

Fees and Funding Policy

DFE Early Years Funding

Springwood Preschool and Nursery LTD are registered to receive DfE Nursery Education Grant funding.

All children who attend Springwood LTD will receive government funding the term **after** their third birthday; (please note this is subject to cut off dates: 3 years old before 31st August, 31st December or 31st March.)

Government funding entitles a child to use up to 15 hours or 30 hours a week over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year and up to 52 weeks of the year (stretch offer).

Springwood LTD uses funding for 38 weeks. If sites are open longer private fees will apply for the additional care services.

- If your child is entitled to a government funding, you will be given a form to fill in. Please ensure this is filled in **FULL** and correctly signed. The forms for funding hours will be given out to parents/carers as soon they will be eligible. Form must be return by specific date but as soon as possible (on the same day or the next day is highly desired). **Parents/carers who do not bring the completed forms back on time OR/AND they will be completed incorrectly, will not qualify for government funding hours and therefore will be charged at normal preschool or nursery rate.**
- Funding can be used between 9am-3pm. Childcare provided before 9am and after 3pm or outside of term time will be charged at a private rate. Please request a price list or view our website for more details.
- ****** Please note that if your child is eligible for the early years educational funding (15 or 30 hours), we will ask that your child will apply for a minimum of 12 or 24 hours a week.

30 hours Funding

There are certain criteria's to meet to be eligible to receive 30 hours funding for your child. Parents will need to have applied through there Government Childcare Accounts through HMRC.

Once an application has been accepted, the parent will receive a code. Parents need to ensure eligibility codes have been validated by the setting in time for the funded hours to start. Once the codes have been validated, the additional hours can be claimed for by the setting in the same way as for the universal entitlement hours are claimed (15hours). Once you have applied for your 30 hour code, please send this to your child's settings by email. The setting will check the code and confirm validation.

There are cut off dates to apply for the additional funding (30 hours). If you wish for the additional hours to start in autumn term, applications must be completed before August 31st, if you wish for the additional hours to be claimed ready to use for January 1st, applications must be completed by December 31st, if you wish for the additional funding to be used for April 1st, application must be completed by March 31st.

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure 30 hours funding codes are validated and **reconfirmed every three months**. We will charge for the hours we could not claim for as a result of failing to validate or reconfirm your code, or no longer eligible.

Please apply here: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

Two Years Old Funding

Two year old funding is available for those who meet a specific criteria, please visit your local authority website to apply for this on line.

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/schools-learning-and-childcare/early-years-and-childcare/help-with-childcare-costs/early-education-funding-for-2-year-olds/>

or

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/childcare/payingforchildcare/freechildcare/2yearoldoffer>

Children receiving funding, parents will be requested to complete a funding form each term, for Springwood LTD to claim for the funding direct from their local authority.

Privately Paid Fees

All fees must be paid by cash or bank transfer by the 10th of each month. Cheques will not be accepted. We invoice a month in advance .

- We ask you pay directly into our bank account, or if that is not possible by cash by the specified date. **We cannot accept cheques.**
- Fees are payable a month in advance. Parents are invoiced for each full month, E.G. September's hours are invoiced and given to parent's on August 1st to pay by August 10th . Each school year consists of three terms (6 half terms). New parent's will be asked to pay a month up front before their child's first day. No administration fees are required.
- The payment cash or bank transfer should be returned to Preschool and Nursery as soon as possible but **no later than the 10 th of the month the parent has received the invoice.**
- Please speak to management if you require an alternative pay date.
- Arrears are not acceptable and you can be refused entrance. Placements will be put on pause until the arrears are cleared in full.
- Some employers offer schemes where fees can be paid through them. We are normally able to accept payment under these schemes. Tax Free Childcare, Fidelity, Computer Share are whom we are registered with.
- 4 weeks' notice must be given before withdrawing your child in any circumstances. If notice is not given, we reserve the right to keep the child's paid fees which, would have covered the month ahead - this does not apply to children in receipt of the Nursery Education Grant Funding, however the notice period still applies. Springwood Preschool Portsmouth funding terms and condition we request 4 weeks notice if leaving us, Busy Bee Preschool Hampshire funding terms at this time no notice period is request by Hampshire Council County, however we ask as good will to be notified as soon as possible and within 4 weeks of your child's departure.
- We will give you a maximum of two weeks' notice if we need to change our opening and closing hours, unless due to circumstances out of our control arise, therefore our Emergency Closure or adaption to opening hours will apply. If you need to withdraw your child's place as a result, you still need to give us a four weeks' notice where full fees apply (fees will be adjusted to new opening hours
- If a child starts mid-term the fees will be calculated and adjusted accordingly.
- Non payment of fees will be dealt with promptly and all arrears must be paid before the next month or specific date given.
- Late fee charges of £1.50 per day will be added to any fees unpaid not cleared by the last day of the month

