

9.1 Finance - Fees Policy

The Lloyd Park Children's Charity makes charges for the provisions of childcare, "Fees" in line with the Charity's "Fee Structure" which is reviewed by the Charity's Board of Trustees on an annual basis.

It is important that all users understand the necessity of these charges and the importance of their payment to protect the Charity's sustainability and to enable us to provide quality childcare.

Registration Fee

This is payable by the parent/carer when applying to the Charity for the provision of care. This charge is reviewed annually by the Charity's Board of Trustees and is advertised on the Charity's Fee Structure. This charge provides for the administration of the Centre's Waiting List and offer of places. The Registration Fee is not a guarantee of a place and is non-refundable.

A Registration Fee is not applicable to those registering their child for the Term Time Free Early Education Entitlement Sessions.

New Starter Letter

Once an offer of a place has been made by the Centre Manager the Finance Team will raise a New Starter Letter detailing the following:

- Roll Number - Specific Number Allocated to the child
- Start Date - When care is to start
- Contract Type - Whether an All Year or Term Time Contract
(Please note the Charity does not offer Term Time Daycare Contracts)
- Attendance - Details of Days/Session to be attended
- Fees - Charges to be applied
- Deposit - Deposit Payable/Due

Deposit for Daycare/Breakfast & Tea Time Contract's

A deposit of four times the child's weekly fee is payable, and held in a separate account to that of the child's Fees Account.

One week's fee is payable within seven days of the date of the New Starter Letter. The remaining three weeks can be paid in full prior to the start date or by way of three-monthly instalments. The date of each instalment is contained within the New Starter Letter. **Failure to adhere to the dates stipulated will result in the immediate request to pay the balance in full.**

Payment must be made into the Centre's Bank Account using the child's Roll Number followed by "DEPOSIT". If using the Government Tax Free Childcare Scheme to pay the deposit the Finance Team must be advised of the child's TFC Payment Reference and if paying in instalments must be advised via email when each payment is made to ensure correct allocation to child's deposit and not fees account.

Parents/carers may give notice in writing during the pre-start period that they do not wish to take up the allocated place once it has been accepted. However, in such cases one week's fees shall be forfeited from the deposit paid.

If during the contract a change in the child's attendance occurs, the Finance Team will review the Deposit and advise of any reduction or increase required. Any reduction will be transferred to the child's Fees Account but any increase must be paid to the Centre by the start date of the change of attendance.

Upon receipt of the correct notice to end the child's Contract the deposit will be transferred to the child's fee's account, if there's an outstanding balance, it will be reimbursed to the parent/carer.

Fees

All Fees must be paid in advance whether this be monthly, termly, or annually

All Year Contracts

Fees are detailed in the New Starter Letter. The Average Monthly Fee is the weekly fee x **50** weeks / 12 equal monthly instalments. The Average Monthly Fee is given as this allows for monthly budgeting and relieving the need to change Standing Orders, Vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare payments each month.

Fees are chargeable for all days included in your contract, to include:

- **Child Sickness**
- **Child Holidays**
- **Bank Holidays**
- **Training Days**

Christmas closure will not be charged as the centres are closed.
Any Emergency closure charges will be notified.

It is important that parents/carers are aware that the Charity's Nursery Management System charges for actual days attended in the month and this may vary from the Average Monthly Fee due to the different total number of days each month.

The Finance Team will issue an invoice detailing actual fees to be charged.

Parent/carers have a choice in how they pay:

- Pay the average monthly fee or
- Pay the actual invoice amount emailed to you.

Term Time Contracts

Fees are advised in the New Starter Letter. As stated above all fees must be paid in advance.

Change in Contract

If an agreed change occurs to the child's Contract the Finance Team will issue a "Finance Change to Fees Form" advising of the new Fees & Deposit required.

Holiday Club

To book holiday club contact reception for information or book online at www.tlpcc.org.uk. All days booked must be paid for in advance of attendance. Until payment is received booking cannot be confirmed.

Extra Sessions Outside of Contracted Hours

Contracted Hours are the hours of attendance that were agreed and listed in your Childcare Contract. Requests for attendance over and above these hours are Extra Sessions, they do not form part of this Contract and are charged in addition as per the Charity's Fees Structure. Please note that requests for Extra Sessions are not guaranteed and are dependent upon availability.

Free Early Education Entitlement 15hrs/30hrs

The Free Early Education Entitlement is for either 15hrs or 30hrs per week, based on thirty-eight weeks per year (school year). The number of hours claimed per week is based on the child's attendance and type of Contract. The total hours of entitlement per month are deducted from the total hours attended and the balance known as "Chargeable Hours" are those hours to be charged at the Fee Structure hourly rate.

Prior to your child's eligibility of the FEEE, the centre will contact you to confirm the number of hours of entitlement, FEEE Funding Code (For either 30hrs or 2yr old funding), parent/carer Date of Birth & National Insurance Number. When this is received the Finance Team will provide:

- FEEE Letter,
- FEEE Weekly Breakdown,
- LBWF Parental Declaration Form detailing the entitlement and charges to be applied.

Additional Service Charge

The additional service charge is applied to children who are eligible for the FEEE. The Government states that this funding is intended to cover the cost to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare, during the school year (38 weeks per year). It is not intended to cover the cost of meals, snacks, consumables, additional hours, or additional services. Parents should therefore expect to pay for these, although the service charge is voluntary.

Without this additional charge our services are not sustainable, as the FEEE does not cover the cost of running childcare provision.

