

# Little Dragons Pre-School and Clubs



## Fees Policy

### Statement of Intent

We aim to ensure our financial stability by having a competitive, fair and consistent approach to charging. The pre-school is operating in an increasingly challenging economic climate and it is therefore our policy to wherever possible avoid the incurrence of debtors and where necessary pursue ALL unpaid fees through the County Court for the recovery of the setting's money.

### Fees

At induction parents/carers will be fully informed of the fee and payment structure of the setting for Pre-School Sessions, Breakfast Club and After School Club. The current fees for sessions are on our web-site or can be provided by the pre-school office.

Rates for additional services such as summer holiday club will be advertised annually.

A registration fee is charged. The registration fee entitles your child to a book bag, a t-shirt and two complimentary lunch club vouchers.

The Committee will annually review and readopt the policy and fee levels. Parents and carers will be given at least a half terms notice of any plan to increase fees.

### Funding

At the start of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms, parents of funded children will be asked to sign the Parent Agreement form issued by Essex County Council. This states the number of hours for which your child(ren) will be attending the setting. We request that this form is returned within 1 week as funding cannot be claimed without it and any delay in returning the form may mean that the funding cannot be claimed and the parent/carer will be liable for fees.

Those parents claiming 30 hours funded childcare must ensure they obtain their unique reference number and provide this to the Business Manager before the deadline, this will be required every term.

### Discounted Sessions & Additional Charges

Where multiple children from a family attend a pre-school session or wrap around care session discounts are applied.

From time to time the pre-school will offer discounted sessions or run a promotion to try to fill available spaces within a session. These will be communicated to all relevant parents and carers and can be accessed on a first come first served basis.

A late collection fee for every 15 minutes, starting 15 minutes after session finishes will be applied.

Failure to pay invoices will incur a 10% late payment charge, please see further details overleaf.

Ad-hoc additional sessions at pre-school or in wrap around care will be added to the next month's invoice. Although we aim to be a flexible service to support families please acknowledge that the pre-school is able to run more efficiently if sessions are planned and communicated with reasonable notice. Parents and Carers should also note that sessions are restricted to maximum numbers so late communication of demand may not be able to be met.

While our aim is to work with working families and we do accept the needs can change, we do require four weeks written notice of a service no longer being required. Services not used within this four week period will be charged for.

### Invoicing

Invoices are produced at beginning of each month for the following month based on planned attendance. We use the Firststeps software to administer this process.

The pre-school relies on prompt payment for its services. We request that all invoices are paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month to which they relate, unless due to holiday periods an alternative date is advised.

A reminder will be sent on the 10<sup>th</sup> (or alternative due date) if no payment has been received. Failure to pay within one week of this reminder will incur a 10% charge.

If you require earlier notification of what your monthly charges will be then please discuss this with the Business Manager. Payments for planned sessions can be made in advance but not in lieu of services received.

We prefer to receive payments of fees via BACs straight into the pre-school bank account. Our account number is 27985458 and the sort code is 60-06-06. We are trying to reduce the cash and cheques received by the pre-school, such payments incur administration costs and risk to staff when transporting cash. If having to pay cash then please have the correct amount as change is not often kept on the premises.

There is a "Drop Box" by the register for ALL moneys to be left in, this is locked and emptied at least 3 times a week. Please enclose the correct money in a sealed envelope detailing what it relates to.

We are in the process of changing our bank account at the time of this policy review and updated information will be communicated when the new account is set up.

Non Payment of Fees

Please communicate with us if you are ever facing difficulty in paying your fees. You can speak to the Manager, Business Support Manager or Treasurer. We will always treat this in the strictest confidence and work with you to put in place an arrangement to pay.

Failure to pay three weeks into the month the fees are due will incur a late payment fee.

If you have failed to pay, and not made contact with the pre-school, when the next month's invoice is raised the Business Manager is required to escalate this to the Treasurer.

Failure to pay outstanding fees, again with no contact with the pre-school, may result in the Treasurer notifying you, on behalf of the committee, of our intention to withdraw the services you receive (that are not funded by the Local Authority) until outstanding debts are settled.

If outstanding fees are not paid by the deadline for the next month's invoice the setting will immediately begin proceedings in the County Court for which we charge an administration fee and all court costs. If the setting is required to attend at County Court, costs will be applied at an hourly rate.

Please work with us to ensure legal action is not required. It will avoid embarrassment to all parties.

Please note where payments have been consistently late and recovery action has been instigated the pre-school may require pre-payment for any future services requested.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Little Dragons Pre School
Held on	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2017
Date to be reviewed	November 2017
Signed on behalf of the Pre-School	.....
Printed name:	Rob Lord
Role of signatory	Chairperson