

Charging Policy

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 food consumables, non-food consumables, additional hours, or additional activities and services.

Whilst we are required for these chargeable extras to be a voluntary contribution it is generally accepted that parents, who choose to take up a place at Seedlings Day Nursery, opt to pay these chargeable extras to ensure we can continue to provide our extended hours offering, nutritionally balanced meals and snacks, a wide variety of additional services, activities and experiences that are not directly related or necessary for the effective delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and that it is inclusive for **all** children at the Nursery.

The following fees apply when families claim a funded entitlement as part of childcare arrangement (April 2025 – April 2026):

- Funded 10 hour Day Rate: £18.00
- Funded 7.45 hour Day Rate: £35.85
- Funded 5.5 hour Day Rate: £46.50

Additional hours including those not funded by the local authority will be charged at the current hourly rate. The current hourly / session rates are:

- Standard Full Day: £77
- Standard Half Day am/pm: £38.50

Charges for additional services such as trips will be agreed in advance with families.

Food Consumables which include all meals, snacks and other food items made on-site by our personal chef are charged at **£3.00 for Funded 5.5 hour day** and **£6 for a 7.45 and 10 hour day**.

Non-Food Consumables which include the charges for Operational Services at £2 per day and Activities charged at £3 per day. These non-consumable charges contribute towards, amongst others, any additional toiletries and personal care items, Non-essential PPE for personal care, access to award winning nursery software - ParentZone, daily access to a range of seasonal activities and celebratory crafting and activities, plus ad hoc local off-site visits and experiences.

These fees, together with the funded hours/session and any additional non-funded hours/sessions will be agreed initially as part of our registration process and included in your childcare contract.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, your childcare contract can only be **varied termly** for chargeable extras and reducing hours/sessions.

Changes to your childcare contract must be requested in writing at least 4 weeks before the start of the new claim period to avoid incorrect fees being charged.

Claim Period Start Dates:

- 1 April
- 1 September
- 1 January

Please note: Terminating your contract must also be given in writing at least 4 weeks prior to your child's last date of attendance. Fees remain chargeable during this notice period.

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR CHARGEABLE EXTRAS

Non-Food Consumables (which are not expected to be provided as part of the EYFS.):

Optional services

- Nappies
- Wipes*
- Cream*
- Suncream*
- Non-essential PPE for personal care
- Premium access to the online learning journal 'Parentzone'

Activities

- Additional classes including Outdoor learning sessions, gardening, etc
- Enhanced small group activities such as local offsite visits, e.g. to the park and/or shopping precinct
- Parent / Carer Events including parent's evenings, stay and plays, sports days

* these items must be labelled with your child's name

Food Consumables:

- Breakfast, Lunch, Tea and snacks are made on-site by our personal chef in line with nutritional guidance.

Our Fees for Chargeable Extras

		Option 1	Option 2
Food Consumables		£6 or £3	£8 or £5
Non-Food Consumables	Optional Services	£2	£4
	Activities	£3	£5

- Option 1:

This will be charged where a family has opted in as part of the childcare contract

- Option 2:

This will be charged where a family has opted out as part of their childcare contract but decide to participate after the claim period start date or it has been necessary to supply an item.

The ability to switch options or re-arrange these chargeable extras is termly.

If you are unable to pay for or wish to amend your contract, please speak with the Nursery Manager to discuss the alternative options available.

It is not possible to select items from each list for your child to participate or for you to supply, fees are applied in full where attendance is anticipated as part of your agreed childcare contract.

Where it is necessary for the nursery to supply any individual item listed, the full fee will be charged.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Optional Services and Activities**

We are required to deliver the funded entitlements consistently, so that all children within a setting accessing any of the funded entitlements receive the same quality and access to provision, regardless of whether they choose to pay for voluntary hours, voluntary extra services, meals or consumables.

The reference to quality refers to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework which is mandatory for all early years providers in England and sets out the standards that must be met to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

Our optional services and activities are not directly related or necessary for the effective delivery of the EYFS statutory framework. Invitations and opportunities to participate will not be extended to families who have opted out.

- **Non-Food Consumables**

Where families opt to supply the listed items instead, sufficient supplies of these must be brought to nursery **every day** when your child is accessing their funded entitlement because there is not capacity to store any items at nursery permanently.

All the listed items must be packed in a string bag (or similar) which is clearly labelled with your child's full name. **It is not possible to select certain items to supply,** and the items marked * must also be labelled with your child's name.

Families are responsible for checking that their child arrives at nursery with a sufficient supply of these items so that we can provide for your child's individual care needs.

- **Food Consumables (All Food Brought in from Home)**

Please refer to our Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy where families have opted to provide their child's food whilst at nursery.

Our policy is in line with the EYFS nutrition guidance issued by the Department for Education to ensure meals, snacks and drinks provided to children are healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Our policy in brief for packed meals and food brought in from home:

1. We are committed to following the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance to ensure meals, snacks and drinks provided to children are healthy, balanced and nutritious.
2. Your child's individual dietary requirements including preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements will be collected as part of our registration process.
3. Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be completed, and we will work with you to adopt an individual dietary plan for your child.
4. All staff who prepare and handle food have received training in food hygiene which is updated every three years.
5. Fresh tap water is always available and accessible.
6. A balanced and healthy snack is offered to children attending the following sessions
 - a. morning
 - b. afternoon
7. A balanced and healthy meal is available to children attending the following sessions
 - a. breakfast
 - b. lunch
 - c. afternoon

Please refer to our menu (available on our website or requested from the office).

8. Families supplying their child's meals and snacks **must**
 - a. refer to the list of items which **cannot** be provided. Our list ensures suitable and practical food products are supplied which promote healthy eating and avoids cross-contamination or risk to children with dietary requirements.
 - b. apply the 'four-hour rule' for items that must be kept cool
 - c. avoid using single use plastic such as cling film, sandwich bags and packaging

9. It is not possible to refrigerate or reheat food brought in from home. All food must be suitably packed (waste free) in a clearly named insulated lunch bag, prepared to minimise any choking risk and ready for your child to consume.
10. It is not possible to opt to supply either meals **or** snacks. Where families opt to supply their own, all food must be provided for your child attendance at each session.
11. If food is not supplied as agreed, the food consumable fee will be charged in full.

Other charges include:

A non-refundable Registration Fee of £75 per family covers administration and settling sessions. A fee is not required for funded only children.

A Late Payment Fee will be charged when invoices are not paid within the payment terms and an outstanding balance remains on the account. Unless there is a prior arrangement, a charge of £20 will be made for fees outstanding after 7th of the month.

A late collection fee will be charged at a rate of £15 per quarter hour (or part thereof) to cover emergency staffing and other arrangements.

All fees will be charged unless specific arrangements have been agreed and whilst a childcare contract remains in place. Families wishing to terminate their childcare contract must provide one month's notice in writing to the Nursery 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 **Registration Form and Agreement**.

Our fees are reviewed annually in April. Families will be given at least 6 weeks' notice in writing to inform them of any change and given the opportunity to discuss their options with the Nursery Manager.

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 Registration Form and Agreement is formalised.

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, services, meals or consumables.

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.

All families will be issued an invoice monthly in advance unless the balance equals zero. The payment term is by 7th of every month.

The invoice will be itemised to provide clear and transparent information concerning the charges as agreed in the childcare **Registration Form and Agreement**. It will allow parents/carers to see that the entitlement is received completely free of charge and understand additional fees that have been applied.