**Fees and Funding Policy 2024-2025**

This policy forms part of the contract between parents/carers and St George’s Pre-school. St George’s Pre-school operates a service which is fair and competitively priced. We aim to offer a high quality, safe and stimulating environment that provides a service that is good value for money. You are able to purchase day-care sessions for children during term time on:

Monday - Friday 9am – 12 midday and/or 12 midday – 3pm

We follow the Hinton St George Primary School term time calendar.

**Booking, Fees and Billing**

* The fee charged by the pre-school from 23rd July 2024 is £16.50 per session (3 and 4 year olds), and £22.50 per session (for 2 year olds). Notice of 4 weeks will be given of any fee increase.
* We require a holding fee of £50 cash to secure your child’s place at our setting, payable upon registration. This is a deposit and will be returned to you, once your child officially starts at the setting, unless you do not take up the space, in which case, it will not be refunded.
* All sessions reserved must be paid for. This includes if a child is absent due to short term sickness (1-7 days) or holiday. If a child has long term sickness, then charges will be reviewed on an individual basis.
* Parents are welcome to reserve or pre-book, a session/sessions for their child until they are old enough to attend the Pre-School. This is only available for half a term and is a chargeable service. Sessions can be held for a cost of £17.50 per session for the half term. This is non refundable or transferable and the session will not be reserved until payment has been received.
* You will not be charged for the 8 standard Bank Holidays per year (New Year, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Whitsun, Late August, Christmas Day and Boxing Day) or the 5 INSET days we have this year, please see the school calendar in the welcome pack for these.
* If the Pre School is forced to close due to staff shortages, affected children will have the session’s payment refunded, but funding will still be claimed.
* However, if the Pre-School is forced to close because of reasons outside of their direct control e.g. weather conditions, fees and funding would still be owed and claimed for these days.
* Invoices will be sent out within the first month of each term and fees are to be paid by the half term break.
* Fees are paid via the ParentPay app.
* The fee charging periods are:

Autumn Term: 1st September – 31st December

Spring Term: 1st January – 31st March

Summer Term: 1st April – 31st August

This is in line with the Government Early Years Entitlement periods.

* Your child will be allocated a start date based on their age and what you request. If you decide to delay their start from this agreed date you need to give us 4 weeks notice, and you will be required to pay the session reserve fee of £17.50 per session in order for your child’s sessions to remain reserved for each half term. If you do not give us 4 weeks notice, then the full fees will be payable.
* 4 full weeks notice is required for the cancellation of a place and full fees for 4 weeks will be charged.
* If a place is applied for and then the application is withdrawn with less than 4 weeks notice, then a penalty fee of £30 will be charged in order to cover administration costs, on top of your £50 holding fee.

**Late collection**

It is expected that children will be collected promptly at the end of their session, this is in line with all other settings in the area. We understand that there are sometimes unavoidable circumstances, and you know you will be late to collect, you should do your best to contact the pre-school and inform them of the situation.

**Procedure for collection of late payment/non-payment of fees**

1. If fees remain unpaid upon the date payment is due, a phone call will be made requesting payment or for the parents/carers to attend a debt recovery meeting within one week of the outstanding invoice. At the meeting a payment plan will be drawn up and signed by both parties.
2. Should there be a default on the payment plan a letter will be sent requesting full payment within 7 days and the child will only be allowed access to EARLY YEARS ENTITLEMENT hours.
3. Should fees still remain unpaid, we will proceed to reclaim the outstanding amount through the small claims court.

St George’s Pre-school is sympathetic to financial difficulties and we will actively encourage a mutual agreement in order for fees to be paid. If you think you may have a problem paying fees by the date given, then you should contact the Finance Officer ([Shughes-Williams@HSGschool.co.uk](mailto:Shughes-Williams@HSGschool.co.uk)) or Pre-School Manager ([StGeorge’sPre-School@HSGschool.co.uk](mailto:JBrown@HSGschool.co.uk)) in confidence, so that the situation can be resolved.

**Early Years Entitlement and Expended Entitlement**

**It is imperative to understand these below figures are on the basis of a setting opening 38 weeks in any academic year. Please NOTE we usually open for 39 weeks per year and this is NOT covered in funding.**

**Early Years Entitlement Funding**

***(Universal hours - 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year)***

We are in receipt of Early Years Entitlement Funding for two to four-year olds; this is available from the term following your child’s third birthday (All 3-4-year olds entitlement and funded 2-year olds).

Early Years Entitlement funding entitlement is **approximately** 210 hours in the autumn term, (this equates to 14 weeks), 165 hours in the spring term (this equates to 11 weeks), and 195 hours in the summer term, (this equates to 13 weeks). Parents can claim on average 15 hours per week over 5 days.

You can use more than one provider but no more than three and you can only claim the maximum entitlement of hours per funding period in total.

**Extended Entitlement hours:**

(***Extended hours - 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year)***

Early Years Entitlement extended funding entitlement is **approximately** 420 hours in the autumn term, (this equates to 14 weeks), 330 hours in the spring term (this equates to 11 weeks), and 390 hours in the summer term, (this equates to 13 weeks). Parents can therefore claim on average 30 hours per week over 5 days, when eligible for both types of Early Years Entitlement funding.

There is no minimum number of hours that can be claimed. ***However, St George’s Pre-School has a minimum length of a session which is 3 hours per week and a maximum of 6 hours can be claimed in any one day.*** You can access more than one provider but no more than three and you can only claim the maximum entitlement of hours per funding period in total.

