

67. Fees Policy

St Catherine's Independent Nursery understands that the cost of registered childcare may seem expensive to a parent/carer. However, providing a high quality, safe and stimulating service for children requires considerable funding to ensure the continued high standards and sustainability of the Nursery, it must ask that parents/carers respect its policy in respect of fees.

- The level of fees will be reviewed annually, every April, in the light of the Nursery's financial position, its future strategic plans and any other broader economic or social considerations deemed relevant.
- All childcare is charged on a full day or morning/afternoon/ session basis. A whole day is made up of two sessions and is 10 hours from 8am to 6pm; the morning half day session is from 8.30am to 11.30am and the afternoon half day session from 1pm to 5pm.
- St Catherine's Independent Nursery recommends a "minimum session" policy that supports your child settling into the nursery initially, provides social experience and consistency for the child. The minimum number of sessions we ask that are attended is 2 full days per week or three half days (subject to availability) sessions per week.
- All fees are payable 52 weeks of the year including bank holidays, family holidays and sickness. The Nursery closes for two weeks at Christmas and for one week at Easter when a half retainer fee is charged.
- Under extenuating circumstances when the nursery has to close for Health and Safety reasons, we will charge a retainer of 50% of your regular monthly fee to enable the nursery to hold your child's place and cover unavoidable ongoing overheads during this time.

For example: Water supply unavailable

Electricity supply unavailable

Gas Leak

Extreme weather conditions

Outbreak of flu, swine flu, COVID-19, any epidemic or pandemic or other illnesses etc.

- Payment of fees are payable a month in advance, whether or not your child/children attend the nursery sessions.
- Payment can be made via cash, cheque, BACS and we also accept childcare vouchers provided by your employer from a broad range of providers.
- If the fees are not paid on time, the Nursery may notify the parent/carer in writing and request payment at the earliest possible opportunity. The Nursery reserves the right to refuse requests made for extra hours / sessions or days until outstanding fees have been settled in full.

- The Nursery has the right to issue a formal warning to the parent/carer and inform them that continued late payment will result in late fees being introduced. A minimum charge of £20 per occasion will be applied if parents have exceeded the payment date by 14 days, and no payment plan has been set up. After this time, the Nursery reserves the right to charge daily interest on late fees at the rate of 2% over the Bank of England base rate. Children may also be excluded from the nursery if fees remain outstanding more than 14 days beyond their due date and the registration terminated or reduce to funded hours only. Outstanding fees will still be payable and legal action taken where deemed necessary in order to recuperate any fees due to the nursery. No debts are written off.
- St Catherine's Independent Nursery will source a debt collection agency to collect any debt remaining when a child leaves the nursery. Any fees charged by the agency will be added to the debt as entitled to under Regulation 3 of the Late Payment of Commercial Debt Regulations 2013.
- All nursery fees including payments for hot lunches, Diddy Dribblers must be up to date by the end of each term to enable your child to attend nursery the following term.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to the Nursery Manager if they have any query about the fees policy, or if, for any reason, they are likely to have difficulty in making a payment on time. Parents/carers are strongly advised to arrange a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity, to avoid the late charges and jeopardising their child's place at the Nursery. St Catherine's Independent Nursery understands the financial difficulties that families face from time to time. We actively encourage to discuss their needs with the manager as soon as possible so a confidential, mutually agreed payment plan can be set up. This may well be in the form of smaller instalments, staggering or delaying payments.
- The Nursery requires one months' notice in writing should a Nursery place no longer be required. All fees are payable during this period or may be paid in lieu.
- The Nursery requires one months' notice in writing should a regular or extra booked session no longer be required. All fees are payable during this period or may be paid in lieu.
- In the event that a cheque is returned unpaid, a standard £20.00 charge will be added to the next invoice to cover bank charges and administration costs incurred by the Nursery.
- If your child attends Diddy Dribblers (Tuesday a.m.) fees of £2 per session is charged
- Hot lunches are charged at £2.35 per day, however you can opt to bring a packed lunch. If your child is going to be absent from nursery, please ensure you report your child's absence before 9am otherwise you will be charged for a hot lunch for that day.
- Fees are calculated on a yearly basis, bank holidays and altered sessions are taken into account within the fee structure, therefore monthly fees remain the same. Fees are also calculated on an individual basis with regards to your needs therefore it is not nursery policy to exchange through the year.

Early Drop offs or Late collections

Parents must inform the Nursery if they need to drop their children off early or collect them later than agreed in order to ensure that staff ratios are maintained.

- Should a parent be delayed and arrive after 6.00pm, they will be charged late fees £5.00 per 10-minute increments to cover the additional staffing costs on an overtime rate.
- The nursery closes promptly at 6pm and the nursery staff must be off the premises so that the caretaker can lock and alarm the school. To ensure a smooth handover parents are asked to pick up their child by 5.50pm.
- An additional early drop off/late collection fee will be charged if children arrive prior to or are collected after the agreed times at the rate of Extra hours will be charged at the hourly rate of £7.50 for 2-year-olds, and £7.00 for 3-year-olds
- Additional charges may be waived as long as the Nursery is given prior notification.
- Where parents are persistently early or late, childcare requirements will be discussed, and times amended accordingly.

Early Years Funding Scheme

- We are able to offer 2-year-old funding. You need to apply for 2-year-old funding by contacting Lancashire County Council Family Service. Please contact us after you are in receipt of your successful application. Please note we only take emerging three-year-olds, two-year-old children who turn three during the term they start or early on in the following term.
- All children become eligible for the Universal Early Education Funding (up to 15 hours per week) the term after their third birthday.
- Parents/carers may only use a maximum of two providers
- Parents may request extra hours, earlier starts and later collection times but must be requested in writing and agreed with nursery management at least 24 hours in advance. Occasional and extra hours will be charged at the hourly rate of £7.50 for 2-year-olds and £7.00 for 3- and 4-year-olds.
- EEF only covers childcare, and nursery makes a reasonable charge for breakfast, snack, additional activities, and consumables such as sunscreen, toilet paper, paper towels and arts and craft materials provided during any free session. Meals are charged at the rate of £2.35 per meal. Consumables are charged at 50p for a morning or afternoon session or £1 for sessions for 5 hours or more.
- Universal Funding – parents can request their preferred sessions for their child when applying for a childcare place, and the sessions available will be confirmed the term before your child's start date.
- Extended Funding – Eligible children can receive up to 30 hours free childcare per week.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
19/10/2022	<i>H Brockliss</i>	19/10/2023