



Fees & Funding policy for eligible children from 9 months to 2 years from the 1st September 2024

How the Nursery offers the funding

From the 1st September 2024, the Government will provide all eligible children from 9 months old, up to 570 hours of funded hours towards a child’s education. These hours are for providers to ensure the learning and development needs of a child are met. It is not given to cover all aspects of general childcare. Because North Northamptonshire Council does not provide nurseries in Northamptonshire enough funding to cover our normal hourly rate, Nurseries are permitted to introduce an optional fee called a consumables fee, which is a small contribution towards anything outside of the child’s education. This includes the child’s nappies, wipes, toiletries, all food/meals whilst they are in nursery. It also contributes towards the running and upkeeping costs of the nursery.

If a parent opts out of paying the consumables fee, then the parent will need to provide their child with a list of consumables which do not fall under the Government Funded hours. If the nursery must provide these items because they were not provided by the Parent, then the fee will be added on the next invoice for that week, even if one day is missed.

To claim the funding, a child must attend a minimum of 2.5 hours per day, and a maximum of 10 hours per day.

A minimum of 10 hours childcare is required per week.

Solely funded hours must be taken in the following way: -

FUNDED HOURS	MORNING SESSION	AFTERNOON SESSION	DAY SESSION
ALL YEAR ROUND – MAXIMUM 11 HOURS PER WEEK	5.5 hour session	5.5 hour session over 2 days	NOT AVAILIABLE
	Must start no later than 9.30am	Start time must be between 11.30am & 12.30pm	NOT AVAILIABE
	Consumables Fee - £11 per week		
TERM TIME ONLY – MAXIMUM 15 HOURS PER WEEK	5 hour session over 3 days	5 hour session over 3 days	7.5 hour session over 2 days
	Must start no later than 9am	Must start between 12pm and 1pm	Must start no later than 9.30am
	Consumables Fee - £15 per week		

If a child has further chargeable hours over and above the funded hours, the consumables fee is slightly less than it is for solely funded hours. (Please see page 3 for further details)

Once the claim has been made, the days a child attends cannot be changed until the following term. The funded hours must be taken on the same day every week.

The setting is open all year round closing only on bank holidays, weekends, and the Christmas period. We close at normal time on the 23rd of December and reopen on the first working day after New Year’s Day. We do not charge for bank holidays or the days we are closed over Christmas the period.

NNC PROCEDURES

1. From September the 1st 2024, all children from 9 month plus to 3 years old, and who are from eligible working families, are entitled to a maximum of 570 hours Funded Early Education and Childcare. Then, from September 2025, it may be possible to claim up to an extra 570 hours.
2. Funding can be split across a maximum of 2 settings and can claim a minimum of 2.5 hours to a maximum of 10 hours in any one day.
3. The Nursery cannot request a deposit to hold any funded place. The Nursery can request a deposit on chargeable hours over the funded hours. However, this is not something we currently enforce.
4. The funding can be claimed from the term **after** the child turns 9 months and will run up until the child attends school. The Funding is split across 3 funding blocks throughout the year which start on 1st September 1st January, and the 1st April.
5. The Nursery receives the funding for a set number of weeks across each term and it is at the discretion of the Nursery to decide which days/weeks the funding can be claimed for. The Nursery will issue a calendar at the beginning of each term to inform parents of the term dates. Please note that Term Time Only funding entitlement is only for 38 weeks per year, at the discretion of the nursery. Therefore, there may be weeks when the hours taken cannot be paid via early years entitlement funding and parents will be responsible for any such fees.
6. Funding can be offered all year round and up to a **maximum** of 11 hours, or 22 (extended) hours per week from **1st September 2025**. **OR** up to a maximum of 15 or 30 (extended) hours during the term time (child will not attend during school holidays). Parents do not have to use all the offered hours if you do not require them.
7. Parents will be required to complete a Parental Declaration Form and provide evidence of the child's birth certificate and proof of address before the Nursery can claim the funding. This form will be provided by the Nursery and must be filled out in full. The Nursery can help with this.
8. You will need to apply for a funding code which will need to be added onto the Declaration form. The Nursery cannot claim the funding without this code or the declaration form.
9. If claimed hours do not get used on a regular basis then the Nursery will discuss reducing the hours as the Nursery may be required to pay back any unused hours to NNC. For example, if a Parent is claiming 11 hours funding but is only bringing their child in for 8 of those hours then we may look at reducing it to 8 hours claimed. We understand children may have time off through holidays or sickness and will not affect the number of hours claimed.
10. If a Parent wishes to change their child's funding claim, this must be requested in writing and will be only accepted based on a place being available to do so. Any changes to hours must be made at the start of a new month. A change from all year round care to term time only care, or vice versa, must be made at the start of a new funding term and must be requested with 2 weeks written notice. Funded hours must be taken on the same day each week and cannot be swapped.
11. Parents cannot request that funded hours are carried forward, or contra them against any charged hours if the child does not attend their funded times.
12. We will only be able to attribute the hours to the child's early years entitlement if this has been agreed and notified to our local authority within their required timescales and adheres to their policy on early years entitlement provision.
13. We will not ask Parents to contribute towards the financial top up of any loss the Nursery may receive on the hourly rate provided to us by the County Council. We will, however, request a contribution (Consumables fee) towards extra items we use that are required to provide care outside of the curriculum, such as food, toiletries, nappies etc.

