

## POLICY FOR DEBT MANAGEMENT

Birchwood Pre-school and After School Club is committed to ensuring it's accessibility to all families in the community, and whilst providing high quality care and education, it aims to keep fees as low as possible. Fees are subject to an annual increase.



On acceptance of a place at the setting, parents are given a welcome pack; this pack contains information on our fees and how to pay them and whether children are eligible for any help with fees e.g. 15 hours universal funding, 30 hour funding, 2 year funding and childcare tax and vouchers. The welcome pack contains a parental agreement, which parents must sign and return to the setting. This parental agreement sets out the steps taken for non-payment of fees.

All parents receive an invoice within the first week of each month. All invoices show Nursery Education Grant which is free at source.

We recognise that families have differing financial situations and we aim to meet the individual needs of all families. Payments are to be made directly into the pre-school bank account.

### Payment of fees

**Before School Club;** all absences will be charged for, unless we receive 3 days' notice. Fees must be paid by the date shown on the invoice

**Pre-school;** all absences must be paid for. Fees must be paid dates indicated on the invoices.

**After School Club;** all absences will be charged at the first hour rate unless 3 days' notice has been received. Fees must be paid in line with the dates indicated on the invoices.

### Non-payment of fees

Non-payment of fees can have a critical effect on the sustainability of the Pre-school. If parents have any difficulty at all paying fees, it is essential that parents tell us immediately. We are always happy to discuss the possibility of alternative arrangements with parents with genuine financial difficulties. If a family has used the services provided by the Pre-School without payment or their payment has been dishonoured, the Pre-School will adopt the following staged procedure: To ensure fees are paid, the following actions will be taken:

- a payment reminder is sent via the Family app.
- If payment is not received within 7 days an Overdue Account letter is sent. If payment is received within seven days no further action will be taken.
- If payment is not received, a second letter will be issued asking for immediate payment, in full within a further seven days. If payment is received within that seven day period no further action will be taken.
- If after fourteen days from the original "Overdue Account" letter, full payment (or an agreed payment plan) has not been received, a final letter will be issued. At this stage your child(ren) will be unable to use our services until full payment is received. If payment is received within seven days of the "Final" letter, no further action will be taken.
- If payment is still not received legal action will be taken

*This policy was reviewed by Claire Davis, December 2023.*

*Staff signature.....(Hard copy only).*

*Next review date, May 2025.*