



Registered Charity No. 1033185

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| Title:                                       | <b>CHARGING POLICY</b>  |
| Outcome Statement:                           | This policy is written in line with the Norfolk Local Authority expectations and shows a commitment from Hainford and Frettenham Pre-school to provide Government funded childcare. |
| To meet the standards as part of:            | Norfolk Local Authority Guidance<br>EYFS framework  |
| Applicable to & For use by:                  | Staff, parents, committee members including treasurer and book keeper   |
| Appendices:                                  |   |
| Last reviewed:                               | September 2025  |
| Reviewed by:                                 | Hainford & Frettenham Pre-school Manager / Chairperson  |
| Date of Committee Meeting policy adopted at: |   |
| Chairperson Name and Signature:              |   |
| Review Date:                                 | September 2026  |

# Charging Policy

This policy is written in line with the Norfolk Local Authority expectations and shows a commitment from Hainford and Frettenham Preschool to provide Government funded childcare. The entitlement place is offered free. Parents will not be charged a “top-up” fee to recoup the difference between the amount received from the Local Authority and the current hourly rate.

Government funding is intended to cover the cost to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare only. It is not intended to cover the cost of meals, consumables, additional hours, or additional services.

The funded entitlements will be delivered consistently so that all children accessing any of them will receive the same quality and access to provision, regardless of whether families opt to pay for optional hours and services.

The following fees apply when families claim a funded entitlement as part of childcare arrangement:

- ❖ **Additional hours:** Additional hours including those not funded by the local authority will be charged at the current hourly rate. The current hourly rates are £6.50 per hour for 2 year olds, £6.00 per hour for 3 and 4 year olds.
- ❖ **Additional services:** Charges for additional services such as trips will be agreed in advance with families.
- ❖ **Cost of meals:** Families must provide a packed lunch for their child if they are attending during lunch (11:45-12:45).
- ❖ **Snack:** will be provided by families and preschool will offer milk or water.

Other charges –

- ❖ **Retainer Fee –** During a long period of absence it is not possible for the pre-school to claim funding. Therefore, a retainer fee is charged to secure your child's place. This will be charged at half the usual hourly rate.
- ❖ **Late Payments –** This fee will be charged when invoices are not paid within the payment terms, and an outstanding balance remains on the account. The late payment fee is charged at £10 the day following the invoice due date, and an additional £10 every 14 days after that.  
We will do our best to support families experiencing hardship and ensure children in our setting continue to access high quality childcare. Families who are having difficulties with paying invoices should speak with the pre-school manager who will pass the information to the officers of the committee. They will consider a payment plan would be advisable. However, if fees remain unpaid and no attempt is made to pay them, then the committee reserves the right to reduce the child's hours or stop them attending pre-school. If necessary, fees may be sought via the small claims court.
- ❖ **Late Drop offs-** Sessions start at 8.45 and we expect all children to be in the setting before 9am. For the safety of our children, our front gate is locked from 9am. We appreciate that, from time to time, there are occasions when individuals may be running late to drop children off to pre-school. However, when staff have to leave the building to let late arrivals in, they cannot support our children. Therefore, we reserve the right to charge a late drop-off fee to parents who are late in bringing their child to pre-school if this happens on more than 2 occasions within a 2 week period. A £10 fee will be applied for every late drop off thereafter.
- ❖ **Late Collection –** When children are not collected on time, they have to be supervised by two staff members, as per our safeguarding policy. Staff members cannot complete their usual end of day tasks and may need to work additional hours if late collection occurs. Therefore, a late collection fee will be

charged when children are not collected on time if this happens on more than 2 occasions within a 2 week period. A £10 fee will be charged for every 10 minutes until the parent or carer arrives.

- ❖ No charge will be made to parents for Bank holidays. However, should the preschool be closed for reasons beyond our control, such as extreme weather conditions, sickness, etc., the usual charges will apply and no refunds will be issued. We apologise but it is also not possible to swap days in these circumstances.
- ❖ All fees will be charged unless specific arrangements have been agreed and whilst a childcare contract remains in place.
- ❖ **Extras** – Occasionally we offer special activities and events that you may be required to contribute towards in order for them to go ahead such as external groups to deliver music sessions, family sessions to celebrate e.g. Mother's/Father's Day and crafts that aren't covered under normal funding.

### **Changing your childcare contract**

Changes to the days and hours you require must be given in writing to the pre-school manager. We require 4 weeks' notice of changes. We do our best to accommodate additional hours but depending on staffing and the number of children already in setting, these cannot be guaranteed.

In the case of reducing hours, these spaces will be offered to children on the waiting list. There is no guarantee that the same hours can be reallocated to you at a future date.

### **Terminating your childcare contract**

Families wishing to terminate their childcare contract must provide 4 weeks' notice in writing to the Pre-School manager. Any funding entitlement claimed beyond the notice period is transferrable to your new childcare provider via the local authority where the funding criteria is met. Where a child leaves the setting before the end of the agreed notice period, we will seek authorisation from the local authority to claim any funding applicable to your entitlement up to the end of the notice period, together with any additional fees which formed part of your childcare arrangement (contract).

### **Review of Fees:**

Families will be given at least 6 weeks' notice in writing to inform them of any change in fees, and given the opportunity to discuss their options with the committee chairperson.

Where a time lapse has occurred between the point of enquiry and their child's start date, families should check that the information shared about funding and fees remains current so that any applicable charges can be checked / finalised before the childcare arrangement (contract) is formalised.

### **Invoicing**

All families will be issued an invoice during the first week of each half term for the upcoming half term. The payment term is within 14 days. The invoice will be itemised to provide clear and transparent information concerning the charges as agreed in the childcare contract. It will allow parents/carers to see that the entitlement is received completely free of charge and understand additional fees that have been applied.