In each of our settings we have a limited number of places that are offered free to families who are unable or unwilling to pay for meals, snacks, and consumables. These places are administered through a waiting list following our waiting list criteria. Please speak to the reception team if you would like to join the waiting list for this service.

Where parents are already accessing a childcare place, and find they are unable to pay, they can join the waiting list for the free places, or alternatively we have a limited discretionary fund to support families in need. Please speak to your centre manager and they can apply to this fund on your behalf, but this is not guaranteed.

Discounts

Discounts are applied to a child's fees in accordance with the Charity's Fees Structure.

Discount for those children in receipt of the Free Early Education Entitlement is only applied to the Chargeable Hours purchased is it not applied to the Additional Service Charge.

Late Collection Charge

Failure to collect your child/ren at the end of your allocated session time may lead to an Additional Penalty Charge. Current rates are:

- £20.00 up to and including the first fifteen-minute period
- £20.00 each subsequent fifteen minute or part period

Failure to make payment within seven days may result in the charge being added to your child's account. In the event of continuous lateness, a meeting will be requested with the Centre Manager and the parent/carer to discuss a resolution as it is unacceptable for the Charity's staff members to be repeatedly required to stay late and for the Charity to be expected to absorb the associated cost.

Fees are reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers as soon as possible.

Payment

The Charity accepts numerous methods of payments:

- BACS
- Standing Order
- Childcare Voucher
- Government Tax Free Childcare Scheme
- Salary Sacrifice – Charity Staff Members

All payments should state the child's Roll Number or Tax-Free Childcare Number to ensure the correct allocation of payment. Failure to do so may result in the delay of payment being allocated to your child's account.

A record of all fees due and payments received will be maintained for each child on the Charity's Nursery Management System. Payments will be downloaded from the Centre's Bank Account and uploaded to the Nursery Management System by the 15th day of the following month. For example, a payment made in January will be uploaded to system by 15th February.

Statement of Account

Immediately following the uploading and allocation of payments a Statement of Account will be emailed. The statement shall show the Deposit Held, Monthly Charges, FEEE Hours (If applicable), Payments made and Balance of Account.

Account Arrears

It is extremely important that the Charity does not place families in a position of financial difficulty. The Charity will work with any parent/carer who is experiencing financial difficulties but it is incumbent upon them to contact the Charity immediately to discuss a resolution in the terms of payment and or a "Payment Plan" which if chosen, must be adhered to as failure to do so could result in the immediate loss of the allocated place. During the time of arrears and dependent upon the sum of arrears no requests for additional days or increased attendance can be accommodated. Such requests will only be considered/reviewed upon the payment of the outstanding monies or upon the significant reduction in the arrears if a "Payment Plan" is in place and is at the Centre and Finance Managers consent.

Procedure for Un-paid Fees

- A missed payment will be discussed in confidence with the parent/carer and a verbal contract will be made with regard to the outstanding fees and agreement made as to how these fees will be paid. This will be acknowledged by a formal letter. If the payment is not paid in full following this, a further formal notification will be provided to the parent/carer and a meeting arranged to discuss the issue further.
- If the payment is not received in full within four full weeks of this meeting steps will be taken to recover the outstanding amount and the child's place will be suspended until the payment is received in full, unless otherwise agreed.
- All outstanding fees are subject to the loss of any discounts given and a penalty charge of 10% of the total outstanding debt will be added on a weekly basis
- If the arrears remain unpaid despite the steps above being followed the charity will make a claim to the "Small Claims Court" for reimbursement of any arrears plus any additional costs of our nominated Debt Collection Agency.
- A statement will be issued for all arrears over £500.00. If this is not paid a month after a statement has been issued, the Charity will have no option but to hand the debt to a Debt Collection Agency.

Notice to End Contract

In line with the Terms & Conditions of contracts, the Charity requires a minimum of four full weeks written notice and the completion of a "Notice to End Contract Form" to end the provision. Upon receipt of this notice the Finance Team will issue an "End of Contract Statement" providing a balance of the account to the last day of attendance including the transfer of deposit held. Should the required minimum four weeks written notice not be received the deposit will be held in lieu of outstanding fees and any subsequent deposit after all fees accounted for will be forfeited. Please be aware that until written notice is received with an end date fees are payable as the childcare place is still allocated to the child concerned.

Once we receive a notice to terminate a contract, and an "End of Contract Statement" has been issued any further payments received over and above any monies requested will be subject to an Administration Charge as follows:

- Childcare Vouchers - 20% of the total of each Voucher received
- Tax Free Childcare - 20% of the total of each TFC Payment received
- Standing Order - 10% of the total of each Standing Order received

Any overpayments on the account other than those that are attributed to the Governments Tax Free Childcare scheme will be returned to the parents/carers bank account eight weeks from the end date of the contract. Overpaid accounts using the Tax-Free Childcare Scheme in line with HMRC Procedures will be returned to the child's Tax-Free Childcare Account. The parent/carer must provide the child's Tax Free Childcare Account reference number usually beginning "1100" to enable us to process the refund.

Policy Name	Fees Policy
Version Number	V3
This policy was developed by	Governance and Accountability Sub Group
These people were consulted/ involved in developing the policy	Finance Department
This Policy was adopted by	Trustee Board
Date	September 2023
Signed	
Name	Bisi Oyekanmi
Role	Chairperson
Next Review Date	September 2024 – extended to Nov 24