

Late Payment Policy

Aim:

At Playdays Preschool we are committed to equal opportunities for everyone, ensuring it is accessible to families in the community, whilst providing high quality care and education. Whilst we aim to keep fees as competitive as possible, in order to maintain sustainability, quality of care prices, for it to be possible to pay staff according to their qualifications and experience and to meet rising costs of services etc. we carry out a review of our charges on an annual basis.

Should it be deemed necessary to increase the fee's, you will be given the minimum of one months' notice. We recognise that families have differing needs and therefore endeavour to meet the individual needs of all families.

Method:

Parents and carers are notified of the required fees at the beginning of each term by means of an invoice which is given at least one week in advance of payment due.

Fees are payable monthly in advance and may be paid in their entirety or in weekly instalments. Fees can be paid by cash, bank transfer or cheque made payable to Plymstock & District Community Association. Please note that parents and carers will be expected to pay any bank charges incurred by Playdays Preschool as a result of their cheque being unpaid. If a cheque is unpaid, then parents and carers will be expected to settle all future fees by cash or bank transfer.

Fees are only applicable during term time as defined by Playdays Preschool. Fees are to be paid regardless of holiday taken during term time and whether the child is absent due to illness or injury.

If a child starts at Playdays during the month, the fees will be calculated accordingly and adjusted. The fees must be paid before childcare can commence.

Fees must be paid on the date specified on the invoice. If parents/carers are late paying fee's this can impact on our ability to pay our overheads. If no payment is received a warning email and letter will be sent to parents and carers to request immediate payment. Late payments which are overdue by 5 or more days are subject to a late payment charge of £20.00 and childcare will be suspended until the fees are paid. Where a child is accessing government funded childcare they will be able to continue attending for those hours. Fees that remain unpaid after 28 days will be referred to a debt collection agency.

We understand there is occasionally a genuine reason why parents/carers are unable to pay on time and will always give these parents/carers the opportunity to share this information with us and would ensure this information remains confidential.

We request 4 weeks' notice before withdrawing your child from preschool. If notice is not given, we reserve the right to charge for this period.

Fees will still be incurred if the setting has to unexpectedly close (for a period of up to and including 3 working days).

Late collection charges may apply if you are late in collecting your child at the end of the session. See Uncollected Child policy for further details.

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Playdays Preschool is registered to receive childcare vouchers with Computershare and Edenred. Other schemes can be available on request. Playdays is also registered for the government tax-free childcare scheme. We are unable to offer siblings a place at Playdays Preschool if the family have outstanding fees for another child in the family until they are government funded.

Non-payment of fees by the payment due date as indicated on the invoice will result in a reminder email and letter within 5 days from the invoice date. If the fees remain unpaid the collections and debt recovery procedure is to be followed.

Government Funding

Children are entitled to preschool funding through the Government Early Years Entitlement Programme of up to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks per year, from the term following their third birthday.

If a child is accessing more than their entitlement, then additional hours will be charged for. If no payment of these additional fees is received within the specified time period detailed on the invoice and the parent has not made suitable contact to explain why with the Preschool Leader, the extra hours will be withdrawn.

Parents are free to choose where they use their funding and whether they split the funding between Playdays and another setting.

Collections and Debt Recovery

As a registered charity with limited funds at our disposal, we expect parents and carers to assist us with the smooth running of Playdays Preschool by ensuring all fees are paid promptly. Obviously, we appreciate that from time to time, unforeseen circumstances may occur which result in late payment of fees. This is why as a considerate organisation, we are committed to resolving payment issues with parents and carers as fairly and openly as possible and have developed the following strategy.

1. If a parent or carer has difficulty paying by the due date they must advise the Preschool Leader to arrange an alternative plan. Where a parent or carer makes contact with the preschool, their circumstances will be sensitively and confidentially considered with a view to agreeing a reasonable payment and minimising recovery action, thus helping to alleviate possible hardship. The Preschool Leader will have an informal discussion with the parents or carers to ascertain when fees are likely to be paid. If fees are paid on time or in accordance with the payment plan then no further action will be taken. If after 5 days of payment being due, the fees are not paid and parents or carers do not advise the Preschool Leader, then a late payment charge of £20.00 will be applied.
2. Where a parent or carer fails to establish contact within 14 days of fees due to be paid, or maintain arrangements made, the Preschool Leader will write to parents requesting payment by a specific date and invite the parents or carers in for further discussion if they are unable to make payment by this date with the aim of arranging a manageable payment plan. If no contact is established within 14 days of the fees remaining unpaid, then childcare for fee-able hours will be suspended. Payment plans should be confirmed in writing to the parents or carers who will be asked to sign and return a Payment Contract. If not payment has been forthcoming or a payment plan has not been agreed then:

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3. The Preschool Leader will write to parents or carers requesting immediate whole or part payments by a specific date and arrange a formal meeting to discuss the situation and suspend billable hours of childcare. Children can continue to attend their government funded sessions where applicable.
4. If no payment is forthcoming then the Preschool Leader will write to parents or carer confirming the suspension of childcare because of the non-payment of fees and any associated costs if there are no extenuating circumstances to the contrary.

Our aim is to promote positive action to prevent arrears occurring by providing a range of payment methods. However, the preschool will consider enforcement action against deliberate non-payers of those who delay payment.

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Payment Contract

This contract is between Playdays Preschool and
(the parents/guardians) of *(the child)*.

Under this contract, the parents/guardians hereby confirm that they can afford to pay to Playdays Preschool, the sum of £ per week / month (delete as appropriate) in settlement towards the arrears of fees totalling £ in respect of their child's attendance at Playdays Preschool.

The parents/guardians also hereby confirm that this sum will be paid every week / month on
(specify day/date) commencing (date to be inserted) until all of the arrears have been repaid.

Should the parents/guardians be unable to make an agreed payment then they undertake to inform either the Preschool Leader or Chairman of Committee as soon as possible.

Signed Date
(Parents/Guardians)

Print Date
(Parents/Guardians)

Signed Date
(On behalf of Playdays Preschool)

Print Date
(Parents/Guardians)