



# **Gunthorpe Explorers Pre-School**

## **Booking and Payment Policy**

## **Pre-School Booking and Payment Policy**

### **Aims**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the transparent process for booking places and payment procedures at Gunthorpe Pre-school. It is our aim to ensure all parents and carers experience a fair process in booking sessions for their child/ren and are given clear guidelines for paying any pre-school fees for non-funded sessions.

### **Legislation and Guidance**

The following guidance has been used in compiling this policy

- Peterborough Free Early Years Funding Agreement (Peterborough City Council) – Charging guidelines
- Peterborough City Council Parent/Carer and Provider Agreement: Early Years Funded Entitlements
- Peterborough City Council Nursery Education Funding Guidance

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Board – Soke Education Trust are the governing board with overall responsibility for Gunthorpe Pre-school. The Trust Board delegates some functions to its Local Governance Committee including the monitoring of this policy and holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher - is responsible for ensuring that appropriate staff understand this policy and it is implemented consistently.

Staff - are responsible for implementing the policy consistently, highlighting any suggested alterations to processes and therefore this policy and input to policy review consultation.

Parents/Carers – are responsible for adhering to the process in this policy, checking their eligibility for the Extended entitlement, responding to the reminders from the HMRC every three months to confirm that their details haven't changed, complete the Parent/Carer Declaration for free entitlements, provide proof of child's identify, address and date of birth

### **Definitions**

Universal entitlement - all 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to a maximum of 570 hours free early education per year.

Extended entitlement - 2, 3 and 4 year olds of working parents may be able to access an additional 570 hours free early education per year if they meet certain criteria.

Disadvantaged entitlement - 2 year olds of low income families who receive certain income support benefits, children who attract Disability Living Allowance and Looked After Children

ParentPay – safe and secure way to make cashless payments to Gunthorpe Pre-school

HMRC – UK's tax, payments and customs authority

[Beststartinlife.gov.uk](http://Beststartinlife.gov.uk) - this website informs of the government's introduction of new ways to help parents with childcare costs.

### **Booking places**

Once a parent has gone through the admission process (see Admissions Policy) of application, they will be offered sessions based on what is available at that time, considering the needs of the child and the constraints of the setting.

If a child is currently a pupil of the pre-school and their parent or carer wishes to extend their sessions, they are able to do this based on what is available. Parents need to request these session changes by completing a Change of Session form, available on our website or from the office. Changes to sessions may only begin at the start of a new half term and with two weeks' notice prior to the end of the current half term. This is subject to the requested sessions being available.

### **Payment process**

Upon a child starting their first four weeks at Gunthorpe Pre-school, their parent or carer receives an invoice for their sessions up to and including the end of that half term. The invoice states which sessions are funded and which sessions are to be paid for according to Gunthorpe Pre-school fees.

Following their first invoice, parents/carers receive a new one during the first four weeks of each half term, covering fees until the end of that half term. Therefore, in an entire academic year a parent/carers may receive up to 6 invoices.

Invoices will be emailed to parents and carers, or a hard copy will be made available if not able to access email.

Parents and carers must pay according to the payment date/s stated on the invoice. Invoices should be paid using Parent Pay or a Tax-Free Childcare account. Parents and carers may also request to use Childcare Vouchers and must inform us about it before their child begins their sessions so that compatibility to use the scheme can be clarified.

Late payments will incur a charge of 5% of the total bill. If payment is not made within 2 months of a payment due date then the child's place at Gunthorpe Pre-school will be withdrawn.

Invoices only cover the cost of Gunthorpe Pre-school childcare fees and does not include charges for anything supplementary.

### **Absence and Cancellations**

If a child is absent from Gunthorpe Pre-school then Parents/carers are still required to pay for any sessions that they have booked.

In the event of a child leaving the setting and not needing their place anymore or in the event of parent intending to split their funded hours with another setting, a parent/carers is required to give a four week notice period in writing in order for any change or split to funding to be processed by the Local Authority

If a parent/carer wishes to reduce or cancel an amount of their child's booked sessions this may only take place at half termly points. In the event of a parent/carer no longer wanting their child to attend Gunthorpe Pre-school (for funded and non-funded places), notice of four weeks needs to be given in writing and they will be liable to pay for any booked sessions until the end of that notice period. For a parent/carer to request any changes to sessions, including a reduction of sessions they will be required to complete a Change of Session form and follow the procedure outlined in the 'Booking places' section of this policy. In exceptional circumstances, this period may be waived.

If the late pick-up fee is not paid after repeated reminders, we reserve the right to withdraw the child from their place in pre-school.

### Charges

Aside from the 15 hours and 30 hours entitlement or any additional benefit for childcare costs, the charges will be as follows:

	Half day session	Full day session
2 year olds	£26.25	£52.50
3 and 4 year olds	£18.75	£37.50

This fee structure will be processed without being a barrier to taking up funded places. Children will need to bring a packed lunch to a full day session.

A £10.00 late pick up charge will be applied to children for each occasion where they are not collected by (10 minutes after the end of the session):

Morning session	Afternoon/full day session
12.00pm	3.00pm

Where parents are separated, the charge will be made to the parent that should collect from that session.

### Funded places

On applying to Gunthorpe Pre-school, parents/carers are given an information sheet that outlines the criteria for government Early years funding. This information is clear and transparent and signposts families to sources of further information.

It is the parent/carers responsibility to check their eligibility for the Extended entitlement through [www.Beststartinlife.gov.uk](http://www.Beststartinlife.gov.uk). If eligible, parents/carers will be directed to the HMRC webpage to apply and will be issued with an 11 digit eligibility code which must be given to Gunthorpe Pre-school. It is also the parents/carers responsibility to respond to the reminders from the HMRC every three

months to confirm that their details haven't changed. The Local Authority will make checks on the validity of eligibility codes, following

Gunthorpe Pre-schools initial validation check, and let Gunthorpe Pre-school know if it is no longer valid. A 'grace period' is given if the extended entitlement is no longer funded. Places can be lost if job circumstances change and parents/carers no longer meet the criteria.

If a child attends more than one setting, parents should contact the School Office to discuss sharing funding with the other setting to ensure there is no duplication, which could result in charges for the parent.

The maximum number of funding hours that can be claimed in each year-long funding period is

<b>Maximum hours per year</b>	<b>Eligible group</b>
570	Disadvantaged or low income 2 year olds
570	Universal entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds
1140	2 to 4 year olds with working parent entitlement

All funded hours, start the term after the child turns 3 years old. If funding is claimed by another setting during this year, and the 570 hours is exceeded, Gunthorpe pre-school reserves the right to invoice the parent for any hours not covered by funding.

Parents/carers must complete the Peterborough City Council Parent/Carer and Provider Agreement: Early Years Funded Entitlements form, provide proof of child's identify, address and date of birth (e.g. short form birth certificate or NHS card) and agree with Gunthorpe Pre-school when the place will be taken up. Gunthorpe will not be able to claim funding for a child's place without this form.

**Links to other policies:**

Gunthorpe Pre-school Admissions Policy