

# Holy Family Catholic Primary School



## Nursery Fees Policy

Date: April 2021

Review Date: May 2022

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## Statement of intent

Holy Family School aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high quality and geared towards a smooth transition to primary school. At Holy Family School we aim to create a school community where adults and children grow and develop to their fullest. Through the sharing of our Catholic faith, the promotion of Gospel values and through the values of:

Responsibility

Resilience

Respect

We endeavour for all our children to develop an awareness of God's presence in themselves and others and to:

'Aspire to Inspire'

as we

'Pray, Play and Learn together'

We expect all our children to expect the very best of themselves - to discover their talents and to leave Holy Family with the knowledge and skills that give them firm foundations for their future. In turn, we aim to provide the very best for them, to be innovative and creative in our teaching and to believe every child can succeed.

We will work with parents to claim benefit entitlement related to nursery fees such as Working Tax Credits and free childcare entitlement.

This Nursery Fees 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 school's procedures. It will be included on the school's website and made available to view at the school on request.

Signed by:

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Headteacher

Date:

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Chair of governors

Date:

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## 1. Legal framework

- This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to:
- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- The 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 (2018) 'Early years entitlements: operational guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'

## 2. Fees

- Parents are charged for care provided outside of the following provision:
- Universal 15 hours free provision a week for all three to four-year-olds.
- Extended 30 hours free provision a week for eligible three to four-year-olds.
- Extended 30 hours free provision a week for children in foster care.
- The charges are as follows:
- £ 13.89 per additional session
- £ 3.00 for lunch time supervision and £ 2.10 for each lunch provided
- The 30 hours free childcare offer cannot be used to pay for meals, other consumables (such as nappies or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). The school may charge a fee for these additions. If parents choose to pay for these, it is an arrangement between the parent and the school.

## 3. Eligibility for 15 hours free childcare for three and four-year-olds

- All children in England receive 570 hours free childcare per year.
- These hours will be taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year
- '15 hours' free childcare is available from the term following a child's third birthday.
- The school may ask parents to complete a form to help us ensure they receive their free childcare hours.

## 4. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare extended entitlement

- Parents of three and four-year-olds must meet the eligibility criteria below to be eligible for the extended 30 hours free childcare:
- The parent of the child (and their partner where applicable) is seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.

- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage – this funding limit does not apply if a parent is self-employed and started their business less than 12 months ago.
- Where one or both parents are in receipt of benefits in connection with sickness or parenting, they are treated as though they are in paid work.
- Where one parent (in a couple household) is in receipt or could be entitled to be in receipt of specific benefits related to caring, incapacity for work or limited capability for work, they are treated as though they are in paid work.
- Parents are not eligible if:
  - The child does not live with them.
  - The parent or their partner has a taxable income over £100,000.
  - The parent is from outside the EEA and their UK residence card says they cannot access public funds.
- Parents will check their eligibility for the scheme by using the government's Childcare Choices website or the Childcare Calculator. If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.
- Eligible parents will provide the school with their unique eligibility code, National Insurance number and child's date of birth, along with their written consent, to enable the school to verify eligibility and receive future notifications from the LA on the continued validity of the code – parents are encouraged to do this as soon as possible, as they can only start their 30-hours free childcare the term after receiving a decision from HMRC.
- The school will retain digital copies of documentation to enable the LA to undertake audits and fraud investigations; however, as per the Data Protection Act 2018, it will be stored securely and deleted when there is no longer any good reason to keep the data.
- If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' of four weeks – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a period of four weeks.
- A child who becomes ineligible during the first half of a funding block will be funded until the end of that following funding block or for as long as they remain under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.
- Consideration to extend the grace period will be taken in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if a parent has been forced to leave their home and paid employment.
- A child will not be able to take up their 30 hours free childcare place if their parents fall into their grace period before the child has started at the school.
- 30 hours free childcare can be claimed at the same time as claiming Universal Credit, tax credits, childcare vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare.

## 5. Eligibility for extended entitlement for children in foster care

- A child in foster care is entitled to an additional 15 hours childcare per week (30 hours free childcare per week total) provided that the child is aged three, but below the compulsory school age, and the criteria below are met:
- Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision making; and
- In single foster parent families, the foster parent holds additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.
- In two foster parent families, both partners hold additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.
- To receive their free childcare allowance, foster parents must apply directly to the LA by completing the LA's eligibility form. The school can provide this form on request.
- Foster parents are required by the LA to reconfirm their eligibility every three months.

## 6. Payment information

- Payments should be made in advance on the first Monday of the week of the half term for all non-statutory sessions and lunches, which parents have for their child that week.
- Payments will be made online by Parent pay only.
- Payment is 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 nursery will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. The nursery's decision is final.

## 7. Difficulty with payments

- The school will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored.
- 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 should contact Mrs Evans, the Head teacher, as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

## 8. Debt collection

- The governing board has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled, including nursery fees.
- The governing board will not write off any debt which exceeds £500.

- A full record will be kept of debts owed to the school for seven years. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices.
- The school will not initiate legal action to recover debts; however, we will refer uncollected debts to the LA to consider such action.
- All debts will be handled in accordance with the Debt Recovery Policy.

## 9. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

- The Headteacher and Business Manager will ensure that:
  - Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and well-maintained.
  - Evidence of the steps taken by the school in pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both letters and phone calls.
  - A final reminder is sent by recorded delivery to the debtor.
  - The privacy of the family involved will be respected and only made known to those who need to know.
  - The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time.
- The governing body:
  - Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery.
  - At its discretion, will refer uncollected debts to the LA for consideration for legal action.
  - Will record all approved action in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
  - Will adhere to privacy arrangements.
  - May delegate its responsibilities under this policy to Mrs Glanvill , the Business Manager.

## 10.The process for pursuing debts

- Informal reminder – Within one week of late payment, the debtor will be informally reminded in person or by telephone that they owe money to the school.
- First reminder letter – If the debt is yet to be paid two weeks after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor.
- Second reminder letter - If the debt is yet to be paid two weeks after a first formal reminder, a second formal letter will be sent to the debtor. These letters allow the debtor every opportunity to settle their debt and ensure the school can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further.
- Final reminder letter – If no response is received following the second reminder, the school will send a letter to the debtor advising them that they will be referring the matter to the LA to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to respond. Child will no longer be able to attend the Nursery

## 11.The waiving of debts

- The waiving of debts is at the discretion of the headteacher and the governing body.
- A debt may be waived when it is believed the debtor is experiencing serious financial hardship or if all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted and it is believed it would not be cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.
- The headteacher is authorised to waive debts off up to £100.
- Debts between £100 and £500 will only be waived with the approval of the governing body. Debts of £500 or more will never be waived.

## 12.Monitoring and review

- This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher and SLT in conjunction with the governing body.
- The next scheduled review date is July 2022.