

# Fees and Admissions Policy

It is the intention of Bridgwater & Taunton College Childcare Centre to ensure that parents and carers are fully informed as to the policies and procedures relating to our 'Fees and Admissions Policy'.

Our application procedure is based on the date the original application is received at the centre. In this way we prioritise our waiting list by date order ensuring that we are offering equality of opportunity for all our families. However, should there be limited availability, priority will be given to Bridgwater and Taunton College staff, students and existing families.

## Deposit

To secure a place at the Childcare Centre we request a £30.00 deposit – this will be refunded on your child's final invoice.

## Settling in Sessions

When your child starts nursery, they will often have several settling in sessions to familiarise themselves with the Childcare Centre. The first 2 sessions are free; any following sessions will be included on your first invoice at the relevant hourly rate and meal cost.

## Booking Procedures

Parents are able to book sessions that suit their individual requirements through a planned and fixed booking pattern.

<b>0-2</b>	<b>2-3</b>	<b>3-4</b>
8.00 - 8.30	8.00 - 8.30	8.00 - 8.30
8.30 - 9.00	8.30 - 9.00	8.30 - 9.00
<b>9.00 - 11.30</b>	<b>9.00 - 11.30</b>	<b>9.00 - 12.00</b>
<b>11.30 - 1.00</b>	<b>11.30 - 1.00</b>	<b>12.00 - 1.00</b>
<b>1.00 - 4.00</b>	<b>1.00 - 4.00</b>	<b>1.00 - 4.00</b>
4.00 - 4.30	4.00 - 4.30	4.00 - 4.30
4.30 - 5.00	4.30 - 5.00	4.30 - 5.00
5.00 - 5.30	5.00 - 5.30	5.00 - 5.30

- Minimum booking of 7 hours per week.
- All booking patterns will need to start by 9:00am in the morning or 1:00pm in the afternoon.
- We ask that children come in no later than 10:00am if attending during the morning session. This is to ensure that every child is able to access the focused group times during our morning and afternoon sessions. One off exceptional circumstances are at the Manager's discretion e.g. medical appointments.
- All children who are booked in from 8:00am will automatically be booked in and charged for a breakfast; those booked in for a lunch will be booked in until 1:00pm. With all children who are booked in after 4:00pm will automatically be booked in and charged for a tea.
- If we have availability, parents can book additional times for their child but swapping hours and cancelling hours are not permitted.
- One month's notice is required to increase or decrease sessions booked or to withdraw a child from the Centre. If a term time only booking pattern, 1 month's notice during term time is required to withdraw a child from the Centre otherwise payment will be necessary from their last day.

## Charges & Financial Procedures

From 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024, the following fees apply:

Children aged 0-2 years	Children aged 2-3 years	Children aged over 3 years
£6.93 per hour	£6.60 per hour	£6.16 per hour

Breakfast    £1.35                      Lunch            £3.35                      Tea                £2.30

### Early Years Entitlement (Funded Hours) – Consumables / Additional Services Charge

The Early Years Funding is intended to deliver free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to pay for the costs of drinks, snacks, consumables or additional activities. To cover this an additional services charge of **50p per funded hour** will be added to your invoice monthly, along with meal costs or extra hours as appropriate.

We offer a limited number of Early Years Entitlement only places; these are booking patterns that pay no fees for meals or additional services.

This does not apply to parents / carers in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium or children in receipt of supported families 2 Year Funding.

### Discounts

- For families with more than one child attending, we offer a sibling discount of 10% for the eldest child.
- Staff in current employment with Bridgwater & Taunton College will receive a 5% discount on fees (not applicable to meals).
- For children accessing year round care, we offer a 50% holiday discount for 2 weeks based on the permanent booking pattern. For example, a 5 day booking pattern will entitle you to 10 days holiday. A 3 day booking pattern will entitle you to 6 days holiday etc. Holidays need to be booked one month in advance. For parents who wish to take their child out for time over and above the two week allocation, an authorised absence will be noted for the child, but the original booking charge will be applied.
- Holiday time is accrued throughout the academic year, and no holiday entitlement can be carried over to the following year.
- For families accessing term time places the holiday discount does not apply. Term time children being taken out for holidays will be noted as an authorised absence, but the original booking charge will be applied.