CHARGEABLE HOURS POLICY

1. **Fees will be charged in advance per calendar month.** If you are paying for any childcare hours and/or the Sustainability fee, then the fees are due for payment in advance, and must be paid before the child's first day. A child will not be able to start until the first invoice has been paid in full.

Your chosen contracted hours are stated on your invoice.

BAND	HOURS OVER AND ABOVE THE FUNDED HOURS	COST PER ADDITIONAL HOUR	CONSUMABLES CONTRIBUTION FEE
BAND A	15 hours or less	£7.80 per hour	£8 per week
BAND B	16 to 25 hours	£7.30 per hour	NO FEE
BAND C	26 to 35 hours	£6.90 per hour	NO FEE
BAND D	36 hours or more	£6.00 per hour	NO FEE

2. **Additional hours will be charged in arrears.** We must have a cutoff date to enable invoices to be produced on the 20th of each month, therefore the arrears dates will run to the last Friday before the 20th of each month. All dates for arrears (extra's) fees are clearly stated on the invoice. Any additional hours required over the funded hours will be charged at the relevant banding rate.
For example: If 30 hours per week were required, all year round, and a child claimed 11 hours funding, 11 hours would be deducted from the total. 19 hours would be remaining. This would be charged as per BAND B - £7.30 per hour, or £138.70 per week.
3. **All invoices will be sent out on the 20th of every month** (or the nearest working day) for the following month. Whether paid by BACS or Tax-Free Childcare, **all monies must clear into the Nursery bank account by the 27th of each month** unless a prior agreement is made. Cash is also accepted. We do not take card payments or cheques. The invoice will clearly show you the number of funded hours that have been claimed, as well as the number of hours that are charged directly to you, any extra hours and the sustainability fee. Payment dates can be changed if a parent does not get paid until the end of the month but the final day, we will accept payment is the last Friday of the month. This is at the discretion of the Proprietor. Repetitive late payments will incur a £8 late payment fee on invoices under £200, £12 late payment fee on fees over £200. If the invoice is continually late then we reserve the right to revert the payment back to the 27th of the month.
4. **If an invoice is not paid before the first day of the month, we will not be able to accept the child/en into the nursery for their chargeable hours until the payment has been made.**
5. By accepting a Nursery place, the signatory/ies on the contract are agreeing that it is their responsibility to pay any fees each month regardless of how they choose to pay for the childcare.
 - **Tax free childcare** - It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the Tax-free childcare account is set up appropriately and the funds are cleared in the Nursery account before the 27th of each month. Payments made before 2pm will clear on the same day. Payments made after 2pm will clear the following day. Parents must ensure payments are made in the mornings. We will not accept TFC payments after the last day of the month.
 - **Universal Credits** – **It is not Universal Credits responsibility to pay the Nursery fees on time.** It is the responsibility of the person who signed the contract to ensure the fees are paid on the agree date. Any monies a parent receives from universal credit is between them and HMRC. We will still expect payment on the 27th regardless of whether the money is received from Universal credit. You must ensure you have set up with universal Credit before a nursery place is started.
6. **If both parents are responsible for paying for Nursery fees** and there is a breakdown in their relationship, then the nursery shall work with the family to decide who is responsible for what percentage of the invoice if necessary. If only one parent has signed the contract, then responsibility will rest on the sole signatory to ensure the fees are paid on time.
7. **If a Parent requires an earlier drop off than their start time,** then they **must** contact the Nursery to make prior arrangement for this. Please do not assume we can accept your child. If a starts more than 5 minutes early, we charge a minimum of a full half an hour. If over half an hour early, we will charge the full hour.

