

## CHARGING POLICY



The aim of this policy is to ensure that all of our families are able to access flexible funding that they are entitled to, and fairly in conjunction with guidelines set out by Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance (Apr 2024); DfE Early Years Entitlements: Operational Guidance (Feb 2025) and Local Authority Funding Agreement (Aug 24-Sept 25).

The policy will complement the nursery's other policies covering Teaching and Learning, Equality and Educational Visits.

### Overview

Our OFSTED Rating was Outstanding for the Nursery School in May 2019 and we maintained the quality following an inspection in October 2024. We also have an Outstanding for our Day-Care provision (July 2023). We are registered with OFSTED and Norfolk County Council as an approved provider of 9 month to four year old funding.

We are open 48 weeks of the year between 8-5pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and 8-4pm on Wednesday, providing day-care and extended sessions for children. We offer a combination of full days, half days and sessional care to enable our families to access their funding as flexibly as is possible to maintain high quality and good practice for the children.

Government funding for 9 month olds to 4 year olds is intended to cover the cost to deliver up to 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 (see fee table below)

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. Within our setting there is no additional consumable charges. Parents are not charged a top up fee to recover income when our hourly rate is greater than the rate received by the Local Authority for Early Educational entitlement.

### **All year round**

For children who are all year round (i.e not term time only), funding can be applied between the hours of 8am-5pm. You will remain responsible for covering the cost of meals (breakfast, lunch, tea), except snacks. We will continue to offer the option to stretch your funding across the whole year. The funding covers 38 weeks per year, and we will calculate the appropriate number of hours per week to allow for this extended distribution.

To secure an all-year-round-place an advance retainer fee must be paid (see fee table on page 13) that will be deducted off the first invoice. Failure to provide this payment at the time that the place is offered will result in the place being offered to other families.

### **Term time**

For children who attend term time only, you will now be able to take up to 30 hours of funding between the hours 8.30am-3.30pm but any additional hours e.g. before 8.30am or after 3.30pm will be chargeable. Meals such as breakfast, lunch and tea will be chargeable.

If your child is booked in for food for breakfast, lunch or tea and they are unable to come in for any reason, then you will be charged for this as the food is ordered in advance. The only exception is for planned holiday absences that you have already informed us about.

Participating in meals is voluntarily and families can supply their own packed lunches. Any families experiencing difficulties paying for meal fees or supplying a packed lunch should contact and discuss with the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

Charges for additional services, such as trips, will be set according to specific costs and agreed in advance with participating families. All income and payments will be operated through the Nursery's bank account, and all monies collected will be recorded.

Money received for funding will always be used for the purpose intended and parents will be given a reduction equivalent to the prevailing hourly rate (rates will be itemised in the fee table on page 13) when funding is part of extended hours beyond the basic 15/30-hour requirement. This applies mainly to those parents who access day-care and our extended nursery services.

All families will be issued an invoice at the end of the first month the child starts and then at the end of every consecutive month, unless the balance equals zero. The invoice details the services provided and all appropriate charges. It will also show services provided free of charge as an Early Education place. Payment is required on or before the last working day of the month and a range of payment methods are available including bank standing order, cash, cheque, childcare vouchers, and direct debit.

Fees will be charged for non-attendance due to illness and short-term absences. For holidays where advance notification has been given, a two-week holiday reduction (of your child's weekly sessions) of 50% will be calculated pro-rata. Any holidays taken above the two-week entitlement will be charged at full cost. No charges are levied for bank holidays, school closure days or closure due to adverse weather conditions or extenuating circumstances when the Nursery must close.

Should fees be not paid on time without prior arrangement with the Headteacher or the School Business Manager, including agreed arrangements to clear any debt, then the Nursery may exercise the right to cancel that place.

Emneth Nursery is an inclusive setting, and no child will be refused access to their funding entitlement for any reason other than capacity. Emneth Nursery will always maintain required staff to child ratios and children's safety will always be the number one priority.

Four weeks written advance notice is required where families wish to make changes to their childcare arrangements.

Fee Table – last price increase 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025		
Retainer fee to secure all year round space	£75 (this will be deducted off your first invoice if your child attends)	
Hourly Rates	0 – 2 years	£6.50
	2 – 3 years	£6.10
	3 – 4 years	£5.90
Breakfast		£1.10
Lunch		£2.40
Tea		£1.50