



Fees Policy

I am self-employed and set my own Terms and Conditions, including fees. It is important that you read through my Fees Policy very carefully and understand exactly what is expected of you.

If fees are not paid I am within my rights to immediately terminate care and take legal action against you to recover fees. Legal action might affect your credit rating in the future.

- 1 Legally binding contract** - this Fees Policy forms part of your legally binding contract with us.
- 2 Retainers** – a retainer keeps a place open for a child if you want to send your child but you do not want the space immediately. I charge half normal fees (50%) during the waiting period.
 - 2.1 Please note that retainer fees are for me to keep unless the place is not available when you want it, in which case they must be repaid in full. You do not have to pay a retainer fee when I am on holiday or unable to work.
 - 2.2 Please note that I cannot charge a retainer fee for an unborn baby.
- 3 Deposits** – you pay an agreed amount of money as a deposit to reserve your child's place for an agreed date in the future, and to guarantee a minimum of period of attendance at our setting.
 - 3.1 **Privately funded hours** - For a contract which includes or is solely comprised of privately funded hours, the deposit is 2/12 of the child's annualised privately funded hours, capped at £150. The deposit will be credited against final fees minus any other charges. The deposit may need to be adjusted if you change your child's days/hours in the future.
 - 3.2 **Government funded hours**
 - 3.2.1 **Conditions of Deposit Return**

The deposit for contracts for government funded childcare hours only is held to ensure commitment to the allocated funded hours and to safeguard the setting against funding losses arising from unnotified or premature

withdrawals. In strict compliance with statutory regulations, this deposit will be refunded in full to the parent/guardian, subject to the following binding conditions:

3.2.2 **Attendance Past Headcount Day:** The child must be actively enrolled and maintain regular attendance at the setting from the first day of the term up to, and including, the official **Local Authority Headcount Day** for that specific term.

3.2.3 **Funding Validation:** My setting must successfully secure and receive the termly Nursery Education Funding (NEF) allocation from **Worcestershire County Council** for the child's place.

3.2.4 **Settlement of Extras:** Any outstanding balances for additional non-funded hours, optional services, meals, or consumables must be cleared in full.

3.2.5 **Impact of Premature Withdrawal**

Worcestershire County Council allocates early years funding on a whole-term basis determined by occupancy on the strict statutory Headcount Day.

Consequently:

3.2.5.1 If a parent/guardian withdraws the child from the setting, or reduces their hours, **prior to the official term Headcount Day**, the local authority will not fund the place for that term.

3.2.5.2 In such an event, the parent/guardian breaches this contract, and the deposit will be retained by my setting to offset the administrative and logistical losses incurred by reserving an unfunded space. Furthermore, the parent/guardian will remain personally liable for any childcare hours delivered up to the contract termination date (including any contractual notice period) at our standard private hourly rate.

3.2.6 **Timeline of Refund**

Once attendance and funding are confirmed by the local authority past Headcount Day, the deposit will be returned via bank transfer, if paid from a personal account, or via Tax-Free Childcare if paid by this method, within 28 days of the Headcount Day.

3.3 If I am unable to offer the place, the deposit will be returned in full. If you cancel the requested place, or your child starts but does not stay at our setting for the minimum attendance period specified above, you will lose your deposit.

4 Registration fee – I do not charge a registration fee to cover paperwork and initial information sharing.

5 Settling in sessions (under 5's only) – settling in sessions are an important part of your child's transition into my care.

5.1 I offer 2 x 2 hour settling in sessions, payable at my normal hourly rate or, where applicable, covered by Nursery Education Funding (NEF).

5.2 We may agree a phased start to childcare if we both agree that a longer settling period is needed, however the full contracted session length will remain payable as the session has been reserved for your child's sole use.

5.3 Settling in sessions normally take place within the two weeks before the normal contracted hours are due to start.

6 Fees payable

6.1 Mealtimes included in hourly fee – morning snack around 8.45am, lunch around 12.00pm, and light tea served 3.30pm.

6.2 I charge by the hour.

6.3 **Fully privately funded sessions** - £66.50 per full day privately funded session, including food, snacks and drinks

6.4 **Partially government-funded sessions** - £7.00 per unfunded hour of a full day session, including food, snacks and drinks

6.5 **Wraparound care** – I regret that I no longer offer wraparound care.

