



## 9.0 Childcare & Early Years Practices – January 2026

### 9.1e Schedule of Fees and Action to Recover Monies Owed

#### Aim

We aim to ensure that all sections of the community have access to Caterpillars through open, fair and clearly communicated policies and procedures, including our fee structures. However, as a registered charity, in order to keep our fee structure low, and ensure the financial stability of Caterpillars Pre-School we will implement a fair and a consistent process for pursuing non-payment of fees.

#### Methodology

In order to achieve this aim Caterpillars Pre-School will:

- At induction fully inform parents/carers of the fee and payment structure of the Caterpillars Pre-School.
- Issue invoices to parents electronically via email when fees are due. The invoice will give details of the sessions being paid for and the rate being charged. It will also include payment details and give a 3-week window in which to make the payment.

#### Funding

- Universal funded places (up to 15 hours a week) can be claimed from the term after a child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.
- Working parents funding of up to 30 hours a week can be available for children over the age of 9 months. More information can be found at <https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/> (formally the Childcare Choices website)
- We accept children who are receipt of all forms of funding and do not restrict either the number of places or number of hours that children who are in receipt of funded hours can access.
- Any hours/sessions attended that are not covered by government funding will be charged in line with the rates outlined below.
- Funding does not cover the following ;
- snack, meals, or other food based activities
- nappies, sun cream, wipes
- enrichment/extra-curricular activities such as trips, celebrations, festivals or specialist tuition.

- All these areas will incur a charge as set out under the 'Consumables & Enrichment' charge detailed below.

### **Fee Structure & Invoicing**

- Our fees are reviewed a minimum of every April as are the Government funded rates and maybe reviewed during the year if funding rates are revised or other financial pressures demand it.
- The current fee rates for non-funded hours from September 2025 is £8.50 per hour for all children regardless of age.
- We charge a £3 per day 'Consumables & Enrichment charge'. This covers the item and activities not covered by funding that are listed above. The charge is broken down as follow;

Consumables – food - £1.50

Enrichment & Extra Curricular Activities - £1

Consumables - Non food (inc Nappies, suncream and other non food consumable items) - £0.50p

- Caterpillars offers a number of enrichment activities throughout the year. This includes food-based activities which can be linked to the various festivals and events that we celebrate with the children such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. We also run a number of enrichment activities during the year such as craft mornings, parental tea parties, and children's parties at the end of the Autumn and Summer term.
- We request this charge each half term based on the number of morning sessions your child attends for. This charge is applied in this way to enable us to plan what enrichment and food-based activities we can run during the term without having to make multiple requests for contributions to additional activities.
- Were children are fully funded, then this charge is not mandatory, but as a charitable run preschool, were contributions can not be provided, we will discuss with families what options can be put in place to ensure the inclusion of their child in the various additional activities.
- Invoices for non-funded places/hours will be issued electronically every half term and are payable within 21 days of the date of issue.
- Hardcopy invoices can be provided to families on request who do not have access to emails.

### **Notice Periods/Absences/Late Collections**

- 4 weeks' term time notice is required if your child no longer require a place Caterpillars (this includes new starters once the registration papers have been signed) or you wish to reduce the number of sessions your child attends. If less than 4 weeks term time notice is given, fees will remain payable for the duration of the notice period.
- In order to retain your child's place at Caterpillars, absences due to holidays, sickness or personal choice, remain chargeable.

- If you are late collecting your child for any reason, in line with our terms and conditions we reserve the right to apply the following fees to cover the additional costs Caterpillars will incur whilst staff wait with your child;
  - £20 fee for the first 15 minutes
  - An additional £10 for every fifteen minutes thereafter.

### **Unexpected Closures**

In the exceptional circumstances that Caterpillars is forced to close one or both of its settings e.g. due to extreme weather, staff sickness, outbreak of a contagious illness or forced to close by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, all fees remain payable for the first 3 working days. If the closure lasts longer than 3 working days, adjustments will be made against future invoices.

### **Recovery of Monies - Statement of Intent**

It is our policy to pursue all unpaid fees through the County Court for the recovery of monies owed to Caterpillars Pre-School.

### **System for Failed/Non Payments**

If a family has used the services provided by Caterpillars Pre-School without payment or their payment has been dishonoured, Caterpillars Pre-School will follow the staged procedure outlined below:

1. 7 days after the invoice due date, a '1<sup>st</sup> reminder will automatically be generated by the invoicing system and emailed to the named parent/carer.
2. If payment is still not received within a further 7 days of the 1<sup>st</sup> reminder (and now 14 days after the payment due date) a 2<sup>nd</sup> reminder will again be automatically generated by the invoicing system and emailed to the parent/carer.
3. If payment is still not received within a further 7 days of the 2<sup>nd</sup> reminder (now 21 days after the due date) a 3<sup>rd</sup> and final reminder will again be automatically generated by the invoicing system and emailed to the parent/carer.
4. During steps 1-3 contact will be made with the parent/carer to ensure that the invoices and reminders are being received and to discuss when they expect to be able to make the payment.
5. If after 21 days beyond the original due date and following the issue of the 3 system generated reminders and contact being made with the parent/carer, payment is still outstanding, an 'Overdue Account' letter asking for immediate payment plus a £10 administration fee will be issued to the parent/carer.

If payment is received within 7 days of the 'Overdue Account' letter, no further action will be taken.

6. If after a further 7 days from the 'Overdue Account' letter payment is still outstanding and/or a payment plan (that has been agreed by the Caterpillars Pre-School Committee) has not been agreed a 'Final Warning' letter will be issued plus a further £10 administration fee. At this stage the child(ren) will be unable to use Caterpillars services until payment in full is received.  
If full payment following the issue of the 'Final Warning' letter is received or a payment plan is being adhered to, no further action will be taken.
7. If there has been no payment or payment plan put in place within a further 7 days of the 'Final Warning' letter, Caterpillars Pre-School will immediately begin proceedings in the County Court for which we charge an administration fee of £50 and all court costs. If Caterpillars Pre-School are required to attend at County Court, costs will be applied at a rate of £20 an hour.
8. If the amount owing in fees exceeds £250, or a child is due to leave Caterpillars and there are fee's still outstanding, the Management Committee reserve the right to suspend a child's place at Caterpillars at any point from step 1 until full payment or a payment plan is agreed.