### Billing

- We will not refund fees for sessions not attended due to illness, absence or where the nursery is forced to close due to circumstances beyond our control e.g., severe weather.
- Invoices are raised in advance on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month with payment due within 21 days.
- Payment can be made by Cash / Card Payment / BACS / Childcare Vouchers / Tax Free Childcare. If paying by Tax Free Childcare or Childcare Vouchers please allow enough time for the payment to clear.
- If your account falls into arrears, we may suspend or reduce your sessions with immediate effect, until all fees are paid. Invoices that are not paid by their due date will have a £15.00 late payment charge added to the account each month in arrears. A continued place within the centre will not be guaranteed if a debt remains outstanding for more than 1 month.

- Any invoice outstanding will be chased through the debt management system within the college – see Debt Management Policy.
- Due to staffing and resource requirements as laid down by Ofsted, children must have been collected and vacated the nursery by the end of their session. If a child has not been collected by this time a late collection charge will be added to your next invoice. Between 8am and 5.30pm, a charge of £7.50 will be made for the first 15 minutes of lateness, with a further £7.50 for any additional 15 minutes of lateness until the child is collected. After 5.30pm a charge of £15 for the first 15 minutes of lateness will be made with an additional £15 for every further 15 minutes of lateness, until the child is collected. In the event of a dispute over collection time the nursery is able to review CCTV to resolve the matter.
- Annually in the spring we add an additional one-off charge for sunscreen – if your child has sensitive skin and you would like to provide your own please make reception aware. Children with booking patterns of up to 15 hours per week this will be £4.50, for booking patterns of over 15 hours per week this will be £9.00.
- If your child doesn't attend the Childcare Centre with nappies and wipes there will be a 50p charge per nappy change.

### **Assistance with fees**

Help with childcare costs is available through a number of schemes. The government have a fantastic website that explains all the different schemes available.

[www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

- **Supported Families 2 Year Funding**

Families with 2 year old children who meet a certain criteria can apply for funding for 2 year olds. It is similar to the free nursery entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds however is only available for parents/carers receiving certain benefits.

- **Early Years Entitlement - Government funding for 3 and 4 year olds**

Early Years Entitlement funding is provided by the government to ensure that all children in the two years prior to starting school are able to access good quality free early years education. It pays for 570 hours of childcare per year from the date the child becomes eligible until they turn 5 or until they transition to school. A child becomes eligible in the term following their third birthday.

There are some limitations as to how the funding can be claimed; a minimum of 2.5 hours can be claimed per day, with a maximum of 15 hours per week. Any hours or meals accessed above this will be charged directly to the parent.

Dependant on the type of booking pattern you have will depend on how many hours you can claim per week, for a year round place this works out at 11.25 hours per week, for a school term time place (38 weeks per year) this works out at 15 hours per week.

- **30 Hours Funded Childcare for 3 and 4 year olds**

The Extended Entitlement is only available to parents who meet the eligibility criteria. If you are eligible you will need to apply for and obtain a 30 hours code via your Childcare Service account. Applications for this funding need to be made in the term before your child turns 3, or the term before you require the funding to start. Please remember it is your responsibility to apply for the 30 hours and to re-validate your application online every 3 months.

- **Working Families Funding**

From April 2024 the working families funding is only available to parents who meet the eligibility criteria. If you are eligible you will need to apply for and obtain a code via your Childcare Service account. Applications for this funding need to be made in the term before your child turns 2, or from 9 months old in September 2024, or the term before you require the funding to start. Please remember it is your responsibility to apply for and to re-validate your application online every 3 months.

- **Childcare Element of Working Tax Credit / Universal Credit**

If you are aged 16 or over and you and your partner work over 16 hours per week, you may be entitled to the Childcare Element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit.

- **Childcare Vouchers / Tax Free Childcare**

Childcare Vouchers are available through employers; they offer tax and national insurance exemption on a salary sacrifice to pay for childcare at a registered childcare setting. We accept all types of childcare vouchers.

We also accept Tax Free Childcare payments. When you join this scheme you will be given a reference number, please email this to [childcare@btc.ac.uk](mailto:childcare@btc.ac.uk) to ensure we know who the payment is from.

- **Care to Learn**

If you are under 20 and have one or more children, Care to Learn can help with the cost of your childcare while you are studying.

- **Student Support**

Student support can advise on funding available for students studying at Bridgwater & Taunton College, in some cases this can pay up to 90% of Childcare Costs. For more information, please call 01278 441233.

**Reviewed Date: March 2024**

**Review Date: August 2024**

**Authorised by:** .....