



13. Fees and Funding Policy

Aims of Policy

This policy aims to specify the process around payment of fees and the funding available. Whilst we make every effort to support parents with funding, including support completing the forms, it is the parents' responsibility to be aware of the funding they can receive and ensure their applications are submitted appropriately. By assisting parents with their applications, we recognise we are already providing a significantly greater amount of support to parents than a typical setting. However, whilst we can provide this support, we believe it remains valuable to parents, and so will continue to do so.

Fees

There are three stages of fees payable to the Pre-School:

1. A registration fee.
2. A deposit to confirm their place.
3. Ongoing fees for their attendance at the Pre-School.

Each of these fees is outlined in more detail below. All fees are subject to an annual review.

All fees are payable within the terms sent out on the invoice, which is typically 14 days from the issue of the invoice. There are 6 invoices throughout the year and they are sent at the

beginning of each half term, for that specific half term that has just commenced. They are sent:

1. At the start of the autumn term in September
2. After October half term
3. At the start of the spring term January
4. After February half term
5. At the start of the summer term in April
6. After May half term

You will see that your invoices are itemised, detailing the hours/service and the fee charged.

If fees are not paid on time, you may be subject to late charges of £25 per week overdue, unless the Committee agrees otherwise.

If you receive funding or have any concerns with the fees outlined in this document, please speak to the Operations Manager.

Registration fee

A registration fee of £50 is payable when the initial paperwork is completed to register your child's interest in attending the Pre-School and to put them on the waiting list. We only charge a registration fee where no funding has yet been granted. This fee is non-refundable except in the cases outlined below:

Where eligible working parent funding is already in place or in the process of being obtained and you expect to be fully funded, we will waive this fee. If there is no funding in place yet, but it is granted at a later date and you are fully funded at the time of starting, then the fee would be refunded. If parents/guardians feel this fee is in any way a barrier to registering their child, they should contact us to discuss their options.

Deposit

A deposit of £150 will be taken for all children to confirm their place. This is payable prior to starting, typically in the first part of the calendar year (January – April) prior to the academic year they start (September onwards).

Parents/guardians will be given two deposit options before leaving the Pre-School:

- 1) to donate their deposit to the Pre-School

2) to have the deposit returned to them.

This communication will be sent via email in the summer before your child is due to start school.

If parents/guardians pay the deposit and accept their child's place but their child does not start with us for any reason, the deposit is non-refundable. 6 term term-time weeks' notice must be given if you no longer wish for your child to start with us. Pre-School holiday periods do not count towards the notice period.

For example, a child due to start with us in September once the autumn term commences would need to give notice 6 weeks **before** we close for the summer holidays to not incur any fees. Any notice periods given that are **less** than 6 term-time weeks incur a full 6 weeks' fees.

If parents/guardians feel the deposit is in any way a barrier to their child starting with us, they should contact us to discuss their options.

When a child is accessing a funded only place (no additional hours purchased on top) then the deposit will be returned within 6 weeks of the funded place being taken up.

Ongoing Fees

Ongoing fees include the following two fee types.

1. Sessions including consumables/snack fees:

- An hourly rate is payable for sessions which aren't funded by the government.
- A consumables/snack fee is payable by all for each session, regardless of whether the session is funded or not. The consumables/snack fee covers items such as first aid equipment, hygiene items, sensory items and healthy snacks. A full list of the items that this charge covers is available upon request. If you feel that the consumables/snack fee will create a barrier to your child attending our Pre-School, please do not hesitate to speak to us.

2. Activities fees:

- Activities run throughout the year within Pre-School, including the Christmas party, sports day, end of year picnic and, for older children, additional activities such as cooking and forest school.

Due to being a not-for-profit charity, we regret that we cannot offer a sibling discount.

Please request a copy of our fee information for up-to-date information on current charges.

The hourly rate payable may be reduced to zero for those hours where funding is provided by the government (see below). This funding can only be claimed on a child's agreed base hours (core plus any further sessions that are committed to).

Funding

We recommend that all families sign up to <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> to be kept up-to-date on the current funding on offer from the government.

We accept the following funding types, with no limit on the hours used at our setting per week.

Funding for 3 and 4 year olds

All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for universal funding from the term following their third birthday until they start school. This entitles parents to claim 15 hours of funding for their child.

