

Nursery Fees Policy



Statement of intent

Mill View Primary School aims to provide a nursery experience for pupils of the highest quality that is carefully planned to support a smooth and positive transition into Reception class while supporting the needs and unique characteristics of each individual in our care.

We will work with parents to claim benefit entitlement related to nursery fees such as Working Tax Credits and free childcare entitlement.

This Nursery Fees Policy has been established to provide transparent fee information, set procedures for the payment of fees and create a framework for dealing with non-payment in a swift and fair manner.

Parents should be aware of, and given access to, this policy and the school's procedures. It will be included on the school's website and made available to view at the school on request.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- The General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- The Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) Regulations 2016 (as amended)
- DfE (2018) 'Early years' entitlements: operational guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'

Fees

Our nursery is open 38 weeks of the year, in accordance with the school's published term times. The Nursery is not open during school holidays/bank holidays.

Our sessions are available for the following times. All fees are reviewed annually.

Morning 08:45 - 11:450	£16 (September 2023)
Afternoon 12:15 – 15:15	£16 (September 2023)

All fees are payable a minimum of one week in advance to ensure your account remains in credit or at £0.00. Failure to pay for your non funded sessions a week in advance will mean your child cannot attend nursery until all non-funded sessions are paid and any outstanding debt fully cleared.

If using childcare vouchers etc. to pay for sessions school needs to be made aware of this from the outset and all information must be provided to school ahead of your child starting

nursery. If voucher provision is not set up ahead of your child starting nursery you will need to pay for all chargeable sessions until set up has been completed.

If you require additional sessions these will be accommodated where possible, although due to staffing and ratios in nursery this may not always be possible. Any additional sessions need to be paid for in advance of the session taking place.

Parents are charged for care provided outside of the following provision:

- Universal 15 hours' free provision a week for all three to four-year-olds.
- Extended 30 hours' free provision a week for eligible three to four-year-olds.
- Extended 30 hours' free provision a week for children in foster care.
- Additional morning or afternoon sessions - £16 per session
- Lunch time provision - £2.50 (optional)
- School meals - £2.70 (optional)

Parents should book the required sessions a half term in advance and it will be assumed the agreed pattern will continue on a permanent basis.

Parents will not be required to pay any fee as a condition of taking up a '30 hours' place.

Eligibility for 15 hours' free childcare for three and four-year-olds

All children in England receive 570 hours' free childcare per year. These hours are usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year. The 15 hours' free childcare is available from the term following a child's third birthday.

Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare extended entitlement

Parents of three and four-year-olds must meet the eligibility criteria below to be eligible for the extended 30 hours' free childcare:

- The parent of the child (and their partner where applicable) is seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage – this funding limit does not apply if a parent is self-employed and started their business less than 12 months ago.

Where one or both parents are in receipt of benefits in connection with sickness or parenting, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

Where one parent (in a couple household) is in receipt or could be entitled to be in receipt of specific benefits related to caring, incapacity for work or limited capability for work, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

Parents are not eligible if:

- The child does not live with them.
- The parent or their partner has a taxable income over £100,000.
- The parent is from outside the EEA and their UK residence card says they cannot access public funds.

Parents should check their eligibility for the scheme by using the government's [Childcare Choices](#) website or the [Childcare Calculator](#). If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

The 30 hours' free childcare can be claimed at the same time as claiming Universal Credit, tax credits, childcare vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare.

Eligible parents should provide the school with their unique eligibility code, National Insurance number and child's date of birth, along with their written consent, to enable the school to verify eligibility and receive future notifications from the LA on the continued validity of the code. Parents are encouraged to do this as soon as possible, as they can only start their 30-hours free childcare the term after receiving a decision from HMRC.

The school will retain digital copies of documentation to enable the LA to undertake audits and fraud investigations; however, as per the Data Protection Act 2018, it will be stored securely and deleted when there is no longer any good reason to keep the data.

A child who becomes ineligible during the first half of a funding block will be funded until the end of that following funding block or for as long as they remain under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.

If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a five day 'grace period' – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours' free childcare for 5 days. Consideration to extend the grace period will be taken in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if a parent has been forced to leave their home and paid employment.

A child will not be able to take up their 30 hours' free childcare place if their parents fall into their grace period before the child has started at the school.

Extension of 30- hours to children in foster care

A child in foster care is entitled to an additional 15 hours' childcare per week (30 hours' free childcare per week total) provided that the child is aged three, but below the compulsory school age, and the criteria below are met:

- Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision making; and
- In single foster parent families, the foster parent holds additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.
- In two foster parent families, both partners hold additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.

To receive their free childcare allowance, foster parents must apply directly to the LA by completing the LA's eligibility form. The school can provide this form on request. Foster parents are required by the LA to reconfirm their eligibility every three months.

Payments

- Payments should be made a half term in advance for all non-statutory sessions and lunches, which parents have booked for their child that week.
- Payments should be made by ParentPay, vouchers or tax free childcare.

- Payment is required when a child is on holiday or absent due to illness, as the nursery must hold the child's place during this period and staff rotas are set on a monthly basis.
- If a child is absent for a long period due to illness, the nursery will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. The nursery's decision is final.
- Late payments will incur a £10 fine for each week payments are overdue. Parents can avoid this by ensuring the timely payment of fees each week.
- One month's written notice is required to withdraw your child from the nursery and you will be charged for your scheduled sessions during this termination period.

Parents should be aware that failure to make payments on time and in full, may put their child's place at nursery at risk.

Difficulty with payments

Parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care and education as possible. The school will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties should contact the Principal as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

Debt collection

The governing board has a duty to ensure the school receives all nursery funds.

A full record will be kept of debts owed to the school for seven years. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices. The school may initiate legal action to recover debts. All debts will be handled in accordance with the school's financial handbook.

Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

The Principal will ensure that:

- Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and well-maintained.
- Evidence of the steps taken by the school in pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both letters and phone calls.
- A final reminder is sent by recorded delivery to the debtor.
- The privacy of the family involved will be respected and only made known to those who need to know.
- The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time.

The governing board:

- Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery.
- At its discretion, will refer uncollected debts to a debt recover agency for legal action.
- Will record all approved action in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
- Will adhere to privacy arrangements.
- May delegate its responsibilities under this policy to the Principal.

The process for pursuing debts

Informal reminder – Within three days of late payment, the debtor will be sent a School Ping reminding them that they owe money to the school.

First reminder letter – If the debt is yet to be paid one week after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor and a late payment fee will have been incurred.

Second reminder letter - If the debt is yet to be paid one week after a first formal reminder, a second formal letter will be sent to the debtor. These letters allow the debtor every opportunity to settle their debt and ensure the school can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further.

Final reminder letter – If no response is received following the second reminder, the school will send a letter to the debtor advising them that they will be referring the matter to a debt recovery agency to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to respond.