8. **Parents must inform the nursery if they will be late to collect their child.** If a parent is late collecting their child and the Nursery has not been informed, and we cannot make contact with the parent, the Nursery will contact the child's emergency contacts to collect the child. The Police and Social Services will be contacted in the event of no response from the Parents or from any of the contacts after half an hour of no contact. If a child is collected 5 minutes late, we will charge for the time the child is still in our care. Any child who is collected after 6pm will incur a charge of £25.
9. **If your child is not going to attend their session,** you MUST notify the Nursery BEFORE the session start time. If we do not get notification, then we will call after 15 minutes of their session time starting. This is to comply with safeguarding regulations.
10. We charge our fees on minimum hours contract. These hours must be the same day and time each week. Parents will discuss the days and times you require with the nursery manager and **these hours will be charged every month regardless of the child's attendance. These hours/days cannot be swapped short term.** Extra hours may be accommodated subject to availability, but we cannot swap days and times. If a permanent change is required, then we will need 2 weeks written notice.
11. **Fees are still due if a child does not attend the nursery for their contracted hours.** If a child is absent from nursery for 2 consecutive weeks, we will expect full fees. If a child is absent for more than 2 consecutive weeks, we will reduce the invoice by 30% from the 3rd week. This is to ensure your child's place is retained for the period of absence.
12. If the Nursery is to close due to unforeseen circumstances, such as a flood, or no power, then no fees will be charged, and a credit will be shown on the following months invoice.
13. **4 weeks written notice** is required to terminate a fee paying place. Soley Funded places will require no notice terminate a place. The notice will only be accepted from the date we receive the notice, not from the date written on the notice. Fees will still be due during the notice period, regardless of the child's attendance, and all fees must be paid before the child's final day.
14. **2 weeks written notice** is required to reduce the hours of childcare. As above, we will only accept written notification from the date we receive the notice. If an increase in hours is required, then we require 2 weeks written notice as above. However, provided we have the availability, then this increase could be sooner.
15. An annual revision of the fees will be carried out in April of each year. Notifications of the increase will be given a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the increase.

16. Non-payment procedure Including non-payment of termination period.

If services provided by Mucky Pups childcare have been used and not paid, or failure to pay the termination fees, in accordance with the Fees policy, the non-payment procedure will be followed to pursue all unpaid fees. If fees are not paid by the last day of the month, then we reserve the right to refuse entry to children whilst the payment is outstanding.

Step 1: A letter will be issued with an unpaid fee's reminder asking for full immediate payment (including any interest incurred). The procedure will continue to step 2 unless the full amount owed is paid within 7 days, or if a payment plan is agreed.

Step 2: A second reminder will be issued 14 days after the first reminder if we have not had any contact.

Step 3: A third reminder will be issued 14 days after the second reminder if we have not had any contact.

Step 4: We will commence proceedings for all outstanding fees as well as court costs and any interest incurred.

You may be given notice of termination of care for your child at any time during this procedure.

Interest will be added in line with the Governments rate of interest, currently at 8%.

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