<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-and-education-for-2-to-4-year-olds>

Eligible working parent funding

Some working parent families may be eligible for 15 hour funding for their 2 year old, and 30 hour funding (called extended funding) for their 3 & 4 year old. For more information, to check eligibility, and apply, please see the following links:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/how-to-apply-for-30-hours-childcare/>

Funding for 2 year olds of families who receive some additional government support

The government provides Free Entitlement Funding (FEF) to some 2 year olds. For more details and to see if you are eligible please refer to these websites:

<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-2-year-olds>

<https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/childcare-and-early-years/paying-childcare/2yo-funded-childcare/>

For funding purposes there are set dates to define term times:

Three-year-olds born between:	Eligible for full funding from:
1st Apr and 31st Aug (inclusive)	The start of the autumn term following their 3rd birthday
1st Sep and 31st Dec (inclusive)	The start of the spring term following their 3rd birthday
1st Jan and 31st Mar (inclusive)	The start of the summer term following their 3rd birthday

Eligible working parent funding can be applied for on ChildcareChoices.gov.uk

- It is eligible parents' responsibility to apply for the Eligibility code before the fixed deadlines 31st March, 31st August and 31st December and to reconfirm their codes every three months.
- Families remain eligible at a current setting if they fall into their grace period, but cannot start with a new setting until their code has been reconfirmed and prior to the cut-off date.
- New or lapsed codes will show as eligible once confirmed but cannot be claimed for until the next cut-off date. E.g. A new code confirmed on 2nd

January may show the child as eligible, but it has missed the cut-off date of 31st December and cannot be used until the Summer term.

- Codes can only be used for the term after a child becomes eligible and cannot be used once the child has started at reception in school.

Should a younger child only take up the minimum session requirement (two mornings and two afternoons Monday - Thursday), this would only equate to 12 hours (unless they were taken as full days, then this would equate to 12 hours and 40 minutes due to the two 20 minute lunch periods between sessions). Any funded hours which are not used at the Pre-School can be used at another setting. If you do so, please keep us informed.

An older child taking the minimum session requirement (two mornings and two afternoons Monday – Thursday plus a full day Friday), would attend 18 hours and 20 minutes (or 19 hours if three full days due to the three 20 minute lunch periods between sessions). If you wish your child to only attend for the 15 hours of funded entitlement, one of the Monday – Thursday sessions would have to be dropped to meet this in accordance with the above notice period.

The extended free childcare entitlement for working parents of 3- and 4-year-olds will provide eligible parents with a total of 30 hours of free childcare per week, over 38 weeks. While we can offer your child the full 30 hours at Pre-School if they are an older child, we cannot offer this to a younger child given Friday's are reserved for older children only. However, you may use the additional hours at another setting (please see above).

For more details and to see if you are eligible please refer to this website:

<https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/childcare-and-early-years/paying-childcare/30-hours-childcare/>

Friday Session

In their final year children attend a Friday all day. From 2019-2020 onwards, all children in their final year will attend 8.50am to 3.10pm on Friday, which brings the total number of minimum hours offered to 18 and 20 minutes (19 hours if taken as full days due to the three 20 minute lunch periods between sessions).

Universal funding is available for 15 hours and extended funding for 30 hours. You may select to send your child for only 15 hours. If you wish your child to only attend for the 15 hours of funded entitlement, one of the Monday – Thursday sessions would have to be dropped to meet this in accordance with the notice period detailed in this policy.

Friday-only Children

If we have availability on a Friday following take up by the children already in their final year at the Pre-School, this will be offered out to children in their final year before commencing primary school who do not attend the Pre-School. They would only attend this session each week. The registration fee and deposit are still applicable in this case. Please note that we do not accept Universal or Extended funding for Friday only children.

Additional and Short-term Extra Sessions

Additional sessions are sessions that are taken up on a permanent basis part way through your child's time at Pre-School should such sessions become available. If these sessions are taken up part way through a term you will not be able to use funding for the new sessions for the rest of that term. However, you will be able to use funding for the new sessions from the following term onwards.

Short-term extra sessions are those signed up for typically for half a term or a term, in advance, should such sessions be available. These are not guaranteed for the child for the full time they attend the Pre-School, but only for the agreed amount of time. Funding cannot be used to pay for these sessions.

The Operations Manager should be contacted for information regarding any additional or short-term extra sessions.

Fees for additional sessions and short-term extra sessions will be billed at the current hourly rate. Please note that payment for additional sessions is due before the session is attended. If payment has not been made prior to the session, attendance can be refused and the session will be opened again.

Consumables/snack Fee

The consumables/snack fee covers the cost of snacks, first aid equipment, cleaning products, sensory materials etc., which is a significant volume and spend each year. This amount is payable per morning or afternoon session, so for children attending their core sessions there would be 4 consumables/snack charges per week for younger children and 6 consumables charges a week for older children as they also attend the Friday session. Please see our fee information for up-to-date information on consumables/snack charges.

Please note, consumables/snack fees are payable per session regardless of whether the session is funded by the government or payable directly.

