

<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Funding</b>
<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>April 2017</b>
<b>Author / Owner</b>	<b>Hagbourne Pre-School</b>

#### **Aim**

- To ensure the financial stability of Hagbourne Pre-school by establishing a system for the collection of fees from parents/guardians.
- To ensure that parents/guardians understand the billing process and the sources of funding available to them.
- To recognise that if on occasions families have financial difficulties there should be a procedure in place to help them meet their obligations in a way appropriate to their means.
- To ensure that late payers are aware of the sanctions Pre-school will impose.
- To ensure that the work of the voluntary committee members involved in this process is clearly defined and as manageable as possible.

#### **Method**

##### 'Unfunded hours' & Fees:

'Unfunded hours' are the hours that a child attends Pre-school where the parents/guardians pay a fee for their attendance. The Pre-school uses two fee rates: A higher rate for unfunded 2yr olds and a lower rate for unfunded 3-4yr olds. These rates are in line with government recommendations and are found on our Admissions Letter.

The lower rate applies the half term after a child turns 3:

- If a child turns 3 in the holidays, then the lower rate will apply the following half term.
- If however, the child's birthday is in term time, even day 1 or 2 of a new half term, then the 2yr old rate continues to apply until the end of that half term.
- If the first day of a new term is a Bank holiday, this counts as holiday.

Hagbourne Pre-Schools offers a discretionary 15% discount to families where siblings are both in attendance. The younger sibling will receive a 15% discount on their bill until the older sibling moves up to reception or leaves the setting.

##### Childcare Vouchers

Parents may be eligible for childcare vouchers via their employer. Childcare voucher schemes enable working parents to be paid part of their salary in childcare vouchers; this is not subject to tax and therefore offers parents an annual saving on the cost of their childcare. Different employers use different childcare voucher providers who then pay Pre-School directly on behalf of the parents. Parents should discuss with their employers and contact the Administrator to confirm set-up.

##### 'Funded hours' & Sources of Funding:

'Funded hours' are the hours that a child attends Pre-school where Oxfordshire County Council pays for their attendance.

Below is a summary of the key Sources of Funding parents/guardians may be able to access. Parents/guardians should speak to a member of staff or the committee if they are unsure of their eligibility or the process for claiming.

### 15 Hours Funding

The government offers a non-means tested 15 hours of funded childcare for all children from the start of the first full term after they turn 3:

Child turns 3 during:	Child is eligible for funding
1 Apr – 31 Aug	start of Sept term
1 Sep – 31 Dec	start of Jan term
1 Jan – 31 Mar	start of Apr term

Pre-school will issue parents/guardians with a funding form to complete at the start of the term their child becomes eligible for this funding; this should be completed and returned promptly for the Administrator to register with Oxfordshire County Council.

### 30 Hours Funding & Tax-free Childcare

Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare are two separate government schemes, to help parents with the cost of childcare. You can apply for both through one online application - the childcare service: <https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/>

To qualify for either scheme, parents must be working and each earning at least £120 a week (on average) and not more than £100,000 each a year.

Parents can use Tax-Free Childcare alongside the 15 and 30 hours free childcare schemes in England, or any free childcare hours provided by the Scottish, Welsh or Northern Ireland governments.

Parents can't use Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as they receive childcare vouchers, Universal Credit or tax credits. However, 30 hours free childcare can be received alongside these schemes.

### 2yr old Funding

Eligible families will receive a postcard from Oxfordshire County Council with a code which they pass to the Pre-school. The postcard has an expiry date on it and the code must be passed to Pre-School before this date. The Administrator will complete the funding registration using the information contained on the postcard.

There is an assisted application process for families who have not received a postcard but believe they may be eligible, which the Pre-school can complete on their behalf.

### Procedure for Payment of Fees/Billing

- The Billing Administrator will calculate fees due for each child using the register, which is maintained by the admin. This register records which sessions each child is due to attend for the coming half term.
- The Billing Administrator generates invoices via the preschool's accounting software, Quickbooks. The invoices are sent by email from Quickbooks.
- Invoices will be emailed two weeks before the first day of each half term.
- Payment is due within fourteen days of the invoice issue date.
- Payment by bank transfer is preferred: Payment information is on the invoice; bank transfers must clearly indicate the full name of the child payment relates to.
- Where bank transfers are not possible please speak to the treasurer and billings administrator to arrange an alternative payment method.
- The Administrator and Treasurer check the bank account for payment and match to the appropriate invoices.
- Under special circumstances, alternative payment plans may be agreed and should be discussed with the Treasurer and brought to the committee for approval.
- Please note any requests from parents/guardians to change a child's total number of weekly hours are subject to half a term's notice.

### Procedure for Non Payment of Fees

- The Billings administrator emails a reminder 7 days before the due date to all parents/guardians who have not paid their invoice.
- This reminder will clearly state the penalties for non payment of fees.



- If a parent is unable to make the payment they must contact the Billings Administrator. Payment plans may be arranged where appropriate or a late payment date agreed in exceptional circumstances.

#### Penalties for Non Payment of Fees

The following penalties will be actioned whenever bills have not been paid by the due date and after all the steps listed above have been carried out:

- Funded children who also attend paid sessions may only attend funded sessions until the invoice is paid in full.
- Unfunded children may not attend any sessions until the invoice has been paid in full.
- Any bank charges incurred by bounced cheques will be passed on to the parent/guardian on the next invoice.

#### Additional notes

There will be no charge for Village Hall closure days i.e. bank holidays and polling days. Pre-school fees still apply where there is emergency closure, any waiver of these fees is at the discretion of the management committee

This policy was reviewed and updated (where required) on 08/01/2022 (date)

Reviewed/updated by Dominique McCann (Chairperson)

Reviewed/Updated by \_\_\_\_\_ (Manager)

Reviewed/Updated by Julie Higgins (Deputy Manager)