

Fees and Charging Policy

(Also see Admissions and Healthy Eating Policy)

At Little Oaks, we aim to make our Pre-School and Playgroup as accessible to as many families in the community as possible. We therefore aim to ensure our fees are as competitive as possible. As a non-profit making charity, we rely on prompt fee payments to be able to meet our running costs and to provide equipment and resources for the children who attend. This policy adheres to the standards regulated by Northamptonshire County Council regarding the Government Funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. Therefore, the following policy will apply:

Fees: (From September 2018)

- Playgroup sessions: £13.00 per 3-hour session
- Breakfast Club: £4.00 a session
- Lunch Club: £3.50 per session
- Non-funded pre-school day care sessions (if available): £13.00 per 3-hour session
- There is no charge for Expressing an Interest in Little Oaks Pre-School (during the current academic year 1 Sep - 31 Aug).
- There will be a £20.00 fee for formally registering a child for Playgroup on or after the registration date, before the child is able to claim their 15 hours funding.

Please note that BACS payment for registration is our preferred method of payment, please quote your **child's name** and what is being **paid** as reference. (For example, John Smith - Registration)

Lloyds Bank Account No: 18250160 Sort Code: 30-11-08

- If registering in person on the Registration date, this is payable by cash or cheque (payable to *Little Oaks Pre-school*) on the day or BACS payment can be made in advance.
- If registering by email or post on or after the Registration date the fee can be paid by BACS, cash or cheque.
- Neither of the above is refundable UNLESS Little Oaks is unable to offer any place for the child.
- For Pre-School a registration fee will not be charged if a child is being registered to join Little Oaks at a date by which they will be entitled to Early Years Funding. However, it will be made clear to parents/carers that priority is given for these places to children who are already attending Little Oaks and that only rarely do such places become available and any enquiry will be put onto a Waiting List.
- For Playgroup registrations, if once a parent has registered with us, it transpires that they have an entitlement to 2-year funding then the registration fee will be refunded.

Payment Procedure:

- All parents/carers will receive a hard copy invoice by the beginning of the first week of each half term. For new starters in Playgroup who attend settling in sessions they will receive an invoice during their first full week. Please advise the Office Administrator if you would like a copy of your invoice emailed.
- Fees can be paid in full during the first week of term OR paid weekly. If paying weekly, payment is due on the FIRST session of the week that your child attends Little Oaks. Please see Late Payment charge below.
- Payment for all fees can be made via our preferred method of BACS for the exact full weekly payment (i.e. weekly or fortnightly, not part weeks) by cheque, childcare vouchers, Tax-Free Childcare or cash. If paying by cash please ensure that we receive the correct money as we cannot guarantee to return any change on the same day.
- Once payment has been received by cash or cheque, a receipt will be issued. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform Little Oaks if a receipt has not been issued by the end of the week and to keep all receipts for future reference.
- If paying using childcare vouchers it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Office Administrator.
- If you choose to pay using the 'Tax Free Childcare' scheme, please let us know the ID reference number so that we can identify payments.
- Once a child has begun at Little Oaks fees are payable for all sessions **regardless of attendance**. Therefore fees are still due for sessions missed due to sickness or holiday. This applies to Playgroup and Pre-school sessions, Day Care and pre-booked Breakfast and Lunch Club sessions.
- Parents or carers will be asked for one week's fees to be paid at our Enrolment event for those starting Playgroup, based on sessions chosen. This will be credited as payment for the first **full** week's attendance when the child joins Little Oaks. If the parents or carers choose, for whatever reason, not to take up the place then this money will not be refunded and will be retained by Little Oaks as payment in lieu of notice. If, however, once a child is enrolled at Little Oaks, it transpires that they have an entitlement to 2-year funding then the advance enrolment fee will be refunded.
- If a child will be absent because of holiday, then payment for the missed sessions must be either made in advance of the absence or the parent must make payment on the child's first week of return or a late payment charge will apply (see below).

Closure of Setting:

Should the setting need to close due to reasons beyond our control (e.g. water/sewerage, heating failure, flood, staff sickness) or adverse weather conditions (e.g. snow and ice), fees will not be refunded for the first 2 days of closure, thereafter paid fees will be credited against future sessions.

Notice Period and Conditions:

Cancellation of a REGULAR Breakfast Club, Lunch Club or Day Care place will require half a term's notice (6 weeks).

Permanent regular bookings will be charged in full if the notice is not given.

