

# Nursery Charging Policy

The Early Education and Childcare Guidance (1<sup>st</sup> April 2025) issued by the Department for Education (DfE) has been updated to ensure greater clarity and consistency around the management of the funded entitlement for parents, providers and local authorities.

Early Years providers have a responsibility to ensure that parents are made aware that they can 'opt out' of additional extras in connection with the funded entitlements to ensure that their child can access the funding free of charge.

## What does the funded entitlement offer?

Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare for up to 38 weeks of the year. The 15 or 30 hours must be able to be accessed free of charge to parents.

This includes:

- Trained staff delivering the EYFS
- Use of the premises and learning environment
- Access to age-appropriate toys, furniture and resources
- Basic consumables required to meet learning and care needs e.g. water, tissues and craft materials.

Government funding **is not** intended to cover the cost of meals, other consumables, additional hours and additional services (Early Education and Childcare Guidance – A1.32).

The DfE guidance makes it clear that providers can charge for additional extras provided that parents are given an alternative option to access the funded hours free of charge (A1.33).

## Our Offer

Our setting is committed to offering the funded entitlements to eligible families as we understand that they play a pivotal role in supporting parents/carers in covering the costs of childcare to enable them to work and to support children with their development.

As the funding does not cover the costs of providing meals, consumables and additional activities, our setting charges a voluntary additional extras fee during the funded sessions to help mitigate this cost. Parents/carers must inform the setting if they wish to opt-out of these additional charges at the start of each term.

To help parents decide whether to opt in or out of the additional extras charge, we have put together some information about what is included below:

## Opt-in Offer

### Meals/Snacks

Our setting offers a school dinner provided by the Bury Catering Service. This is an optional extra. Children can bring their own packed lunch.

We follow current guidelines and legislation to promote healthy eating and ensure that our children are provided with a range of fruit and vegetables so that they are receiving at least one of their five a day.

All children will have access to water and milk (through the nursery milk scheme) regardless of whether the family opts out of the additional extras charge.

### **Extra Optional Activities**

Where parents choose to opt out of the additional extras, children will still have access to the full offer of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS). However, extra optional activities such as celebration events, music sessions and sports sessions such as dance and football will not be included as these are activities that are provided at a cost to the nursery.

### **Consumables**

All families must provide their own nappies, wipes and suncream for funded and non-funded sessions.

### **Opt-out Alternative**

Families who opt out of the additional extras fee will need to provide the meals and snack required for the child's funded sessions. The food provided must be in line with our lunch box policy.

Although milk is provided through the nursery milk scheme, parents opting out must provide a milk alternative if their child has a dairy intolerance.

By opting out of the additional extras charge, you are also choosing to opt out of the additional activities that are not required as part of the EYFS. This is inclusive of trips and celebrations. Please refer to our breakdown of example activities for a clearer understanding of what activities are supplementary.

### **How to opt in/out:**

Our setting needs to ensure that it remains financially sustainable, therefore, we must ask parents to opt in/out of the additional charges at the start of the school academic year when they sign the parent agreement. This is to allow for business planning.

Parents will not be able to opt out of the additional extras charge mid-term. However, should they wish to opt in, they can speak to the setting manager to arrange future payments.

For further information, please contact the Business Manager.

### **Links to guidance:**

[Early education and childcare - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/early-education-and-childcare)