



Nursery Fees Policy

Created or reviewed:	January 2026
Version:	1.0
Review date:	April 2027

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal Framework
2. Fees
3. Eligibility for free education and childcare for two-year-olds
4. Universal entitlements for three-to four-year-olds
5. Working parent entitlements
6. Eligibility for extended entitlement for children in foster care
7. Payment information
8. Difficulty with payments
9. Debt recovery procedures
10. Verbal and written overdue payment reminders
11. Failure to respond
12. Negotiation of debt payment
13. Debt recovery costs
14. Writing off of debts
15. Monitoring and review

Statement of intent

The ONE Trust aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high quality and geared towards a smooth transition to primary nursery.

We will work with parents to claim benefit entitlement related to nursery fees, such as working tax credits and free childcare entitlement.

This policy has been established to provide transparent fee information, set procedures for the payment of fees and create a framework for dealing with non-payment in a swift and fair manner.

Parents should be aware of, and given access to, this policy and the nursery's procedures. It will be included on the nursery's website and made available to view at the nursery on request.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- The Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) Regulations 2016 (as amended)
- DfE (2025) 'Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2025 to 2026'.
- DfE (2025) 'Early education and childcare'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following nursery policies:

- Debt Recovery Policy

2. Fees

Government funding will deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free childcare. These hours are able to be accessed free of charge to parents, and there will be no mandatory charges for parents in relation to free hours.

Government funding will not cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or additional services.

The nursery may charge parents for the following extras in connection with free hours; however, these charges will be voluntary for parents:

- Consumables to be used by the child, e.g. nappies or sun cream
- Meals and snacks
- Extra optional activities, e.g. events, celebrations, specialist tuition, or other activities that are not directly related or necessary for the delivery of the EYFS statutory framework
- Late Collection Fees. We appreciate that sometimes there may be circumstances beyond parent/carer control affecting the prompt collection of your child. If parents know they are going to be late collecting the child in our care they are asked to call the school office at the earliest opportunity with the arrangements for the collection. Please note that a **late collection fee of £15.00** may be charged, unless agreed otherwise due to exceptional

circumstances. This fee is used to cover the staff costs of caring for children after the end of a session.

The nursery may also charge parents for any additional, private paid hours according to its usual terms and conditions and with the condition that taking up private paid hours is not a condition of accessing a free place.

The nursery will deliver funded hours as follows:

- **All 3- and 4-year-olds (universal entitlement)**: 570 hours per year – over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year and up to 52 weeks of the year – from the term after the third birthday until compulsory nursery age.
- **Disadvantaged 2-year-olds**: 570 hours per year – normally 15 hours per week – from the term after eligibility and the second birthday; once taken up, this will continue until the child becomes eligible for the universal entitlement
- **Working-parent entitlement (children aged 9 months and above)**: Children aged 9 months and above will be entitled to 1,140 hours of free childcare each year if their parents meet the working-parent eligibility criteria. This is usually offered as 30 hours per week during term time.
- **Children in foster care**: The nursery will apply the extended working-parent rules where the foster parent is in paid work and where this aligns with the child's care plan; the minimum income test will not apply to foster parents

Any provision that goes beyond the funded entitlements for eligible parents will incur a charge, and parents will be responsible for covering the additional cost.

The nursery will not charge parents for the following in connection with entitlement hours:

- Top-up fees, i.e. any difference between the nursery's normal charge to parents and the funding it receives from the LA to deliver free places.
- The supply of or use of materials or learning resources that are necessary for the effective delivery of childcare.
- Business running costs.
- Registration fees.
- Non-refundable deposits.
- General charges or any other supplementary charges on top of the free hours.
- Any additional fees that are not specifically identified and itemised as being for chargeable extras.

The above will only apply in relation to the Government's free entitlement hours. Where a child attends provision beyond their funded entitlement, additional charges may apply. These charges,

however, will never be a condition of accessing the free hours and will be clearly itemised as payable extras.

The costs of chargeable extras will be published on the individual school websites.

3. Eligibility for free education and childcare for two-year-olds

Parents of two-year-olds will be eligible for free education and childcare if:

- They live in England and receive one of the following benefits:
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Universal Credit – if the parent and their partner have a combined income from work of less than £15,400 a year after tax
 - Tax credits and they have an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
 - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
 - The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment parents receive when they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- The child has a statement of SEN.
- The child has an EHC plan.
- The child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance.
- The child is looked after by the LA.
- The child is no longer looked after by the LA as a result of an adoption order, special guardianship order or child arrangements order.

The nursery may ask parents to complete a form to help us ensure they receive their free early education and childcare hours.

Parents can use the free early education and childcare allowance from the term following the child's second birthday.

Two-year-olds who have met the eligibility criteria and taken up a free place at the nursery will continue to receive a free place until the point at which the child becomes eligible for the universal entitlement. Free provision will continue regardless of whether the child or parent ceases to meet the eligibility criteria during this time.

4. Universal entitlements for three- to four-year-olds

All children in England aged three to four can receive 570 hours of free childcare per year.

These hours are usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year, but parents may choose to take fewer hours over more weeks.

