

The Coastal Federation

**Bacton Primary
school**



**Mundesley Infant
school**



**Mundesley Junior
school**



**Starfish
pre-school**



Pre-school Charging Policy 2019

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher

Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors

Date: _____

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Statement of intent

Starfish Pre-school aims to provide a Pre-school experience for children that is affordable, high quality and geared towards a smooth transition to primary Preschool.

We aim to: Provide a rich, safe, exploratory and nurturing early years curriculum for children aged from 2 to 4 years old which enables children to achieve their potential, make progress, develop a love of learning (through play) and are ready to begin school.

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

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

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. 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

- 2.1. Parents are charged for child care outside of the following provision:
- 15 hours free provision a week for eligible two-year-olds
 - 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.
- 2.2. The entitlement is offered free, Parents will not be charged a “top up” fee to recoup the difference between the amount received from the Local Authority and the current hourly rate.
- 2.3. Additional hours and services will be charged at the current rate provided below, where hours are not funded as Early Education by the Local Authority.

Age	9:00 - 12:00 / 12:00 - 15:00 (session)
2 Years	£13.20
3 to 4 years	£12.00

- 2.4. There is no charge for snack and consumables. Parents will need to supply nappies baby wipes and suncream.
- 2.5. Government funding is intended to cover the cost of deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality childcare only. It cannot be used to pay for mea
- 2.6. Is, other consumables (such as nappies or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). The Preschool may charge a fee for these additions. If parents choose to pay for these, it is an arrangement that is made in advance between the parent and the Preschool.
- 2.7. Parents will not be required to pay any fee as a condition of taking up a '30 hours' place.
- 2.8. The free entitlement will be delivered consistently so that all children accessing any of the free entitlement will receive the same quality and access to provision, regardless of whether they opt to pay for optional hours, services, meals or consumables.
- 2.9. Late payments will incur a £5 fine for each week the payments are overdue. Parents can avoid this by ensuring the timely payment of fees each week.
- 2.10. A deposit is not charged to secure a place at the setting.

2.11. The setting does not charge a registration fee.

3. Eligibility for free education and childcare for two-year-olds

3.1. Parents of two-year-olds are eligible for free education and childcare if they live in England and receive one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit – if the parent and their partner have a combined income from work of less than £15,400 a year after tax
- Tax credits and they have an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment parents receive when they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

3.2. A child may also be eligible for free early education and childcare if any of the following apply:

- They're looked after by the local council
- They have a current statement of special education needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- They receive Disability Living Allowance
- They've left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

3.3. The Preschool may ask parents to complete a form to help us ensure they receive their free early education and childcare hours.

3.4. Parents can use the free early education and childcare allowance from the term following the child's second birthday.

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

4.1. All children in England receive 570 hours free childcare per year.

4.2. These hours are usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year, but parents may choose to take fewer hours over more weeks.

4.3. '15 hours' free childcare is available from the term following a child's third birthday.

4.4. The Preschool may ask parents to complete a form to help us ensure they receive their free childcare hours.

5. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare extended entitlement

5.1. 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.
- 5.2. 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.
 - 5.3. 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.
 - 5.4. 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.
 - 5.5. 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.
 - 5.6. Eligible parents will provide the Preschool with their unique eligibility code, National Insurance number and child's date of birth, along with their written consent, to enable the Preschool 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.
 - 5.7. The Preschool will retain 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.
 - 5.8. 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.
 - 5.9. 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 Preschool age, whichever is shorter.
 - 5.10. 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.
 - 5.11. 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 Preschool.
 - 5.12. 30 hours free childcare can be claimed at the same time as claiming Universal Credit, tax credits, childcare vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare.

6. Eligibility for extended entitlement for children in foster care

- 6.1. 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 Preschool 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.
- 6.2. To receive their free childcare allowance, foster parents must apply directly to the LA by completing the LA's eligibility form. The Preschool can provide this form on request.
- 6.3. Foster parents are required by the LA to reconfirm their eligibility every three months.

7. Payment information

- 7.1. Payments should be made in advance on or before the 1st of the month that the sessions take place for all non-statutory sessions and lunches, which parents have booked for their child.
- 7.2. Payments should preferably be made via bank transfer, although cheque, payable to Starfish preschool are accepted in the school office. **NO CASH TO BE LEFT ON THE PRESCHOOL PREMISES.**
- 7.3. If a parent issues a cheque that cannot be cashed, any bank charges incurred will be added to the invoice fine will be issued and all future payments must be paid on card or in cash.
- 7.4. Payment is required when a child is on holiday or absent due to illness, as the Pre-school must hold the child's place during this period and staff rotas are set.
- 7.5. If a child is absent for a long period due to illness, the Pre-school will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. The Pre-school's decision is final.
- 7.6. Late payments will incur a £5 fine for each week the payments are overdue. Parents can avoid this by ensuring the timely payment of fees each week.
- 7.7. Withdrawal of a child from Starfish Pre-School must be preceded by a complete one month's notice in writing. If this is not given, the month's fees will be charged in lieu of notice. Any funded children will incur session costs for the remainder of the month as the funding will automatically be transferred by the local council to the new setting.

