



## 4.3 Fee Payment Policy

### Policy statement

The Pre-school is registered to receive the following funding entitlements from Norfolk County Council,

- 2 year old funding NEO
- 3-year-old Universal Funding
- Working Parent Entitlement, 15 hours for 2 year olds and 30 hours for 3-4 year olds

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 meals, consumables, additional hours, or additional services.

Children become eligible for this funding in the term following their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Parent and carers can find information on the Childcare Choices website regarding which funding entitlement they can receive.

[Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)

All Buttercups children are encouraged to take their full 15 universal funded hours per week at the setting and this can be accommodated within the weekly session. Eligible parents can also take extended funding up to the 30 hours per week that Buttercups operates. These places will be awarded on a first come first served basis subject to availability and ratios.

Session Time	Session Title	Charging Structure
08:30 – 09:00	Early Start	Funded hours
09:00 – 12:00	Morning	Funded hours
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch	Funded hours
12:30 – 15:30	Afternoon (Monday, Tuesday, Friday)	Funded hours

Parents can determine the hours children attend but are restricted to the session times set out above.

Any hours attended over and above the 15 universal per week will be charged at £6.50 per hour.

The half an hour lunch session can be added to either the morning or afternoon session to form part of the funded hours.

There are no charges for meals or snacks.

Families must provide a packed lunch for their child attending during lunch and a morning and/or afternoon snack depending on your child's session.

If parents wish to use more than one provider, then universal and working parent entitlement funded hours can be split according to their preference so that they receive their full 15/30 funded hours and can also take advantage of additional hours at £6.50 per hour.

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 meals, consumables, additional hours or additional services.

### Recommended Hours

The Local Authority will recommend a maximum number of hours that can be claimed for a child.

This recommendation will depend on the child's date of birth (cycle of eligibility) and whether the entitlement is taken term time only or is stretched. The actual number of hours to claim will be based on the child's pattern of attendance.

Any hours that exceed these hours will be charged at our hourly rate of £6.50.

2-Year-Old & Universal Entitlement	Extended Offer Entitlement
<b>Term Time Only:</b> 15 hours per week x 38 weeks= 570 hours	<b>Term Time Only:</b> 30 hours per week x 38 weeks= 1140 hours

Funded hours will begin on the first contracted day of the week, and you will then be charged for any additional hours on your last contracted day of the week.

For example.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
6.5hours Funded	6.5 hours funded	2 hours funded. 1.5 hours paid	3.5 hours Paid	

Total of 15 hours received, and 5 hours paid per week.

Where we are closed through low staff levels, elections or bank holidays if the day falls on a day that's fully funded the funding will not be claimed for on that day, if it's a day where you pay for the hours you will be refunded in full by deducting the hours from your following months invoice.

### Additional charges:

- Will only be made for hours exceeding the funded hours per week (£6.50 per hour)
- There will be no top up fees to augment the rate received from the Local Authority
- There will no charges for consumables
- There will be no charges for public holidays or days when the Pre-school is shut e.g., when the hall is used as a voting station.
- Charges for additional services such as trips will be agreed in advance with families.
- Deposits and registration fees will not be charged.

The free entitlements will be delivered consistently so that all children accessing any of the free entitlements will receive the same quality and access to provision, regardless of whether they opt to pay for optional hours.

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 arrangement (contract) is formalised

### Fee Rate

The fee rate will be reviewed by the committee in May each year. The new rate will come into effect the following term. 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 Sue Fuller the setting manager or Christine Fletcher the setting deputy manager.

## **Fee Payment Procedures**

All fees are payable monthly in advance and invoices will be sent out on the first working day of the month. Invoices are due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Weekly payments are accepted in agreement with the committee.

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

A nil balance must show on account by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. If this is not the case and a payment plan is not in place your account will be classed as overdue.

Payment can be by cash, cheque, childcare vouchers, bank transfer, or tax-free childcare. Payments are to be handed to the pre-school treasurer or committee chairperson.

## **Absence**

Fees continue to be payable if your child is absent for any reason including illness or holidays taken in term-time.

## **Late Collection –**

This fee will be charged when children are not collected on time at the end of their session. The hourly rate of £6.50 will be charged for each 15 minutes past the child's end of session time.

## **Non-Payment of Fees**

If you are finding it difficult to pay your fees for whatever reason, it is important that you talk to a member of staff as soon as you can. It may be possible to arrange a fee payment plan or a reduction in the number of sessions your child attends.

If you have used the services provided by the Pre-school without payment by the due date, or your payment has been dishonoured, the Pre-school will follow the following staged procedure:

1. An 'overdue account' notification will be issued asking for payment in full within 24 hours. If the arrears are paid or a payment plan agreed within this period, no further action will be taken.
2. If fees remain unpaid and a payment plan has not been agreed, a 'second warning' email will be issued asking for immediate payment of the arrears together with a £5 administration fee. If the arrears are paid within 24 hours or a payment plan agreed within this period, no further action will be taken, and your child can continue to attend the Pre-school.
3. If fees remain unpaid and a payment plan has not been agreed, a 'final warning letter' will be issued with the addition of a further £5 administration fee. This letter will ask for full payment within 5 working days otherwise your child's place may be suspended. If the arrears are paid or a payment plan agreed within this period, no further action will be taken, and your child can continue to attend the Pre-school.
4. If fees remain unpaid and a payment plan has not been agreed, a letter will be sent informing you that your child's place at pre school has been suspended for one week. Fees

will continue to accrue during the period of suspension. If the arrears are paid or a payment plan agreed within this period, no further action will be taken, and your child can return to the pre-school.

5. If fees remain unpaid and a payment plan has not been agreed, a letter will be sent informing you that your child's place at the Pre-school has been withdrawn.
6. If following the withdrawal of a place the outstanding fees are not paid within 5 working days, then court proceedings will be commenced.

<b>Invoice</b>	<b>Overdue Account Email</b>	<b>Second Warning Email</b>	<b>Final Warning Letter</b>	<b>Notification of Suspension Letter</b>	<b>Withdrawal of Place</b>
To be paid by the 20 <sup>th</sup> of the month.	If invoice not paid by due date	If no response within 24 hours of date of overdue account letter	If no response within 24 hours of second warning letter	If no response within 5 working days of date of final warning letter	If no payment within 5 working days court proceedings will commence

If your invoice is not paid by the 20<sup>th</sup> month for 2 consecutive months an automatic £5 admin charge will be applied and the overdue account procedure will begin

### **Notice**

The number of sessions that your child attends will be agreed half termly. Alteration to these agreed sessions outside of this timescale will be made in exceptional circumstances only.

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 4 weeks' notice in writing to Sue Fuller the setting 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 arrangement.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Buttercups Pre-school

Held on

19/04/2024

Date to be reviewed

April 2025

Signed on behalf of the Management

Committee

Name of signatory

Joanne Reed

Role of signatory (e.g. Chair)

Chairperson

Staff/Committee Member	Date read	Signature
Sue Fuller		
Christine Fletcher		
Sarah Jacob		
Charlotte Chilvers		
Ruby Kilvington		