If you would like further information on the consumables/snack fee, please contact the operations manager, who can provide you with a list of all the items covered.

Activities fees

Throughout the year we run various additional activities for the children. These are mainly for the older children to help with school preparation, but also include the younger children in some cases. The below is a list of the activities we intend to run, although these are subject to change at the Pre-School's discretion.

Younger Children	Older Children	Friday Only
Christmas Party	Forest School	Forest School
Nativity	Sports Day	Pre-School Trip and Picnic
Sports Day	Pre-School Trip and Picnic	Christmas Party
	Christmas Party	Cookery
	Nativity	
	Cookery	

The activities fee is lower for younger children as they take part in fewer activities throughout the year. The activities fee is added to the first invoice of the year for the younger children and split across the three terms' invoices for the older children.

Please request a copy of our fee information for up-to-date information on current charges for activities.

Should parents and carers have any concerns regarding fees, please get in touch with the Operations Manager (seer.green.preschool@gmail.com) and we will do our best to support any family who wishes to attend and feels fees may prove a challenge to their child doing so.

Voluntary Contributions

The fees and funding provided to the Pre-School enable it to meet its day-to-day running costs throughout the year. However, we rely heavily on fundraising and voluntary donations to pay for any other investment in the Pre-School, such as toys, games, supplies and inevitable repair and replacement costs.

As such, we request a voluntary donation of varying suggested levels on each half-term's invoice to help us cover our costs and provide the best possible childcare.

Changes and Cancellation

You are required to pay for every reserved session, even if your child is absent due to illness or other reasons.

Should your child leave Pre-School early, you must give 6 term-time weeks' notice to not incur further fees and to receive your deposit, otherwise you will be charged for 6 term-time weeks' fees and your deposit will not be refunded.

For example, a child wishing to leave the Pre-School at the end of the autumn term when we break up for Christmas and not return in January for the spring term, would need to give notice 6 term-time weeks prior to this at the latest to not incur any fees.

Once sessions are agreed for a child, they are valid for the entire time a child is at Pre-School.

We require 4 term-time weeks' notice for any session changes. Holiday periods do not count towards the notice period. For example, if notice is given 2 weeks before the Easter holidays, the notice period runs for a further 2 weeks after we return from the Easter holidays to complete the 4 term-time weeks' notice. The reason we ask for term-time weeks' notice rather than any weeks' notice is due to the Pre-School operating in term time only, with no staff working over the holiday periods.

Whilst every endeavour is made to make sure your child will have regular contact with their key person, please note that if you change your child's sessions during their time with us this may mean that they have less contact time with their key person.

New starters

If parents/guardians pay the deposit and accept their child's place but their child does not start with us for any reason, the deposit is non-refundable. 6 term term-time weeks' notice must be given if you no longer wish for your child to start with us. Pre-School holiday periods do not count towards the notice period.

For example, a child due to start with us in September once the autumn term commences would need to give notice 6 weeks **before** we close for the summer holidays to not incur any fees. Any notice periods given that are **less** than 6 term-time weeks incur a full 6 weeks' fees.

If a child's place is offered and accepted but subsequent to such acceptance the start date is delayed at the parent/guardian's request, a full term's fees will be payable from the original offered start date. This is due to the detrimental effect on the Pre-School's finances and because it is unfair to any children on the reserve list who could start on time. We will do our best to fill the delayed sessions. If we manage to do so you will only be charged a £50 admin fee.

Should a session time be changed (for example due to the nativity, Christmas party or sports day) you will be notified in advance and not charged for any sessions which aren't run.

Gift Aid

Gift aid is tax relief on money donated to UK charities.

When you start at the Pre-School, we will send you a declaration form that can be made out to cover individual donations, a series of donations, donations made during a specified period or to cover all donations.

As with all the policies for Seer Green Pre-School, the Operational Plan should be referred to for the specific details of day-to-day operations of the Pre-School. In addition, any issues which arise in the course of a child's time with the Pre-School and that are related to a child's health and wellbeing, parent's or staff's concern, or the overall care and safety of our children, staff, parents and equipment will be dealt with in a professional and confidential manner in order to arrive at an appropriate outcome.

This policy was adopted on
(date)_____

Signed on behalf of Seer Green Pre-School (Committee Chairperson)

This policy was reviewed as indicated below:

2015 created

2016 reviewed and updated as required

July-Nov 2017 reviewed and updated

June-July 2018 reviewed and updated

February 2019 reviewed and updated

May 2019 reviewed and updated

January 2020 reviewed and updated

June 2020 reviewed and updated

March 2021 reviewed and updated

June 2021 reviewed and updated

May 2022 reviewed and updated

January 2023 reviewed and updated

February 2024 reviewed and updated