8. Late collection

- 8.1. We understand that there may be rare occasions when you may be late to collect your child due to circumstances beyond your control. However, it is our expectation that you will contact us to inform us of this or any alternative arrangements made. Unfortunately, late collection of children has a cost implication for the Pre-School. It is therefore necessary to charge parents/carers £5 for every fifteen minutes that the child remains in our care outside their session times.

9. Difficulty with payments

- 9.1. The Preschool will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored.
- 9.2. 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 Jenny Goodman, the Business Manager, as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

10. Debt collection

- 10.1. The governing board has a duty to ensure the Preschool receives all the funds to which it is entitled, including Pre-school fees.
- 10.2. A full record will be kept of debts owed to the Preschool. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices.
- 10.3. The Preschool will refer outstanding debt to NPLAW legal services to recover on the preschools behalf.

11. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

- 11.1. The Executive Headteacher and School Business Manager will ensure that:
 - Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and well-maintained.
 - Evidence of the steps taken by the Preschool 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.
- 11.2. The governing board:
 - 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 Jenny Goodman, the School Business Manager.

12. The process for pursuing debts

- 12.1. **Informal reminder** – Within **two** days of late payment, the debtor will be informally reminded in person or by telephone that they owe money to the Preschool.
- 12.2. **First reminder letter** – If the debt is yet to be paid **one week** after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor.
- 12.3. **Second reminder letter** - If the debt is yet to be paid **one week** 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 Preschool can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further.

- 12.4. **Final reminder letter** – If no response is received following the second reminder, the Preschool 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.
- 12.5. **Possible legal action** – If no payment is made, and the governing board decides to escalate the matter to the LA, the **LA** will decide whether to take legal action against the debtor.

13. The waiving of debts

- 13.1. The waiving of debts is at the discretion of the **Executive Headteacher** and the **governing board**.
- 13.2. 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.
- 13.3. The **headteacher** is authorised to waive debts off up to **£100**.
- 13.4. Debts between **£100** and **£500** will only be waived with the approval of the **governing board**. Debts of **£500** or more will never be waived.

14. Monitoring and review

- 14.1. This policy will be reviewed on an **annual** basis by the **headteacher** and **SBM** in conjunction with the **governing board**.

The Coastal Federation

Bacton Primary, Mundesley Infant (SRB) and Junior Schools

Executive Head - Simon Wakeman | exehead@coastalfederation.com | @CoastalFed 

Federation Business Manager | Jenny Goodman | businessmanager@coastalfederation.com | **01263 720401**



Head of School - David Hopkins
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01692 650240



Head of Schools - Sarah Hutt
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'together aspire, together achieve, together we are stronger..'

Date

Dear parents,

30 hours extended early years entitlement for eligible three- and four-year-olds

I'm writing to inform you that you may be eligible for 30 hours free childcare per week, extended from the extended from the universal 15 hours available to all parents.

To be eligible, parents need to meet one or more of the eligibility criteria listed below:

- They (and their partner where applicable) are 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 the 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.
- They or their partner has a taxable income over £100,000.
- They are from outside the EEA and their UK residence card says they cannot access public funds.

Claiming your 30 hours free childcare

You can check your eligibility by using the government's [Childcare Choices](#) website or the [Childcare Calculator](#). If you are eligible, you will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply and receive your unique eligibility code.

We will need this code, together with your National Insurance Number and child's date of birth, to enable us to verify your eligibility with the DfE's Eligibility Checking System.

Please complete and return the below cut-off slip to the **Preschool office** by **the end of the Summer term**, indicating whether you consent to your data being used in this way and, if consent is given, providing the requisite information.

Yours faithfully,

.....

Full name:	
I consent to my personal data being used for the DfE's Eligibility Checking Service.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

If you indicated 'Yes' above, please provide us with the below information.

Unique eligibility code:	
National Insurance Number:	
Child's date of birth	

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Executive Head - Simon Wakeman | exehead@coastalfederation.com | @CoastalFed 

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'together aspire, together achieve, together we are stronger..'

Date

Dear parents and carers,

30 hours extended early years entitlement for children in foster care,

From September 2018, a child in foster care is entitled to an additional 15 hours free childcare per week (30 hours free childcare per week total) provided that the child is aged three, but below the compulsory Preschool 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 carer.
- 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 Preschool can provide this form on request.

If you believe you are entitled to 30 hours free childcare for a child in your care, please get in touch with the School Business Manager via businessmanager@coastalfederation.com or by calling 01263 720401 to discuss the matter further and receive your form.

Yours faithfully,

Jenny Goodman

School Business Manager