Charges for visits and shortened sessions:

We encourage parents to visit with their child prior to the child starting with us. There are occasions when a child's keyperson may suggest shortened sessions when a child first starts. In these circumstances, the following charging policy will apply:

- For settling in sessions where the parents or carers are requested to stay, there will be a pro rata charge.
- For shortened sessions, full session fees will be charged for the first 4 weeks. If shortened sessions continue beyond the first 4 weeks, the fees will be reduced on a pro rata basis. If fees have already been paid, then this amount will be credited to the next invoice payable. Shortened sessions are at the discretion of the child's keyperson.

Late Payment:

- A late payment fee charge will automatically be applied (£5.00 for Playgroup Fees or Day Care Fees and £3.00 for Lunch Club) to outstanding fees on the Monday after the week they were due. Reminders will not be issued.
- In the event of a cheque being returned to Little Oaks marked unpaid, a £10 administration charge will be incurred.
- If a child is absent due to illness, no late payment charges will be added for that time, providing we have received a phone call on the first day of absence and payment is received on the **FIRST** session the child returns to Little Oaks.
- If a child is absent for more than 5 days due to a pre-arranged operation or hospitalisation, arrangements should be made **PRIOR** to the absence with the Office Administrator.
- The above applies to all playgroup, day care and pre-booked breakfast and lunch club sessions accordingly.
- If after three requests the outstanding balance has not been paid, we will advise the parent/carer that the child will no longer be able to attend their sessions until the balance has been settled.

Late Collection:

Continuous late collection will incur a charge of £10 as per our Late Collection Policy.

Cancellation of child leaving Little Oaks Pre School:

- Six weeks' notice is required if a child is to leave Little Oaks.
- If six weeks' notice is not received, then 6 weeks' fees will be charged in lieu of notice.
- If a child who is in receipt of funding leaves after headcount day, then we do not transfer the funding to their new setting.
- If a child who is in receipt of funding joins Little Oaks after headcount-day, then we will not request a transfer of funding from the previous setting.

Funding

We are registered to provide the free entitlement to Early Learning and Childcare and will meet our statutory obligations in this respect. For more information please visit:

<http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/early-years/Pages/free-childcare.aspx>

For parents who receive government funding (either the 2-year old funding or when the child receives 3-year old funding) we will require documents to prove your child's date of birth and a utility bill to prove where they live. A parental contract will be drawn showing the amount of hours due to attend and this will be updated and require a signature at each funding block (i.e. each term).

We are registered to provide funding for 30 hours but this is dependent on the availability of sessions at the time of the eligibility being confirmed. In line with the 3-year funding, there is a deadline for applying for this each term i.e. 31st December (for a January start) and 31st March (for an April start). It is the responsibility of the parents to re-check their eligibility every three months otherwise it could result in payment of fees or the child losing their place at Little Oaks.

Voluntary Healthy Snack Contribution

- We ask for a voluntary contribution of £10.00 per child per half term towards the cost of healthy snacks from all children in receipt of free entitlement to Early Learning and Childcare i.e. 2 or 3-year old funding.
- Information will be sent to parents/carers via email. We prefer not to accept payment for Healthy Snack and Cooking via the Tax-Free Childcare scheme or

company childcare vouchers as we would be unable to claim Gift Aid on your contributions. Payment can be made via cash, cheque or BACS.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

As from January 2015, children who are currently claiming the Free Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds in Northamptonshire, who meet certain eligibility criteria could be eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). The Early Years Pupil Premium is additional funding available for investment in improving outcomes for children. Children will be eligible if they are 3 or 4 years old and receiving Government funded Free Entitlement in any OFSTED registered childcare provider and their parents are in receipt of one or more benefits used to access eligibility for free school meals.

Once your child is funded at 3, a form will need to be completed to access this funding, including details of the parents to find out eligibility. Once eligibility has been confirmed, any voluntary contributions asked from parents - including snack, visits and outings, will be covered by the EYPP payment. If required, this payment can also cover one lunch club a week, depending on availability, for the child attending Little Oaks.

This policy was adopted at a committee meeting of Little Oaks held on.....

Signed on behalf of the committee.....

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This policy was reviewed and updated November 2012, Jan 2013, Sept 2013, October 13
Updated Jan 14, Feb 14, Sep 14, updated Jan 15, Updated Oct 15 New late payment charges. Updated Feb 16 - new fee charges, March 16, Update Sep 16, Feb 17, March 17, June 17, Sept 17, updated Nov 17. Reviewed & Updated March 2018, July 2018. Updated Nov 18, Jan 19.