6.6 **Reduction for siblings** – I regret that, as a small setting, I am not able to offer a reduction for siblings.

7 Calculating fees (hourly rate)

7.1 My normal care is provided on a full-day basis (7.30am – 5.00pm). Where an exception to this has been agreed, fees are rounded up to the hour, up to a maximum of 9.5 hours per day. For example:

- 7.2 If a child is booked to attend from 9.00am to 3.45pm, 7 hours will be charged
- 7.3 If a child is booked to attend from 9.00am to 3.45pm but the parent arrives at 3.30pm, 7 hours will be charged
- 7.4 If a child is booked to attend from 9am to 3.45pm but the parent arrives after 3.45pm, 7 hours will have been charged in advance and the period of time between 3.45pm and the actual time of collection will be charged at the late collection rate.
- 7.5 The Attendance Register, which must be completed at the beginning of each session, will show the exact time each child arrives and leaves the premises and can be consulted at any mutually agreed time in case of a query over hours.

8 Additional charges

- 8.1 **Childminder holiday** – no charge
- 8.2 **Childminder illness** – no charge
- 8.3 **Childminder occasional days off** – no charge
- 8.4 **Any hours booked outside of my normal working hours** - £21 per hour
- 8.5 **Early arrival/late collection** – £15.00 per 15 minutes or part thereof.
- Note – Please remember that early arrival/late collection is not always available. Please consider possible late collections when booking contracted hours, so that late collection fees are not incurred. It is important you let me know as quickly as possible if you are going to be late, so I can reassure your child.
- 8.6 **Child/family holiday** – full fee.
- 8.7 **Child/family illness, including periods of mandatory or setting-specific exclusion** – full fee.
- 8.8 **Parent occasional days off** – full fee.
- 8.9 **Bank holidays** – no charge as I do not work. If you need me to work, by agreement and in exceptional circumstances, I will charge my unsociable hours rate.
- 8.10 **Childminder partial or full closure due to adverse weather or other unplanned event where risk assessment identifies risk to the health or welfare of children or adults within the setting if the setting were to remain open** – full fees apply.
- 8.11 **Requests for additional hours/days of care** – where you give me more than 24 hours' notice of a request for additional hours, and I have confirmed my availability, this is charged at my normal rate for the hours/time period covered.

- 8.12 **Childminder training days** – 50% normal fees apply, up to a maximum of 5 training days per academic year. A minimum of four weeks' notice will be given of any required training days.
- 8.13 **Planning and administration days** – no charge.
- 8.14 **Nursery wraparound care** – I am unable to provide wraparound care while a child attends another early years setting.
- 8.15 **Preschool wraparound care** – I am unable to provide wraparound care while a child attends a preschool setting.
- 8.16 **Collection/drop off** – I charge my normal hourly rate if I collect or drop off your child to your house or another setting for the travel time from leaving my house to getting back to my house, rounded up to the nearest hour.
- 8.17 **Outings** – no charge for routine outings. A contribution towards entrance costs may be requested for special outings which will be discussed in advance.

9 Food provision

- 9.1 Meals and drinks are included once your child is fully weaned. I do not provide baby milk or weaning meals, unless following baby-led weaning.
- Morning snack – 9.00am
 - Lunch – 12.00pm
 - Light tea – 3.45pm
- 9.2 For children in receipt of government funded places, please see my NEF Parent Information Leaflet.
- 9.3 Fresh drinking water is freely available through the day in age-appropriate cups/bottles.

10 Other fees information

10.1 Funded sessions

- 10.1.1 I am registered with my Local Authority to offer the funded sessions for children aged 9 months and above. Priority is given to families wanting a minimum of 2 x 9.5 hourly funded sessions per week.
- 10.1.2 Any other hours you wish to book over and above your funding entitlement will be charged at the published rates.

10.2 Part-time care

- 10.2.1 I am happy to offer part time care and I try to be as flexible as possible. However, in order to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged from birth to 5, I require a minimum contract of 2 full days per week.

10.3 Shared care and transition to other settings

- 10.3.1 Where I share the care of your child with another setting or provider, I offer a minimum of 2 x 9.5 hourly sessions per week. This is usually to cover the transition period to pre-school, typically over the course of one academic term. I do not normally share care with other settings before your child attends pre-school.

