

Berkswich CE Primary School			
Reference Number S2b	Shared with Staff May 2024	Ratified by Governing Board May 2024	Review Date May 2026
Policy Title	Nursery Fees Policy		

Statement of intent

This policy operates within the Christian ethos of the school and has been written to reflect an understanding of the importance of proper Stewardship of the God-given resources and facilities we have been gifted and are responsible for. We seek to follow the example of forgiveness God has made to us by ensuring fair access for all in our school, regardless of levels of income.

Berkswich CE Primary School aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high-quality and provides a strong foundation for effective transition into primary school.

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

Parents are charged for morning and afternoon session 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.

Please refer to the website to view the most up to date fees.

<https://www.berkswichceprimary.co.uk/berkswich-ce-nursery-forms-funding-and-information/>

Government funded childcare cannot be used to pay for meals, other consumables, additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). The school may charge a fee for these additions. If parents choose to pay for these, it is an arrangement between the parent and the school.

Funded hours may only be used during the morning and afternoon sessions in Nursery. These sessions are three hours in duration and equal fifteen hours for five mornings **or** five afternoons a week, and thirty hours for five mornings **and** five afternoons a week. The lunch time session is charged at £5 per day to cover additional lunch time supervision; this cannot be paid for with funded hours.

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

Parents are automatically entitled to this funding the term after their child turns three. If a child has just turned three but is not yet eligible for funding, then parents may choose to fully fund an available place. Alternatively, parents may extend hours beyond the fifteen funded hours by paying for additional hours.

Information about this 15 hours of free childcare can be accessed through the following link: [Help paying for childcare: Childcare you can get help paying for - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare extended entitlement:

Additional hours of funding are available for working parents.

Full information and up to date criteria for accessing 30 hours of free childcare can be found through the following link: [Check you're eligible for free childcare if you're working - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Information provided by Staffordshire Local Authority about a variety of funding options can be accessed through: [Early-Education-Childcare-Leaflet-for-parents.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Parents receiving 30 hours of funding receive a code to pass on to the Nursery in order for the funding to be accessed by Berkswich CE. It is vital that parents reconfirm with HMRC every three months in order for the funding to continue each term. Parents receive dates when renewal is required (please note that these will depend on when the funding was first applied for and may differ from dates received by other parents). We ask that parents let school know each time their funding code has been accepted for the next term. Parents must also sign a privacy notice each term (a Staffordshire

county council agreement provided to parents by the school) in order to continue to access the funding.

The school will retain 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.

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

What happens if the required hours are not available at Berkswich?

When we offer a place for a child, and we are not able to offer the full number of hours required by parents and carers, (for example, due to a Spring start and morning places have already been filled), then the remainder of the funded hours may be used with another provider (as long as more than two providers are not used in any one day).

Using more than one Nursery provider

Parents and carers have the discretion to split funded hours between multiple providers, regardless of the ownership type, though no more than across two sites in the same day. Parents and carers whose three or four-year old is accessing a '30 hour' place between multiple providers will record which provider will claim the '15 hours' of Universal Entitlement, should the family fall out of eligibility for the Working Parent Entitlement (extended '15 hours'). It is the parent who has the discretion of naming the nominated provider, and this will be recorded in the relevant section of the Parent Declaration and Privacy Notice. Any changes in use of providers must be updated straight away, in order to update the Privacy notice. Please be aware that the funding does not run for a whole year and so if this is used during holiday times (for example, to pay for a child-minder in half-term week), then the year's funding will run out before the end of the summer term. Again, provision will not be withdrawn; instead, parents and carers will be invoiced monthly to any payments not covered by government funding. In this instance, this is called Stretch Funding and there are only certain times when a parent can swap to this; please talk to the EYFS lead should you require further information.

Eligibility for extended entitlement for 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.

Foster carers do not need to apply online and must contact the related social worker/ key worker who will make and support an application to the local authority for the extended 15 hours on your behalf. Successful applicants will receive a confirmation letter from Staffordshire County Council with an eleven-digit number that begins "400". This letter must be presented to Berkswich CE (see: [Do children remain eligible for funded hours and reconfirming eligibility? - Staffordshire County Council](#)) before funding can be accessed.

Absence

On days when a child is absent, for example, but not limited to: due to sickness, holiday or adverse weather conditions; it is at the discretion of the provider whether to offer the EEF hours at an alternative time within the Nursery setting. However, where this is not practicable, the setting must use the EEF hours as if the child was in attendance as normal. Patterns of absence will be monitored (e.g. no Monday sessions attended) and if EEF hours cannot be claimed by the setting, then it is at the discretion of the setting to charge parents for the sessions in order to cover the costs of staffing and resourcing.

Additional charges

As a provider we can charge for hours that the child attends for, but which the provision does not supply as funded hour (e.g. for lunch club). We are also able to charge for consumables, such as, but not limited to food or drink, trips, activities or any other services. The type and predicted charges of these is made clear to parents and carers when offered a place. No family will be disadvantaged by these charges; families are treated in an equitable manner and charges will not be a barrier for any family to access their child care funding. Any additional hours purchased by parents, and any other charges for services taken, will be in line with those outlined in the Welcome to Nursery information booklet.

Published charges

Please see the [Welcome to Nursery Booklet](#) to view the funded and self-funded places available each day in term time and for the associated charges for Nursery and for our Wrap-around Care Club.

Setting Provision Requirements Prior to taking up a place

Before a child starts in Nursery, parents and carers are asked to complete a provision agreement form; this sets the sessions required for each week throughout the year. Changes to this weekly pattern in provision can only be made after discussion and agreement with the Nursery lead, who has to consider the staffing ratios and the needs of the individuals attending before making any adjustments. Additional hours are subject to availability. Where more additional hours are requested than available, school will follow the admission criteria to select children for these places.