'15 hours' free childcare is available from the term following a child's third birthday.

The nursery may ask parents to complete a form to help us ensure they receive their free childcare hours.

5. Working parent entitlements

A child may be entitled to free early years provision if they are at least 9 months old and below the compulsory nursery age of five.

Parents' eligibility for this entitlement will depend on the following:

- Parents will need to apply for free childcare using this link: <https://www.gov.uk/get-tax-free-childcare>
- Once parents have applied online they will receive an 11-digit eligibility code. Take this to the school office and fill in the parent declaration form to verify your eligibility.
- Parents will need to be in qualifying paid work. This means they will expect to earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours at the national minimum wage each week, averaged over the next 3 months
- If one or both parents are on family leave (such as maternity, paternity, adoption, or shared parental leave) or receiving statutory sick pay, they will be treated as meeting the income requirement for a limited time
- If one parent in a couple is receiving certain disability or caring-related benefits, they will be treated as though they are in paid work
- If a parent is newly self-employed, they will not need to meet the income requirement for the first 12 months
- If either parent has an adjusted net income above £100,000, the household will not be eligible for the entitlement

Further information on free childcare for working parents can be found via the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/free-childcare-if-working/check-youre-eligible>

6. Eligibility for working parent entitlements for children in foster care

A child in foster care will be entitled to free early years provision if they have reached the required age, are under compulsory nursery age, and the following conditions are met:

- The LA will need to be satisfied that the foster parent engaging in paid work (other than their role as a foster carer) is consistent with the child's care plan, ensuring the child remains at the centre of all decisions
- In single foster parent households, the foster parent will need to hold additional paid employment outside of their fostering role
- In two-foster-parent households, both foster parents will need to hold additional paid employment outside their fostering role, or one foster parent will need to be in such employment while the other is either:
 - On family leave (such as maternity, paternity, or shared parental leave), or
 - In receipt of certain forms of statutory pay.

7. Payment information

- Payments will be made in advance by Monday morning for all non-statutory sessions and lunches that parents have booked for their child that week.
- Payments will be made online or in cash at the school office.
- Payment will be required when a child is on holiday or absent due to illness, as the nursery must hold the child's place during this period, and staff rotas are set on a termly basis.
- If a child is absent for a long period due to illness, the school will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. The school's decision is final.
- Late payments will incur a £10 fine for each week payments are overdue. Parents can avoid this by ensuring the timely payment of fees each week.
- One month's notice and payment will be required to withdraw your child from the nursery.

8. Difficulty with payments

The nursery will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored. The nursery understands that parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care and education as possible. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties will contact the headteacher as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

9. Debt recovery procedures

Where there is an outstanding payment yet to be received and the acceptable credit period has surpassed, an official invoice will be created outlining the value and reason for the debt, as well as the debtor's identity.

Upon creating the invoice and stipulating a date on which it must be paid by, there will be acknowledgement from the school that the debt has been set up.

10. Verbal and written overdue payment reminders

Overdue payment reminders are outlined below:

- **Initial verbal reminder** – informal in-person, telephone or email correspondence notifying the individual of debt with the date and time officially recorded.
- **First formal written reminder** – an official, dated letter addressed to the debtor which will be written up two weeks after the first informal reminder and will acknowledge that it took place.
- **Second formal written reminder** – this will arrive two weeks after the second reminder, citing the details of both previous reminders and stating that concerted efforts have been made to make the person aware that an outstanding debt is overdue.

11. Failure to respond

If overdue payment reminders are not responded to, another letter will be sent to the debtor advising them that the case has been to the school's legal advisors and governing board.

It is then for these parties to agree on a timeframe for a repayment or, if necessary, a payment plan for separate instalments.

The school expects that the debt should be repaid as soon as possible, particularly after repeated reminders; however, this can be negotiated at the discretion of the governing board.

If there is a case where the debtor is deemed to be refusing to pay without sufficient reason, the school may consider involving legal services to resolve the issue and recuperate owed funds.

12. Negotiation of debt payment

It is expected that the debt will be repaid as soon as possible, particularly after repeated reminders; however, this will be negotiated at the discretion of the governing board, particularly if the circumstances in section eight of this policy apply.

If there is a case where the debtor is deemed to be refusing to pay without sufficient reason, the school may consider involving legal services to resolve the issue and recuperate owed funds.

13. Debt recovery costs

In addition to the remission allowances outlined in the [Exceptional circumstances and remissions](#) section of this policy, it may be advisable to waive or partially waive debts where it is deemed that it does not make financial sense to continue allocating time and resources to pursuing.

The governing board will review any case a debt may be waived, and come to a final decision based on the value of costs versus value of the debt.

14. Writing off of debts


A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures, commensurate with the size and nature of the debt, have been taken to recover it.

15. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an [annual](#) basis by the headteacher and SBM in conjunction with the governing board.

Version Number	Purpose / Change	Author	Date
1.0	Initial policy	Julie Stuart	January 2026
Review Date			April 2027

Signed by:

Chair of Trustee Board	Helen Richardson	
------------------------	------------------	---