10.4 Extra expenses

- 10.4.1 Extra expenses will normally be agreed in advance. However, this is not always possible. Sundry expenses might include emergency supplies of formula or baby food etc. Payment will be requested on the next invoice.

10.5 Invoice adjustments

- 10.5.1 Where invoice adjustments to your private fees are required, for example due to unforeseen setting closure or where additional sessions have been booked for your child, these will be accounted for in the following term's invoice.

10.6 Payment schedules

- 10.6.1 I may from time to time agree to fix the monthly invoice amount for an agreed period of months to enable the cost of your child's care to be averaged across that number of months (a 'Payment Schedule'). If you give notice to change your child's number of contracted hours whilst the Payment Schedule is active, there will be a £75 administration fee to cover the time spent in recalculating the figures. This administration fee will be incurred each time you request a change during the period of the active Payment Schedule.

10.7 Administrative fees

- 10.7.1 If additional work needs to be carried out at your request or for the sole benefit of you or your child, I will charge for this at a rate of £21.00 per hour or part thereof.

10.8 Parents evenings

- 10.8.1 I routinely provide daily verbal updates at handover times, daily written WhatsApp update with photographs and the statutory two year progress check. Additionally, you may request a maximum of two additional parents

evenings in each calendar year. There will be a fee of £36 per parents evening, to cover additional work required to be carried out for this purpose.

10.9 **All year round care** - I offer contracts for all year round care, which provides high quality childcare throughout the year, both during school term time and school holidays.

10.10 **Term time only**

10.10.1 I offer contracts for 38 weeks of term time only care across the Worcestershire Local Authority academic term dates, as stated on their website.

10.10.2 These dates cover a 39 week period in total, with five Teacher Education Days (TED) being intended to be taken within these dates. We will agree with you which dates to exclude as 'TED'. In the event of no agreement being reached, my final five working days of the Worcestershire Local Authority academic year (as stated on their website) will be taken as unfunded.

10.10.3 If additional care is required outside of these dates, this will be subject to my availability and will need to be booked in separately.

10.11 **Holiday provision only** - I do not currently provide holiday provision contracts, as I tend to take my own holidays during the school holiday periods.

11 **Payments**

11.1 **Paying fees** – fees are invoiced termly in advance of care, with monthly payments to reach my account no later than 5.00pm on the last working day of the month or the payment date stated on the invoice, whichever is the earlier. Each month's fees cover all contracted hours for the following month and are payable in advance of care being provided.

11.2 The hours charged are allocated for your child's sole use. Contracted hours are payable regardless of late arrivals, early collections, your or your child's illness, occasional days off, unusual school closure etc.

11.3 **Payment options** – I accept bank transfer (BACS/Faster Payments), cash, vouchers, tax-free childcare payments or a combination of these methods. I do not normally accept cheques.

11.4 Please remember that you are responsible for paying me – not Tax Credits, voucher companies etc. If payments are late, it is your responsibility to ensure I am paid.

11.5 Where your child is in receipt of government funded hours and, for any reason, the Local Authority does not pay the funding for the contracted hours, you will be required to pay the hours at my private rate.

11.6 **Payment date** – payment must be made so as to reach me by 5.00pm on the last working day of the month or the payment date stated on the invoice, whichever is the earlier. Ensure you allow enough days for the payment to reach me through your chosen payment method. Be aware that some methods can take up to 4-5 days, and some payment methods do not operate over weekends or on bank holidays.

11.7 **Unpaid fees** – any fees that remain unpaid by 5.00pm on the last day of the month will be charged at a late payment rate of £15 per calendar day or part thereof.

11.8 I will not normally provide childcare for any session for which the payment is outstanding. If fees have not been paid by the end of the first week of the month I reserve the right to immediately terminate the contract, and legal advice will be sought.

12 Help with fees

12.1 Tax credits may pay a percentage of your childcare costs, depending on joint family income. Advice can be found here - <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/approved-childcare>. If you need help with claiming Tax Credits or other benefits (letters writing, confirmations of invoices/amounts changed etc), please let me know.

12.2 Please let me know as quickly as possible if you are having problems paying your child's fees. I would much rather work with you to resolve the issues than have to cause a child upset and trauma by terminating their contract.