**How to claim for the extended 30 hour childcare funding**

* Please fill in the “Extended Entitlement Consent Form”, which can be found in the registration document. This acts as:

1) A prompt sheet for all the details you will be asked for when registering

2) Provides the setting with written permission and consent to share the information on it with Somerset County Council in order to check eligibility

3) It can be photocopied to pass to additional providers if necessary

* Parents/Carers can find additional information and the application process for the extended hours through the HMRC childcare Service via **www.childcarechoices.co.uk**
* Once they are registered they will be provided with an 11 digit eligibility code which must be given to the Pre-School Administrator via the “Extended Entitlement Consent Form” provided.
* Both parent’s National insurance numbers if in partnership or just one if single.
* Written consent to share National Insurance details and eligibility code with the Pre-School.
* Child’s birth certificate or passport.
* Parent’s declaration form with a statement to say a new form must be completed if the parent changes the hours claimed (Administrator will give these out at the beginning of each term, or if there is a change in the amount of hours being claimed).

**If the parent does not provide written permission to share National Insurance number, St George’s Pre-School cannot accept the extended entitlement funding.**

**It is the parent’s responsibility to apply for the extended hours funding and keep this up to date every three months.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Academic terms** | **Funding periods** |
| **Autumn** | **1st September-31st December** |
| **Spring** | **1st January- 31st March** |
| **Summer** | **1st April- 31 August** |

**It is the parent’s responsibility to reconfirm their eligibility every 3 months and if they do not reconfirm they will not be able to claim for the next funding periods and therefore have to pay for the child’s hours they continue to use over the universal hours (15 hours per week) at St George’s Pre-School.**

It is imperative to understand that when you become eligible it may not be with immediate effect as it may occur in the middle of a funding period as stated above and therefore you will have to wait until the beginning of the next funding period for your eligibility code to come into effect.For example, if you have a child with a date of birth of 9th May. So although you make all the necessary calls and receive a code and notify the setting, you will be expected to wait for the setting to be able to use that code until September as May falls in the middle of a funding period.

**Grace period**

The Early Years Entitlements Team complete audit checks to review the validity of eligibility codes and providers are notified if any parents no longer qualify and inform them of the ‘grace period’. See Grace period dates below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date parents receives ineligible decision on reconfirmation** | **LA Audit date:** | **Grace Period end date:** |
| **1st Jan- 10th Feb** | **11th Feb** | **31st March** |
| **11th Feb-31st March** | **1st April** | **31st August** |
| **1st April- 26th May** | **27th May** | **31st August** |
| **27th May- 31st August** | **1St September** | **31st December** |
| **1st September- 21st October** | **22nd October** | **31st December** |
| **22nd October-31st December** | **2nd January** | **31st March** |

Therefore, if St George’s Pre-School are in the Spring term (1st January-31st March) and you as a parent receive an ‘ineligible decision’ in-between these dates (1st January-31st March), you can continue to claim the extended funding hours until the last date of the Grace period (31st March). Then on the 1St April you will revert back to just the universal funding hours of 15 hours per week and all additional hours over and above the 15 will be invoiced by St George’s Pre-School.

The Grace period is there to provide parents with enough time to reconfirm their eligibility for the extended funding hours. As well as providing a guaranteed income for the provider for a short time.

You will not be able to claim the extended entitlement if you start at a provider when you are already in your ‘Grace period’.

It is also important to note that just because you become ineligible for a period does not mean that you cannot reapply at a later date when your circumstances change.

To claim the Early Years Entitlement **Universal** Funding the following information is needed:

* Child’s legal documentation - birth certificate or passport and a copy sent to the EY funding team.
* Early Years Entitlement funding parent declaration form - completed every term and signed by the parent.
* In order to claim for 2 year old funding the confirmation letter must be provided to St George’s Pre-School

**If the parents do not produce the legal documentation parents will be charged the settings normal fees as unable to claim Early Years Entitlement funding.**

**For children in receipt of Early Years Entitlement funding, our normal fees will apply for hours attended, in excess of the funding entitlement.**

**Please beware that ALL funding is for a MAXIMUM of 38 weeks per year, yet St George’s Pre-School is open for 39 weeks per year. This usually irons itself out with the addition of inset days and bank holidays, but there is the change that your funding will not cover the hours that your child uses and there is therefore a shortfall. In the case of a shortfall, you as the parent/carer are liable for the payment. We do try to warn parents/ carers if it looks like this will occur, as soon as we notice.**

**Tax-free childcare scheme**

We are in receipt of the tax-free childcare scheme and to find out more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/get-tax-free-childcare>.

**Childcare Vouchers**

If your employer has the facility for you to claim childcare vouchers as part of your salary, please see your employer who should be able to supply you with the necessary paperwork to begin claiming.

**Working Tax Credit**

If you receive working tax credit you may be able to get help towards the cost of childcare. For further details contact the tax credits helpline on 0845 300 3900 or visit HM Revenue and Customs website (HMRC) at [www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits).

**Termination of the Contract**

St George’s Pre-school reserves the right to terminate this contract without notice in the event of unsuitable behaviour from parents/carers or non-payment of fees following the non-payment procedure. At all other times 4 weeks notice in writing will be given.

**This Policy was reviewed, updated and re-adopted on 24th July 2024.**

**Jodie Brown (Pre-School Manager) ……………………………………………..**

**Sam Hughes-Williams (School Finance Manager) …………………………………………**

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