

## Fees and Charging Policy

Little Oaks is a not-for-profit charity, we aim to make our Pre-school and Play Group as accessible to as many families in the community as possible, as part of this we try to ensure our fees are not above market value and represent value for money.

We rely on prompt fee payments to be able to meet our running costs and to provide equipment and resources for the children who attend. This policy adheres to the Provider Agreement (Delivering Early Education and Childcare Funded Provision for 2, 3 and 4 year olds 1 September 2021 - 31 August 2024) from West Northamptonshire Council.

### Summary of Fees & Charges:

- Sessions:
  - 9am-12pm
  - 12pm-3pm
 £15.00 per 3-hour session
- Breakfast Club:
  - 8am - 9am
 £5.00 a session
- After School Club (1hr):
  - 3pm - 4pm
 £5.00 per session
- After School Club (2 ½ hrs):
  - 3pm - 5.30pm
 £12.00 per session
- Play Group Registration Fee:
  - child
 £25.00 for formally registering a child eligible for Early Years Funding. This fee is not refundable unless Little Oaks is unable to offer a place for your child or your child is eligible for Early Years Funding when joining.
- Continuous Late pick-up fee:
  -
 £50.00

### Registration Payments

- If registering by email or post on or after the Registration date the fee should be paid by BACS, cash or card, due immediately or by agreeing to complete a Direct Debit mandate.

### Payment Procedure:

- All parents/carers will receive an invoice by the beginning of the first week of each half term. This will be sent out via email. Please inform the office if you want to receive a paper copy of your invoice.
- Fees are to be paid in full during the first week of term OR paid weekly. If paying weekly, payment is due on the Monday for the coming week.

- Payment for all fees can be made via our preferred method of BACS for the exact full weekly payment (i.e. weekly or fortnightly, not part weeks), childcare vouchers, Tax-Free Childcare or card. Little Oaks also facilitates payment via Direct Debit should you choose to complete a mandate. If you have set up a mandate to collect fees via Direct Debit, please inform the Office if you decide to change your method of payment i.e. if you have a Tax-Free Childcare account, in order to avoid duplicate charges being made. If for any reason a Direct Debit payment fails, Little Oaks will try to take the payment a second time. If this further attempt fails, we will contact you to seek alternative payment which will be due immediately.
  - If paying using childcare vouchers it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Office.
  - If you choose to pay using the 'Tax Free Childcare' scheme, please let us know the ID reference number so that we can identify payments.
  - All invoiced fees are payable **regardless of attendance** from the start date indicated at enrolment. Fees are still due for sessions missed due to sickness or holiday or if a child's place is deferred for longer than half a term without notice being given (please see our Admissions Policy). This applies to Playgroup and Pre-school sessions, pre-booked Breakfast and After School Club sessions.
  - We do not accommodate any swapping of sessions for any reason during the week. If your child is unable to attend a session and you would like to book them in for a different session in the same week, this will be chargeable as an ad hoc booking.
  - Bank Transfer is our preferred method of payment:
  - **Bank Account No: 18250160**
  - **Sort Code: 30-11-08**
- Please quote your child's name and what is being paid as reference.  
(For example, John Smith - Registration)

### Closure of Setting:

Should the setting need to close due to reasons beyond our control (e.g. water/sewerage, heating failure, flood, staff sickness) or adverse weather conditions (e.g. snow and ice), fees will not be refunded for the first 2 days of closure, thereafter paid fees will be credited against future sessions.

### Notice Period and Conditions:

Cancellation of a REGULAR Breakfast Club, Session or After School Club place will require half a term's notice (6 weeks).

Permanent, regular bookings will be charged in full if the notice is not given.

If Breakfast or After School Club is ever seen as a non-viable service, Little Oaks reserves the right to give parents a six-week notice period of the service being cancelled.

### **Charges for visits and shortened sessions:**

We encourage parents to visit with their child prior to the child starting with us. There are occasions when a child's keyperson may suggest shortened sessions when a child first starts. In these circumstances, the following charging policy will apply:

- For the initial settling in session where the parents or carers are requested to stay, there will be no charge. Further settling in sessions at the request of the parent will be charged at the hourly rate of £5.00
- For shortened sessions, full session fees still will be charged at the rate of £15.00 per session. Shortened sessions are at the discretion of the child's keyperson.

### **Late Collection:**

Continuous late collection of your child will incur a charge as per our Late Collection Policy.

### **Voluntary Healthy Snack and Cooking Contribution**

We ask for a voluntary contribution of £10.00 per child per half term towards the cost of healthy snacks and cooking ingredients from all children in receipt of free entitlement to Early Education and Childcare i.e. 3-4 year old funding.

Information will be sent to parents/carers via email. We prefer not to accept payment for Healthy Snack and Cooking via the Tax-Free Childcare scheme or company childcare vouchers as we would be unable to claim Gift Aid on your contributions. Payment can be made via cash, card, BACS or Direct Debit.

### **Non-Payment of fees:**

- Parents and carers are responsible to pay the invoices issued by Little Oaks, the setting will issue a maximum of 2 reminders.
- If a child is absent for more than 5 days due to a pre-arranged operation or hospitalisation, arrangements should be made **PRIOR** to the absence with the Office
- If after 2 requests the outstanding balance has not been paid, we will advise the parent/carer that the child will no longer be able to attend their sessions until the balance has been settled.

### **Cancellation of child leaving Little Oaks Pre-school:**

- Half a terms' written notice is required if a child is to leave Little Oaks.
- If notice is not received, then half a term's fees will be charged in lieu of notice.
- If a child who is in receipt of funding leaves after headcount day, then we do not transfer the funding to their new setting.
- If a child who is in receipt of funding joins Little Oaks after headcount-day, then we will not request a transfer of funding from the previous setting.

## Funding

We are registered to provide the free entitlement to Early Education and Childcare and will meet our statutory obligations in this respect. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/get-help-paying-childcare>

For parents who receive government funding (either the 2-year old funding or when the child receives 3-year old funding) we will require documents to prove your child's date of birth and a utility bill to prove where they live. A Parent/Carer Contract will need to be completed showing the amount of hours due to attend and this will be updated and require a signature at each funding block (i.e. each term).

We are registered to provide funding for 30 hours but this is dependent on the availability of sessions at the time of the eligibility being confirmed. In line with the 3-year funding, there is a deadline for applying for this each term i.e. 31<sup>st</sup> December (for a January start) and 31<sup>st</sup> March (for an April start). It is the **responsibility of the parents** to re-check their eligibility every three months otherwise it could result in payment of fees or the child losing their place at Little Oaks.

## Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Children who meet certain eligibility criteria could be eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). The Early Years Pupil Premium is additional funding available for investment in improving outcomes for children. Children will be eligible if they are 3 or 4 years old and receiving Government funded Free Entitlement in any OFSTED registered childcare provider and their parents are in receipt of one or more benefits used to access eligibility for free school meals.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/get-help-paying-childcare/early-years-pupil-premium>

Parent details captured on the Parent/Carer Contract will be used by the setting to find out eligibility and access this funding. Once eligibility has been confirmed by West Northamptonshire Council, any voluntary contributions asked from parents - including snack, cooking, visits and outings, will be covered by the EYPP payment. If required, this payment can also cover one lunch club a week, depending on availability, for the child attending Little Oaks.

## Other related Policies:

- Admissions
- Healthy Eating Policy

This policy was adopted at a committee meeting of Little Oaks held on.....

Signed on behalf of the committee.....

Role in the committee.....

**Update History**

Reviewed and updated November 23 in line with new procedures, Reviewed June 2024