Funding and Fees Policy

Little Elms Pre-school is a registered charity. It is not a profit-making organisation and relies on fees, voucher income and occasional grants for its day-to-day running costs. These costs are considerable and prompt payment of fees is essential to ensure that overheads can be met.

Late payment of Pre-school fees is detrimental both to Pre-school and the services we are able to provide. This policy is intended to minimise arrears to Pre-school and facilitate the recovery of outstanding fee payments, whilst at the same time respecting true cases of financial hardship.

Nursery Education Funding

Little Elms Pre-School offer free early education places to eligible children aged two, three and four years of age. Children become entitled to 15 hours per week of Nursery Education Funding over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year the term following their second or third birthday in accordance with the table below.

Eligible children who are aged 2 or 3 between:	**Will have a free place from the following:**
1st April and 31st August	1st September following either their 2nd or 3rdbirthday
1st September and 31stDecember	1st January following either their 2nd or 3rd birthday
1st January and 31st March	1st April following either their 2nd or 3rd birthday

30 HOUR FUNDED PLACES ARE AVAILABLE FOR ELIGIBLE 2 AND 3 YEAR OLDS

When your child turns 3	**When they can get 30 hours from**	**Recommended time to apply**
1 September to 31 December	1 January	15 October to 30 November

When your child turns 3	When they can get 30 hours from	Recommended time to apply
1 January to 31 March	1 April	15 January to 28 February
1 April to 31 August	1 September	15 June to 31 July

You can apply outside of these recommended dates but you might not receive your code in time.

You must have a valid code by the end of the month before a new term starts.

You have to reconfirm your eligibility every 3 months. If you apply more than 3 months before the term starts, you'll have to reconfirm your eligibility in your account in order to keep your code valid.

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours funding the term after their 3rd Birthday. Little Elms will continue to offer this 15 universal hours during usual Pre-school time (8.45-3.15pm) the additional 15 hours which is known as your extended entitlement will also only be available during these times but should you wish to use all 15 or 30 hours during session times you would need to pay for lunch club.

Stretch Funding

What is Our stretched offer?

Free Early Education Entitlement is government funding available for 15 hours (or an additional 15 hours if extended) over 38 weeks of the year for eligible children. This potentially leaves 14 weeks where parents / carers will not receive any funding if their child attends a childcare provider for more than 38 weeks of the year. The Government's guidance allows childcare providers to offer stretched hours, although this is not mandatory and is a private business decision for the provider. Parents / carers can receive funding all year round including holidays if they want, by spreading their hours plus extended hours if applicable over the number of weeks their child attends in that term.

Stretched hours are usually utilised by parents / carers when your child attends a setting all year round, allowing you to use less of your funded hours over more weeks. Stretching your hours allows for your Free Early Education Entitlement hours as well as any additional costs that may incur to be spread in equal payments over the number of weeks their child attends, meaning parents / carers aren't hit with large bills in holidays.

Another option is to use some funded hours in the term time and what hours you have left you can use for Holidays. We would need to know your predicted hours for the holidays as we can only submit the claim at the start of the term.

Any hours the child then attends outside of or over their funded hours is then charged for.

We offer the stretch funding on a termly basis and your total funded hours need to be used in that current term, they cannot be carried over.

Our Options for funded sessions are as follows:

-Am session - 3 hours 8:45-11:45
-Am and lunch session -3.5 hours 8:45 - 12:15
-Lunch and Pm session -3.5 hours 11:45 - 3:15
-Pm session 3 hours- 12:15 - 3:15
-Am, lunch and Pm session -6 hours 8:45 – 2:45
-Am, lunch and Pm session -6.5 hours 8:45 - 3:15 (If you would like until 3:15 but don't have the funded hours left to cover it you will be charged the last half an hour at £3.50)

Their entitlement continues until either the end of the term in which they become five years old or until they start school.

- *2 year old NEF – to find out if you are eligible for funding please speak to your local Children's Centre. Little Elms Pre-School accept children from aged 2 years.*
- *3 & 4 year old NEF funding – all 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to funding as detailed above.*
- Fees are charged for children attending sessions which are not covered by Nursery Education Funding

Types of Fees

1. **Session Fees:** A fee is chargeable per session for all children that are not eligible for funding or for children who have exceeded their funding entitlement.

The fees are agreed by the Pre-School Committee and advance notice of not less than one half-term period is given for any increase.

Our session fees are as follows:

Breakfast Club (07.45 to 08.45) £5.50
Morning (08.45 to 11.45) £21.00
Afternoon (12.15 to 15.15) £21.00
After School (15.00 to 18.00) £6.00 per hour and then increments of 15 minutes over an hour (for example 5.10pm will be charged to 5.15pm).
Lunch Club- £3.25

Snack Fee *75p per session (This is a voluntary charge, please let management know if you do not wish to pay for this)*
Lunch Club (11:45-12:15) £3.25

2. **Regular sessions** - An invoice will be issued at the start of each Month and should be paid within 7 days of the issue date. **You will be charged for all regular sessions booked over the invoiced Month. You will still be charged even if notice is provided, as your child's place is secured for this period. If any permanent changes are made within this time, this will be shown in the next invoicing period.**

3. **One off sessions** – (These are sessions that are not a regular booking but booked on a one off basis).

4. A late collection fee of £5 per 5 minutes will be charged if your child is collected past the time they are booked in for.

Payment of Fees

We can receive payment by electronic bank transfer, cash or childcare vouchers or by card.

Please note Little Elms no longer accept payment by cheque. Please pay directly to our account or by voucher schemes or by cash or card.

Fees paid by CASH, must be given to a senior member of staff, recorded in cash book and signed by both parties to confirm receipt of payment,
or placed in the cash box on the wall in the office.

Alternatively, parents may choose to pay fees directly into our bank account. The details of which are:

Lloyds Bank Plc Account number: 00271107 Sort Code: 30-91-49

Parents are requested to use their child's name as reference for any payments made in this way.

A receipt for fees paid will be emailed to you.

If parents have any difficulty at all paying fees, it is essential that parents tell us straight away. We are always happy to discuss the possibility of alternative arrangements.

In relation to payments for breakfast, additional paid for care, full payment of invoices is due 7 days after the invoice is issued.
Payment methods are detailed in each invoice.
A record of payments due and received is maintained in the Preschools' nursery management software system, Kinder soft.
Non-payment will be followed up by issuing reminders as follows:

On payment due date – Invoice Issued Via Kinder soft
1 week from date payment due -Reminder Email Sent
2 weeks from date payment due – Reminder by Written Letter
3 weeks from Date Payment Due- Reminder by written letter
One month from date payment due- Final Reminder Written Letter

We reserve the right to suspend provision of paid for services if payment has not been received, or a satisfactory payment schedule agreed, after discussion with Management. At this point, the only care that will be provided will be government funded hours.
The final reminder is given by hand to the parent and threatens legal action if the account is not settled within 14 days.
After four months, where a debt is still outstanding, legal action will be considered and the debtor will be informed of this in writing.

Refunds

1. Refunds will not be made for absence through illness, holiday or other, apart from in exceptional circumstances (at the discretion of the Pre-School Management).
2. Refunds will not be made if Pre-School closes a planned session due to adverse weather conditions or other extreme circumstances.
3. Refunds will not be made where a child leaves or reduces their weekly sessions after the initial invoice has been issued.
4. Refunds will not be given for ad-hoc sessions cancelled.

If you have any queries or issues with this policy, please speak to Katie or Nelly otherwise you are accepting to agree and apply to these terms.

Reviewed by Samantha Willers and Katie Moss
Date: 05/05/2026