

9.2 Poplar Pre-School Financial (inc. Fees and Funding) Policy

Policy Statement & Aims

- Our admissions and funding policy seeks to comply with the Local Conditions of Funding and the Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on the Delivery of Free Early Education for 2, 3 & 4 years old.
- The ethos of Poplar Preschool is to enhance the development and education of all children at our setting and provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment.
- We aim to ensure that all of our local community have access to the preschool through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.
- This policy will be reviewed annually. It will also be revised following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedure.

Funded Children; 3-4 Years Old

There are 2 types of government funding available

1. **Universal** - All children aged 3 and above are currently entitled to a maximum of 15 hours of funded childcare per week which can be split over a maximum of 2 settings, irrespective of the parents' working status.
 2. **Working Parent Entitlement** - Eligible parents may also be able to claim an additional 15 hours up to a total of 30 hours of funding per week.
- 15/30 hours funding is claimed from KCC based on the hours which Poplar Preschool can offer.
 - There is no guarantee that your child will be able to have the full entitlement of hours at Poplar Preschool as the hours which your child is offered is dependent on the level of children already attending at that time.
 - 15 hours/30 hours funding is claimed for a total of 38 weeks which covers the academic year and takes into account bank holidays and normal school holidays. In the event that a bank holiday is not able to be added to the school calendar, we will offer an alternative session within a specified period and subject to availability.
 - 15 hours/30 hours funding is available for your child at 3 points in the year (Term 1 - September, Term 3 – January and Term 5 – After Easter) and is only available to claim in the term following your child's 3rd birthday. Funding can only be claimed at each of these 3 points per year and cannot be amended between terms.
 - KCC will not allow or facilitate any amendments, unless there are extreme mitigating circumstances so should a parent wish to increase their child's hours midterm any additional costs for extra hours above the funding claimed will be due at the Preschool fee-paying rates.

- In the event a parent wishes to reduce their claimed funded hours, then transfer of funding to an alternative setting will only be considered if the correct notice period has been given and under exceptional circumstances. This will be reviewed by the manager on a case-by-case basis. Refunds of funding cannot be issued direct to parents.
- Funding is 15 hours or a maximum of 30 hours per week and follows Monday to Friday and does not roll over to the following week.
- In the event of closures due to exceptional circumstances, parents are offered the opportunity to take their missed hours at an additional point within the same academic year. Some parents who claim their full funding with Poplar Preschool may be unable to have full use of their hours in these circumstances.

Funded Children; 2 Years Old

There are 2 types of government funding available

1. **Early Learning for 2 year Olds (formally Free for 2 (FF2) scheme)** - Some children aged 2 are currently eligible to a maximum of 15 hours of funded childcare per week which can be split over a maximum of 2 settings.
2. **Working Parent Entitlement** - Eligible parents may be able to claim up to a total of 30 hours of funding per week.

Early Learning for 2 year Olds (formally Free for 2 (FF2) scheme)

- Funding for 2 year olds can be offered in line with this scheme with Kent County Council. Poplar Preschool will offer Early Learning for 2 year Olds places based on available space and numbers of existing Early Learning for 2 year Olds children already placed within the setting.
- There is no guarantee that on application for an Early Learning for 2 year Olds place within Poplar Preschool that a place will be offered. Each case will be reviewed based on current numbers at that time.
- Funding is offered for a maximum of 15 hours per week and is provided over the 38 weeks of the academic term in line with funding provision for 3-4 year olds.
- Families are able to split this funding with a maximum of 2 settings or registered providers.
- Once a place is taken up eligible children will remain entitled to their place until their Universal Funding provision at 3-year-old starts.
- For Information on criteria for eligibility is available from the preschool. Please contact the office for further information.
- Should a parent have received an eligibility confirmation email in conjunction with another setting or children's centre, this must be provided on application and a parental declaration form signed by the parent.

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- Parents can still start their children before their Early Learning for 2 year Olds application has been approved, under Poplar Preschool's standard fee paying terms should they wish and if places are available.
- 15 hours funding is claimed for a total of 38 weeks which covers the academic year and takes into account bank holidays and normal school holidays. In the event that a bank holiday is not able to be added to the school calendar, we will offer an alternative session within a specified period and subject to availability.

