

Beetham CE Primary School

Nursery Fees Policy



Caring for Everyone, Learning Together,
Achievement for All

This policy is based on the Christian principles,
values and beliefs that underpin everything we do at
Beetham Church of England Primary School.

September 2020

Approved by ¹	
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Position:	Chair of Governors
Signed:	
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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

Statement of intent

Beetham CE Primary School 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 broad and balanced curriculum with reference to the guidance provided in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- provide an environment that develops lively enquiring minds and an enthusiasm for learning
- recognise children as individuals and build upon their successes
- enable children to feel valued and respected so they can be confident and secure
- develop, through example and explanation, a sense of responsibility, self-discipline and respect for one another the School and the community
- encouraging aesthetic and spiritual awareness
- ensuring that children, staff, parents, governors and the community feel a sense of belonging and ownership and take a pride in our School.

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.

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. Beetham CE Primary School 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:

- £12 per additional session (8:45am until 11:45am/11.45am – 2.45pm)

2.3. Parents will book the required sessions in advance for each half term

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 LA 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 paper and digital copies of documentation to enable the LA 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 monthly in arrears within 30 days of an invoice being issued via the school's ParentMail system for all chargeable sessions which parents have booked for their child that month.

4.2. Payments can also be made by cheque at the school office. Cheques will be made payable to Beetham CE Primary School.

4.3. 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.

4.4. 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.

4.5. 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 after 2.45pm, parents will be charged an additional cost of £1.00 to cover staff hours.

6. Difficulty with payments

6.1. Beetham CE Primary School 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 Mrs Abi Johnson, the Headteacher, 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 body's policy will be to not write off any debt.

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 Local Authority to consider such action.

8. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

8.1. The headteacher and school administrator 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 the school administrator.

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 LA 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 LA 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 body.

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. Debts between £50 and £100 will only be waived with the approval of the governing board. Debts of £100 or more will never be waived.