

Early years funding is provided by the Government and paid to early years providers including childminders, nurseries and pre-schools through their Local Authority. The intention of the funding is to provide free high-quality education for your child for 38 weeks a year, term time only.

The Local Authority Provider Agreement that we sign to accept funding states that we must ensure our funding policy for parents is clear, transparent and itemised.

If I don't remain compliant with the contract I will risk having the ability to offer funding to parents removed which in turn means my business closes. I will not risk this so it is important you read the information below to ensure that my setting suits your childcare requirements and that you understand what can and cannot be done with regards the funding. It is very important if you have any queries or questions regarding it that you speak to me or check the facts online. Every Childcare setting will have a different policy to suit their business so please also bear that in mind when reading this policy.

This Policy has been written with the support and advice from the current EYCC Funding Manager and Business Management Consultant.

THE FUNDING, OTHER COSTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- **Deposit** – I do not charge a deposit to hold the funded hours.
- **Early drop off fee** – your child's funded hours are booked on the days you attend, between 8am and 4pm. If you want to drop your child off earlier or pick up later outside the 8am-4pm session (anytime between 7.30am up to 5.30pm) you must sign the non-funded contract and pay the normal hourly rate for the extra hours required over and above the funded hours.
- **Hours not used** – if your child is ill or you take holiday, then the hours are lost.
- **Late collection fee** – your child's funded hours are booked on the days agreed between us. If you collect your child late on numerous occasions, you will be charged a late minimum collection fee of £6.50 (1 hour), as part of our non-funded contract. This will not be covered by the funding.

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- **Notice period** – if you leave mid-term, then the funding will stay with me and will be lost as that childcare place has been allocated for your child. If I give notice, then I will pass the funding on to your new provider.
- **Consumables** – For all children I will add on a Consumables Fee (£4 a day to be reviewed each year). This cost is to help cover the following: -
 - Entry costs to venues that parents do not provide a yearly pass for such as Barleylands, Call of the Wild, RHS Hyde Hall, parking fees and contributions to entry into reservoirs, woods etc.
 - Wipes, nappy sacks and nappies that run out
 - Calpol/Ibuprofen if none is provided
 - Sun cream if none is provided
 - Snacks, ad-hoc treats, topic related food or items, eg fish tasting, apple tasting etc.

Please note that payment of the consumables charge is voluntary, and I am mindful of the impact of additional charges on funded parents and ask you to speak to me if you have any questions about this extra charge. I believe this is a fair way of offering funding to parents and helps ensure my setting remains sustainable. It also helps us continue offering funded places and to maintain the outstanding level of service and opportunities we currently provide for the children.

The Consumables payment can NOT be taken out of the funding entitlement as it is non-compliant. The payment has to be paid privately over and above any funding payments.

- **Attendance** – I offer funded sessions, Monday – Friday, 8am – 4pm. Anything outside these hours is charged at the normal non-funded hourly rate of £6.50.
- **Bank holidays** – I do not work on bank holidays but you will still be charged. The funding will cover the funded session but you will need to pay the extra hours as usual. The consumables payment of £4 per day will not be charged for that day.
- **Cancellations** – funded sessions cancelled due to circumstances beyond my control such as extreme weather will, where possible, be offered elsewhere in

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the term but this might not be possible. I will take advice from the local authority as necessary.

- **Settling in sessions** – are not offered as part of the funding and are charged at £6.50 an hour.
- **Stretched hours** – I offer stretched hours only. This means that the funding hours you receive from the government whether it be 15 or 30 hours will be split over the term time weeks (when children are at school) **and** the school holidays (when they're not!). This is because I don't work on a term time only basis (all school holidays off).

The funded hours will be worked out termly as each term has a different amount of weeks in it. Depending on the time of year I have to consider the length of the school holidays and also take into account any time I may be taking off. Once the total weeks have been worked out, the hours you are given from the government are split over that amount of weeks. This will show you how many funded hours you have each week towards your childcare requirements.

EXAMPLE

Jenny is 3 years old and is entitled to 30 hours of government funding a week. She attends the setting for three days a week 9am – 3pm (6 hours a day or 18 hours a week). For this example, the summer term has 14 weeks in it (when all children will be at school). I will be taking two weeks off during the 6 week summer holidays but I will still be working the other remaining 4 weeks and the half term week. An extra 5 weeks over and above the 14 term weeks. These are added together so the total amount of weeks I will be working over the summer term and holidays is 19 weeks.

This means the hours received for the summer term will be stretched over 19 weeks: -

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30 hours x 14 weeks (as funding is only provided for term time only) will give you a total of 420 hours but because I am working for 19 weeks of that term the 420 hours is divided by 19 weeks. This will give you 22 hours of funding each week to put towards your childcare.

My session time is 8am – 4pm. The funding will cover your three contracted days a week, but it means I can only claim for the 18 hours you attend, and you will have to pay the daily Consumables charge of £4 privately (£12 a week for the days your child attends). Extra funding **cannot** be claimed to cover this cost as it is non-compliant with the Essex County Council contract rules.

I will not be able to claim the remaining hours for: -

- extra ad hoc days you may wish to have
- to put towards childcare for siblings or
- to pay for childcare during the school holidays once your child has started school and left my setting.

I will usually take between 20-25 days holiday a year (sometimes less) not including bank holidays and this will be factored into the stretched hours each term. With regards your invoice, some terms may show you as having more or less hours to take each week due to the amount of weeks in the term that the funding has to be stretched over. I can only claim for the hours you attend.

- **Term time only care** – I do not offer term time only childcare.

Retention period – funding documents which include the signed parent forms need to be retained securely for 6 years. These forms will be kept in your Child's file which is locked away.

Policy renewal date: This may be updated throughout the year due to my hourly rate going up or the Government or Local Council making changes to legislation. It will always be reviewed however on April 1st each year to cover the FEEE contract period which ensures I remain compliant with it.

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You will be sent the updated policy each year whilst your child is receiving government funding in my setting.

For more information on all entitlements, and to check eligibility criteria please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk and [Apply for free childcare if you're working](#)

Parents will need to provide an eligibility code and National Insurance Number to us along with a copy of their child's birth certificate. Please note that funding can be split between different providers and parents need to complete the 'Parental declaration form' to claim funded entitlement. This form will be provided by us. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that that they renew their eligibility code in good time, following their prompt email from HMRC. Where a parent/carer fails to renew their code and loses their eligibility for early years entitlements, they will still be liable for paying the fee in full.

Date Policy written:	9 th July 2025 By Emma Janes, Becky Crook, Kim Davies, (Little Legs Childcare)
Reviewed and Updated	1 st July 2026

This Policy supports the guidelines set out by Essex County Council and the Department for Education.