- Late pick up charges will incur, £5.00 for every 15 minutes.
- Persistent non-payment (e.g. late payments, late pick-ups) will mean loss of place and any siblings who may wish to attend in the future may be refused a place.
- Fees are reviewed every year ready to commence in April alongside inflation. Springwood reserves the right to change prices, which are reviewed very carefully. Many factors will influence our decision (e.g. inflation, NLW, NMW, etc.). We will inform you about new prices at least two week before they come into effect. We normally review fees once a year, however should our circumstance change, including the ones where we have no control over, fees prices can be changed more than once a year.
- We offer discounts. Discounts are decided and reviewed every year, at the senior management discretion. We offer a daily fee discount. Springwood staff's discount.
- Any complaints regarding this policy should be dealt with via the current complaints procedure
- All children receive one week holiday where fee's will not be charge. Holiday runs from September to September.
- Our invoice will clearly set out how much is required, what sessions are being charged for, be dated and have our bank details for payments.

- Compulsory Consumables per week: £2.10 (This contribution goes towards resources we provide for children such as additional cooking activities, outings to pay for additional staff to attend, outside groups to teach children new skills, we currently use Mini Athletics, along with providing messy play and much more.
- Weekly cooking charge £1 paid in cash on the day or billed for the month.
- Snack and breakfast is either charged for or parents provide their own food.
- ** Please note that if your child is eligible for the early years educational funding (15 or 30 hours), we will ask that your child will apply for a minimum of 12 or 24 hours a week.
- ** Please note that funding can only be used between 9am – 3pm.
- ** Please note for any additional childcare provided before 9am and after 3pm for funding children, this will be charged for, because this falls within our breakfast and after school club services.
- ** Please note for non-funded children or families who are topping up using our additional services (breakfast and afterschool clubs), we ask for one month's fees in advance of your child's start date.

Your child's sessions are subject to payment or funding that is successfully claimed. **In the event you are unable to pay by the specific date, please ensure you discuss this situation with the manager, as we may be able to assist with a payment plan;**

Non-Payment of Fees

Should the parent / carer have difficulty with payment due to unforeseen change of circumstances, they should approach the Owner or Manager to discuss and resolve the problem in confidence.

1. If payment has not been received, the manager will issue Fee Payment Reminder letter. The late payment fee will apply. In some circumstances, the late payment fee can be waived with the Owner's discretion.
If payment is received within seven days no further action will be taken.

2. If payment is still not received, the manager will issue a second (final) Fee Payment Reminder letter. The letter will ask for full payment within 14 days. **At this stage, your child will be refused entrance to preschool and nursery until full payment is received. We cannot guarantee that place for your child will still be available.**

The late payment fee will apply. In some circumstances, the late payment fee can be waived with the Owner's discretion.

If payment is received within fourteen days no further action will be taken.

Legal Action for Non-Payment of Fees/Funding

We will take any necessary legal action to recover any money owed. Please see below for further details. If you are no longer eligible for funding, e.g. 30 funded hours, the 'extra' hours (any hours that exceed the 15 funded hours a week)

- If for any reason you feel the invoice is not correct, please speak to the Manager. Do not be tempted to change it as this creates errors on our accounting system, if your invoice is incorrect we will issue you with a new one.
 - If, for any unforeseen circumstances, you need to change your child's sessions (e.g. permanently, for one term or one week only), we will try to accommodate your request. We cannot guarantee this, as we have a responsibility to honor our waiting list and are responsible for keeping within childcare ratios.
 - If your child misses any sessions, due to weather, illness or holidays, there will be NO refund given and no additional sessions will be offered to replace those missed; except in exceptional circumstances defined by the setting.
 - If your child changes settings during the term, we are able to transfer funding once the new setting has claimed the funding.
 - It is important that fees are paid on time as this depends on providing safe and consistent and sustainable preschool/nursery for your little ones.
3. If payment is not received, Springwood will have no alternative, but to take legal actions to recover the outstanding payment through a debt recovery scheme.
Please be advised that all applicable costs for retrieving the money will be covered by the person reliable for paying the money owed.

By accepting a place in Springwood you are agreeing to above Fees Policy and Procedures.

PLEASE NOTE:

Our aim is to ensure the financial stability of the setting by having a fair and consistent process for pursuing non-payment of fees. We will pursue all unpaid fees through legal proceedings.

January 2024