



Nursery Fees Policy



BROOKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Fees
3. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare
4. Payment information
5. Late collection
6. Difficulty with payments
7. Debt collection
8. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection
9. The process for pursuing debts
10. The waiving of debts

Appendices

Letter to Parents: 30 Hours Free Childcare

Statement of intent

Brooklands aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high quality and geared towards a smooth transition to primary school.

We aim to provide:

- **A warm, welcoming setting where every child feels valued and safe**
- **An engaging and creative environment which fosters a love of learning**
- **A child-centred, inclusive approach where every child is given opportunities to learn in a way which suits them, and is both supported and challenged to achieve their potential**
- **Exciting learning experiences across all seven areas of learning and development as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework**
- **Opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning through regular communication, including online learning journals**
- **Qualified staff with a passion for teaching and learning in the Early Years**

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

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.

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____

1. Legal framework

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

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2014 (as amended in 2016)
- The Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) Regulations 2016
- DfE (2017) 'Early years entitlements: operational guidance'
- DfE (2017) 'Early education and childcare'

2. Fees

2.1. **Brooklands** charges parents for care provided outside of the:

- Universal 15 hours free provision a week for all three- to four-year-olds.
- Extended 30 hours free provision a week for three- to four-year-olds, where eligible.

2.2. The charges are as follows:

- **£23** per additional session
- **£ 11** for lunch time supervision and each lunch provided

2.3. Parents are at present only allowed to access full time spaces. The governing body may review this post January intake and if costs appear to outweigh total fees taken..

3. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare

3.1. Parents of three- and four-year-olds must meet one or more of the following criteria in order to be eligible for the extended 30 free hours of care:

- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage (unless in a 'start up' period– i.e. newly self-employed – in which case they don't need to meet the income criteria for 12 months)

- The parent should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work
 - One or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or are on statutory sick leave
 - One parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work
 - If a non-EEA national, the parent has recourse to public funds.
- 3.2. Parents will 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.
 - 3.3. Eligible parents will provide the school with their unique code, National Insurance number and child's date of birth, along with written consent, to enable the school to verify eligibility and receive future notifications from the Trust 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.
 - 3.4. The school will retain both **paper and digital** copies of documentation to enable the Trust to undertake audits and fraud investigations; however, as per the Data Protection Act 1998, it will be stored securely and deleted when there is no longer any good reason to keep the data.
 - 3.5. If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a short period of time.
 - 3.6. 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.
 - 3.7. 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.
 - 3.8. 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.

4. Payment information

- 4.1. Payments should be made in advance on **Monday mornings** for all non-statutory sessions and lunches, which parents have booked for their child that week.
- 4.2. Payments will be made by parent pay or childcare vouchers as set up by the **school office**.

- 4.3. Cheques or cash payment are not accepted
- 4.4. Online payment direct into the school's bank account is also permissible. To obtain the details and discuss the procedure, contact **Yvonne Howells** by email: yhowells@brooklands-maritime.org.
- 4.5. 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.
- 4.6. 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.
- 4.7. 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.
- 4.8. **One month's** notice and payment will be required to withdraw your child from the nursery.

5. Late collection

- 5.1. Staffing ratios must be maintained at all times. If a child is collected late, this can lead to staff needing to stay beyond the end of their shift. This incurs a cost which will be passed on to the parents at **£5.00** for the first **15 minutes** and a further **£1** for each subsequent **5-minute** period.

6. Difficulty with payments

- 6.1. **Brooklands** will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored.
- 6.2. Parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care and education as possible. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties should contact **Emily McGrath**, the **Early Years Leader**, as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

7. Debt collection

- 7.1. The governing board has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled, including nursery fees.
- 7.2. The governing board will not write off any debt which exceeds **£500**.
- 7.3. 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.
- 7.4. The school will not initiate legal action to recover debts. However, we will refer uncollected debts to the Trust to consider such action.

8. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

8.1. The headteacher and school business manager will ensure that:

- Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and those records 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.

8.2. The governing board:

- Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery.
- Must approve any legal action taken.
- Will record all approved action in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
- Will adhere to the privacy arrangements.
- May delegate its responsibilities under this policy to **Carole Hornsby, Head Teacher**.

9. The process for pursuing debts

- 9.1. Informal **reminder**– Within **two** days of late payment, the debtor will be informally reminded in person or by telephone that they owe money to the school.
- 9.2. **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.
- 9.3. **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.
- 9.4. **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 the Trust to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to respond.
- 9.5. Possible **legal action** – If no payment is made, the Trust will decide whether to take legal action against the debtor.

10. The waiving of debts

- 10.1. The waiving of debts is at the discretion of the **headteacher** and the **governing board**.
- 10.2. A debt may be waived when it is believed the debtor is experiencing serious financial hardship or if all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted and it is believed it would not be cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.
- 10.3. The **headteacher** is authorised to waive debts of up to £100.
- 10.4. Debts between £100 and £500 will only be waived with the approval of the **governing board**. Debts of £500 or more will never be waived.

Letter to Parents: 30 Hours Free Childcare

Brooklands Primary School
Medebourne Close
Blackheath
SE3 9AB

Date:

30 hours extended early years entitlement for eligible three- and four-year-olds

Dear parents,

From 1 September 2017, the current universal free childcare entitlement for three- and four-year-olds will be extended from 15 to 30 hours per week for certain working parents.

The eligibility criteria which parents will need to meet one or more of are:

- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage (unless in a 'start up' period – i.e. newly self-employed – in which case they don't need to meet the income criteria for 12 months)
- The parent should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work
- One or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or are on statutory sick leave
- One parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work
- If a non-EEA national, the parent has recourse to public funds

You can check your eligibility by using the government's [Childcare Choices](#) website or the [Childcare Calculator](#). If you are eligible, you will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply and receive your unique eligibility code.

We will need this code, together with your National Insurance Number and child's date of birth, to enable us to verify your eligibility with the DfE's Eligibility Checking System. Please complete and return the below cut-off slip to the **school office** by **the end of the Summer term**, indicating whether you consent to your data being used in this way and, if consent is given, providing the requisite information.

Yours faithfully,

Emily McGrath

Early Years Foundation Stage Leader

✂.....

Full name:			
I consent to my personal data being used for the DfE's Eligibility Checking Service.			Yes ☐ No ☐

If you indicated 'Yes' above, please provide us with the below information.

Unique eligibility code:	
National Insurance Number:	
Child's date of birth	