Working Parent Entitlement funding

- There is no guarantee that your child will be able to have the full entitlement of hours at Poplar Preschool as the hours which your child is offered is dependent on the level of children already attending at that time.
- 30 hours funding is claimed for a total of 38 weeks which covers the academic year and takes into account bank holidays and normal school holidays. In the event that a bank holiday is not able to be added to the school calendar, we will offer an alternative session within a specified period and subject to availability.
- 30 hours funding is available for your child at 3 points in the year (Term 1 - September, Term 3 – January and Term 5 – After Easter). Funding can only be claimed at each of these 3 points per year and cannot be amended between terms. Funding is a maximum of 30 hours per week and follows Monday to Friday and does not roll over to the following week.
- In the event of closures due to exceptional circumstances, parents are offered the opportunity to take their missed hours at an additional point within the same academic year. Some parents who claim their full funding with Poplar Preschool may be unable to have full use of their hours in these circumstances.

Fee Paying Children

- Children who are not entitled to funding or have exceeded their funding allocation will be charged for the hours which have been agreed with the setting that their child can attend.
- Parents are billed in advance with 15 days to pay, unless otherwise stated. If payment is not received Poplar Preschool will automatically apply a late payment penalty of £10 to the following term's bill.
- Poplar Preschool reserves the right to pause a child's attendance at Preschool should there be repeated failures to make payment on time.

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- Parents who are unable to make payments must communicate with the Manager or Administrator (confidentially if required) explaining their circumstances. Poplar Preschool will do their utmost to support parents who are struggling to make payment and subject to the Manager's discretion can amend payment terms appropriately.
- All sessions not covered by funding will be charged at the current fee rate. Children will be billed for their agreed hours irrespective of attendance and refunds will not be available for short-term sickness or holidays. In exceptional circumstances the Manager in conjunction with the Trustees reserves the right review this on a case by case basis.
- Poplar Preschool reserves the right to review the fees annually, with any increase being applied in the September term. Notice will be issued to parents prior to this and will be advertised on the website. In exceptional circumstances, the Trustees reserve the right to increase fees mid way through an academic year. Parents will be informed accordingly.

Other Funding Sources

- Poplar Preschool also accept the following funding sources
 1. Tax free National savings.
 2. Employer childcare vouchers
- Information on all funding options can be found at www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

New Starters

- A £20 Administration fee will be requested once a place has been offered (exceptions apply and a funded place is not conditional of payment).
- Invoices for fees will be sent prior to starting and should be paid in advance of start date.

Additional Events; Christmas, Easter, Summer Picnic

- These events are an opportunity for the children and their whole family to celebrate together with everybody in the preschool community and are part of our annual curriculum.
- Poplar Preschool is a non-profit charity organisation so these events will also involve fundraising, for example stalls, games and a raffle.

- These events will be scheduled during afternoon session time within the academic calendar and the day of the week for each may be dependent on the availability of the church and church hall but we try to vary days of the week to maintain fairness.
- Children who normally attend preschool on these afternoons will still have funding claimed, however fees will not be charged. Children who do not normally attend on these sessions will be invited at no extra cost for the period of the event.

Closure; Exceptional Circumstances

- In exceptional circumstances the Preschool may have to close. Wherever possible notice will be given to parents and information will be posted on our website (www.Poplarpreschool.co.uk) and on our Facebook Page.
- In this event of this occurring the Preschool will offer parents a refund for those closed days for any fees already charged.

Non-Collection of Children

- Poplar Preschool reserves the right to make an additional charge for children who are not collected on time at school end.

Notice Period

- Should a parent wish to remove their child from the Setting, a notice period of no less than 1 full terms notice must be given.
- In the event that insufficient notice is given,
 1. Fee paying children will still be liable for their bill until the end of the notice period.
 2. For funded children, transfers of funding to an alternative setting will only be considered if the correct notice period has been given. In exceptional cases, consideration may be given on a case by case basis by the Manager & Trustees.

Financial Fraud, Debt and Failed payments

- The Preschool reserves the right to recover any costs associated with Financial Fraud from the Parent involved, should there exist such a case. The

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Preschool will vet funding claims to ensure parents are eligible for such funding.

- Should it become clear that a parent is not eligible for the funding as claimed the Preschool will seek to recover these costs from the Parent.
- Should the Parent be unwilling to provide payment for the failed funding provision then Poplar Preschool reserves the right to suspend that child's attendance and notify relevant authorities.
- Poplar Preschool reserves the right to recover costs associated with failed payments provided by parents, including any banking charges incurred.
- Poplar Preschool reserves the right to recover any outstanding invoices via debt collecting facility or via the Small Claims Court.

Manager: Stephanie Powell-Yates	Date & Signature: 1 st August 2026
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