Berkswich CE Nursery always aims to accommodate parent and carer's requirements where possible and staff will always be available to talk through your child's Nursery hours and individual needs.

Occasional Extra Hours

You may wish for your child to take part in whole school events, such as Harvest Festival and the Christmas performance in addition to their normal provision (i.e., your child may be involved in an afternoon performance when their provision is usually only mornings). In these circumstances, if you wish for your child to stay for the whole session, a charge may be incurred at the usual rate of the session; this would cover any additional staffing costs to ensure correct legal staffing ratios. Due to restrictions in the way that we can claim 30 hours funding, when we are unable to claim through available funded hours, the hourly rate will be applied and parents/carers will be invoiced. Please see the school website for the most up-to-date fees ([Welcome to Nursery Booklet](#)).

However, if on these occasions, you wish for your child to arrive and stay for the event times only, there will be no charge. For example, if your child took part in the Harvest Festival and arrived at the start of the event and went home straight afterwards with you, then there would be no charge. Your child would remain with you when not taking part in the performance and would remain the parents/carer's responsibility. School will make every effort to try to vary the times when performances take place, so that the same families are not impacted each time. However, please be aware that we are often unable to vary timings, since these can be dependent of the availability of St Thomas' church or timetabling arrangements across school.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Extra funding is available to support some three and four year old children on funded childcare places. Childcare providers could claim up to £300 per year for a child who accesses the provision over the year. This equates to an extra payment per hour on funded hours attended by eligible children (on a maximum of 570 hours in the year).

- Eligibility - Three and four year olds will be eligible if their parents are in receipt of one of the following benefits.
 - Economic criteria
 - Income support
 - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (Provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
 - Working Tax Credit run on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit and have net annual household earnings below £7,400 (this means your take home pay from any paid employment, after Income Tax and NI contributions have been deducted).

- Non-economic criteria

In addition, a child will be eligible if they:

- have been looked after by the local authority for at least one day
- have been adopted from care
- have left care through special guardianship; and
- are subject to a child arrangement order

Applications for non-economic criteria will need to be made using only the EYPP paper claim form available in school. A member of staff will support parents in the completion of this and will need to ask for any relevant documents, such as an adoption order, to verify the child's status. Copies of any documents are sent with the form; without these, the Local Authority will be unable to process your claim. Original copies are returned to the parents.

Once a provider starts receiving EYPP funding for a particular child, they will not lose it while the child is taking up the funded entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds.

Please visit <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Children-and-early-years/Childcare-providers-and-professionals/Early-Years-Pupil-Premium/Overview.aspx> for further information.

Booking

Bookings must be made every month in Schoolcomms, a month in advance of use of the sessions. It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that this has been completed in time. Parents and carers must ensure that the sessions booked are those named within their provision agreement. Staff members are always available to support if there are technical difficulties or alterations need to be agreed before the time of booking.

Regular use of certain sessions or repeated patterns in bookings cannot be accepted as booking for any month in the absence of booking in advance. A child must not be sent into Nursery to attend a session which has not been booked. If you would like to increase the number of hours of provision at any point, then we ask that parents request this as soon as possible. Additional hours are subject to availability. Where more additional hours are requested than available, school will follow the admission criteria to select children for these places.

Errors made in booking are the responsibility of the parents/carers; staff will endeavour to support parents in the event of such an error. However, Nursery is not obliged to rectify an error if staffing levels and booking numbers do not allow this at the point of the discovery of a booking mistake.

Payment

If you go over the funded hours for your child, you will be responsible for paying the additional fee. On occasions where additional hours are required, or a child's provision is amended at a time when school is unable to claim using the 30 hour funding (due to restrictions when in the term funding can be claimed), then parents/carers will be invoiced through Schoolcomms. This will be the case, even when there are unused hours remaining.

Invoices received by parents will be paid through Schoolcomms Gateway by 15th of each month.

Any additional costs, such as trips, will be invoiced through Schoolcomms.

Cancellation of pre-booked places must be made with one week's notice, otherwise the costs of the sessions booked will still be charged.

Payment is still required for pre-booked sessions when a child is then on holiday or absent due to illness.

If a child is absent for a long period due to illness, Nursery will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. This decision will be made by the headteacher.

Parents are asked to renew their funding code every three months through HMRC; if this is not completed by the parents, then funding may not be released by the Local Authority to the school. Parents will be responsible for paying any shortfall in Nursery fees in the event of this occurring.

Late collection

If a child is collected late by ten minutes or more an additional fee will be charged at a rate of a half hour session if pick up is delayed by ten minutes. Further charges will be added at a rate of £1 for each subsequent 5-minute period. Late collection payment fees will automatically be added to the parents'/carers' next invoice.

These costs may be waived in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the headteacher or the governing board. In these instances, the reasons for waiving the fees will remain confidential between school and the family concerned.

Difficulty with payments

The school will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored; for example, accessing 30 hours funding for those below school age.

Parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care as possible. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties must contact the headteacher as early as possible in order for school to be informed and for staff to provide signposting to potential funding options (for example, working tax credit and 30 hours funding).

Invoices are to be paid by 15th of each month. Failure to pay will result in a late payment charge of £30 being added to a parent's/carer's account.

If payments are either two months in arrears or the arrears exceeds £200, parents and carers will no longer be able to use Nursery and the child's place will be terminated. School will continue to signpost parents and offer as much guidance as possible to support prior to this point.

Debt collection

The governing board has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled, including Nursery fees.

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 will not initiate legal action to recover debts; however, school will refer uncollected debts to the Staffordshire County Council to undertake such action.

All debts will be handled in accordance with school policies.