

Coniston Early Years Centre Policy Document

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records Providers must maintain records to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and to help ensure the needs of all children are met.



High Quality Care for All Children
A Firm Foundation for Education

11.2 Fees Policy

Policy Statement

Coniston Early Years Centre intends to keep our service affordable for as many families as possible within our locality. We balance this aim with the need to ensure the pre school remains financially viable and sustainable.

Procedures

The procedure for fees payment is as follows;

- We do not offer discounted fees as we believe our hourly fee rate is set as low as possible to ensure affordability for local families whilst maintaining our financial viability.
- We will offer payment plans to parents who are struggling to pay their child's fees and do our utmost to help and support parents in this situation.
- Fees are payable within 14 days of invoice and invoices are issued on the first of each month for the previous months fees. (that is one month in arrears)
- We do not charge a sessional fee but instead have an hourly rate as we feel this is simple for parents to understand and enables them to accurately calculate their weekly/monthly childcare costs.
- We only charge parents for the hours their child attends over their free entitlement when they are in session and round drop off and collection times down to help parents prevent escalating costs for their childcare.
- We do not charge parents when their child is absent due to sickness/holidays.
- We do not charge parents for the weeks we are open over those which the Nursery Education Grant (NEG) covers.
- We adhere to local government guidance and legal requirements in respect of NEG funding.
- We maintain records pertaining to NEG funds received in accordance with local government guidance.
- We retain these records (in electronic form) for a reasonable period after the child has left the setting.
- We ensure records are accessible to local government officers for audit purposes if necessary.
- We ensure parents are made aware of their entitlement in respect of 2, 3 and 4 year old funding.

- We recognise the importance of this funding for our sustainability and ensure we submit all documentation in a timely manner.

We recognise that there are times when family circumstances can make it difficult for a parent to pay their fees and if fees should remain unpaid at the end of the month the following action will be taken;

- A senior member of staff will speak to the parents to ascertain if there is a problem with payment. This may then result in receipt of payment and the matter will be closed.
- If however no payment is received by the end of the following month a letter/text will be issued with the next bill asking for full payment of outstanding fees or that the parent speak to the Deputy or Manager regarding a payment plan.
- If at the end of the third month payment has still not been received or a signed payment plan has not been put in place and adhered to parents will be informed that their child may only attend for the funded hours to which they are entitled each week until the outstanding monies have been paid or the payment plan is adhered to.
- When the parent has cleared any outstanding fees or shown a commitment to adhering to the payment plan the child will be entitled to increase their hours above those funded by the government.
- We have a four week notice period and retain the right to claim the Nursery Education Grant for this notice period.

Unpaid Fees after a child has left the setting.

If fees are owed by a parent when their child leaves the setting the following procedures will be applied;

- A letter will be sent to parents requesting full settlement of the outstanding balance within 30 days of the date of the letter, or settlement following an agreed payment plan.
- If payment is not received within this time frame a second letter will be issued requesting payment no later than 14 days from the date of posting.
- If fees still remain unpaid after this period a third and final letter will be issued informing the parents that we will be taking legal action to recover the outstanding fees.

Cost per child.

Important notes all parents should read.

Please note for children who are entitled to receive the Nursery Education Grant this funds a maximum of 15 or 30* hours per week for 38 weeks of the year.

(* 30 hours government funded education only available to parents who qualify and need to be applied for by

- Parents of children funded by the Nursery Education Grant who attend pre school for more than 15/30 hours per week as applicable will be required to pay our hourly fee or part thereof for those hours attended above and beyond their entitlement.
- All fees charged relate to that part of a session not funded by the NEG
- We never ask parents to sign up for private paid hours as a condition of taking up their free entitlement.
- We have only one additional charge which is a £20 per year voluntary contribution towards snack fee. We do not currently have an alternative option for parents who choose not to pay this fee as in such circumstances we would still provide the child with a snack. This may have to be revised if we were to have a situation where a large number of parents chose not to pay the voluntary snack contribution fee.

SUMMARY - Our children can access their DFE funded places during our opening hours in whatever format they choose. We operate in the following way – for the first 15 or 30 hours (as applicable) that a child attends our setting there is no charge, we only charge parents for any hours their child attends over and above their free entitlement. We feel we cannot be any fairer than this. We also only have one additional fee which is a snack fee of £20 per year, this is a voluntary fee and clearly marked on invoices. We really do feel we could not be any fairer and that we have very minimal charges for parents.

Reviewed by

ManagerSarah Trussell..... Date18.2.26.....

StaffStaff Meeting..... Date25.11.25.....

TrusteesTrustee Meeting Date23.10.25.....