13 Contract amendments/changes and termination

13.1 All fees **must** be paid in full before the contract is terminated. Contract termination must normally be in writing, giving a minimum notice period as stated in the 'Notice Period' section of this policy.

13.2 The termination and notice period does not include holiday days or periods when the setting is closed, or any unbooked days/weeks such as the weeks between terms in a term time only contract.

- 13.3 I reserve the right to immediate termination of the contract in order to protect the wellbeing of myself, my family and those who attend my setting, and to protect the positive relationships I have with my neighbours where:
- the relationship has broken down beyond repair, or
 - abuse, aggression, threats or intimidation takes place, or
 - an event or action causes conflict with my neighbours, or
 - an event or action compromises the ongoing safety of anybody in my setting
- 13.4 The termination and notice period is chargeable at the normal rate. If any fees are outstanding, including any fees in lieu of notice, you will be acting in breach of contract. In such an instance I reserve the right to seek legal advice.
- 13.5 If you are on a preferential private hourly rate, ie your private hourly rate is lower than that of a new customer as at my latest price increase, I may increase your private hourly rate from the date of the start of the amended hours to match that of a new customer in order to offset loss of income.
- 13.6 The deposit will be used as payment towards the private fees for the last month of your child's care and any extra fees, costs or charges will be invoiced for payment by the usual date.

14 Notice period

14.1 Changes to contracted hours **privately paid for by you**

- 14.1.1 A minimum of one calendar month's notice by either party for changes to a child's hours contracted for payment by you. Where notice is received **before 5pm**, notice will be deemed to have been received that day (day zero) and the notice period will start on the following day. Where notice is received **after 5pm**, notice will be deemed to be received on the following day (day zero) and the notice period will start on the day following the deemed notice date.

14.2 Changes to contracted **government funded (NEF) hours – notice period and term-time boundaries**

- 14.2.1 Please note that funding is allocated on a whole-term basis. If you wish to make changes to your child's funded hours part-way through a term, it may not be possible to transfer the funding to a new setting. This is governed by rules set by the Local Authority and is not within my control.

14.2.2 **Required Notice:** To withdraw your child from the setting, you must provide a minimum of half a school term's notice (defined precisely as 6 weeks) in writing to me.

14.2.3 **Holiday Exclusion:** Notice periods must be served during official term time weeks only. Official school holiday periods (including the 6-week Summer holiday, Easter, Christmas, and half-term breaks) do not count toward your notice period. For example, if notice is given on the final day of the Summer term, the notice period will not begin counting down until the first day of the subsequent Autumn term.

14.2.4 **Late Notice and New Term Financial Liability - Alignment with Local Authority Headcount:** Our funding is strictly tied to Worcestershire County Council's termly headcount structure. If you fail to give the required half-term notice prior to a new term commencing, the setting is blocked from reallocating that funded place to another child.

14.2.5 **Fees in Lieu of Notice:** Where notice is given late and extends into a new term, or where notice is given after the local authority's funding transfer cutoff date, you remain strictly liable for a private fee.

14.2.6 **Late Notice Calculation:** If notice is given after the deadline, a private fee in lieu of notice equivalent to one calendar month of the place's value (calculated at our standard hourly/daily rate for the child's scheduled hours) will be invoiced directly to you. Government funding cannot be used to cover this period if the child is no longer attending, and you agree to pay this charge privately as compensation for the setting's lost slot.

14.3 If I need to make changes that will affect your child's funded hours with me I will give you a minimum of 6 weeks' written notice. In such instances, no fees in lieu of notice will be applied.

15 Fees review – fees are reviewed annually to take effect from April, in line with government funding rate review dates. You will be notified in writing if fees are changing, giving you a minimum of one calendar month's notice so you can adjust tax credits/bank payments/vouchers etc.

16 Please remember! Booked sessions are reserved for your child's sole use. This means that I am unable to care for another child on the days and sessions that

your child is due to attend. This also means that I charge full fees if the child is dropped off later or collected early, and I do not swap days or hours around. I charge full fees for all booked sessions and for additional/extra sessions. I will always invoice parents for booked sessions unless I am ill or on holiday and unable to provide a service.

- 17** If you have any questions about my Fees Policy, please do not hesitate to discuss them with me.