

NURSERY FEES POLICY

DEPOSIT

Upon being offered a place in a Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT) nursery you will be asked to pay a deposit equal to one month's fees directly into our bank account or by credit/debit card. **Please note that no part of the deposit can be paid by childcare voucher or Tax Free Childcare.** Payment of the deposit secures the place for your child and sets up an account for future invoices. Once the account is set up you will be sent a copy of the deposit invoice stating that it has been paid, this will be sent from the Accounts Receivable Department via email.

Please note that for children in receipt of the 15 or 30 hours funding, the deposit will be equal to one month's fees for a non-funded child and the nursery will advise you of the amount payable. This is because if a child should leave the nursery before the termly headcount date the nursery may not receive any funding for that child. In addition, children receiving the 15 hours expanded entitlement and 30 hours funding may fall out of eligibility.

Once the deposit has been paid, should you no longer wish to take up the place in the nursery you are required to give one month's notice in writing and your full deposit will be returned to you. If you give less than one month's notice, part of the deposit will be retained in lieu of notice and the remainder of the deposit will be returned to you. If you wish to reduce the sessions booked, a month's notice in writing is required. If you give less than one month's notice, fees will be charged at the higher rate in lieu of notice, after this time the fees will reduce to reflect the sessions attended.

Once the deposit has been paid should you wish to put back your child's start date in the nursery you are required to give one month's notice in writing although there is no guarantee that there will be a place available at a later date. If, following discussions with the Nursery Manager you then decide not to take up a place in the nursery you are required to give one month's notice in writing or pay the fees in lieu of notice as above.

Please note that full fees are chargeable from your child's agreed start date and at the agreed attendance pattern, as stated in the offer letter sent from the nursery. If you wish to delay your child's start date or to reduce their attendance for a short period, fees will be charged based on the full attendance and from the start date as stated in the offer letter. This can only be changed at the Nursery Manager's discretion.

The deposit is kept in a separate bank account and is not used until your child's last month in the nursery when it is returned to your nursery account and all or part of it goes towards payment of the last invoice along with any unpaid fees. Any unused deposit will be returned by way of a BACS payment paid directly into your bank account in the month after your child leaves the nursery.

The nursery fees are paid in arrears - at the beginning of one month for the previous month, therefore the deposit also covers this month's fees until they are paid.

If your child's sessions increase, you will be asked to 'top up' your deposit.

BHFT FEES

The BHFT nurseries were established primarily for BHFT staff and therefore where one or more parents in a family work for the Trust they will be placed on the BHFT fee rate. Proof of employment will be required to be placed on a BHFT fee rate, this is a current payslip or for new employees who have not yet commenced employment, the contract of employment signed by both parties or a letter from your employer stating your start date and salary.

For information of the current BHFT fees please see the BHFT Fees Sheet for your nursery.

CALCULATION OF FEES

Fees are calculated on a monthly basis and the same fee is payable each month throughout the year. The monthly fees are calculated as follows; daily rate times number of days attended in a week times by 51 (weeks that the nursery is open for) and divided by twelve.

A discount of 9.5% is applied to the fees for those children attending on a full time basis of five days per week. The full time fees shown on the fees sheet reflect this discount.

If a child joins or leaves the nursery part way through a month the fees will be calculated using the daily rate for part time or full time attendance.

INVOICES

Towards the end of each month, you will be sent an invoice for your child's attendance in the nursery via email. This will include additions for extra sessions and late collection charges. Please note that invoices are not sent for any fees paid by salary deduction but are sent for all other methods of payment.

If at any time you have a query with your invoice, please contact Katie Baker on 07789 374217 / katie.baker@berkshire.nhs.uk

PAYMENT OF FEES

BHFT staff are required to pay their fees by salary deduction unless they will be paid by Tax Free Childcare, please complete the salary deduction form and return it to the Nursery Manager prior to your child joining the nursery. Fees may also be paid by childcare voucher.

The fees for all other children must be paid by online banking, standing order set up online or via your bank, Tax Free Childcare, childcare voucher or any other electronic method of payment. Prior to your child's start date the Nursery Manager will inform you of the fees payable for the first month's attendance as well as the usual monthly fees thereafter. All fees are to be received in our bank account by the 10th of the month at the latest.

As **standing orders** take a few days to reach our account please ensure that they are paid by the 3rd of the month. Please set up the standing order or electronic payment method yourself using the details provided by the nursery. You will also need to obtain your four-digit customer/account number from the Nursery Manager, and this must be quoted on all payments.

Please remember that standing order payments are controlled by you, we are unable to change them. Therefore, whenever there is a permanent change to your fees and the Nursery Manager or Katie Baker inform you of this, please ensure that you alter your standing order in line with the change.

Payments by **debit or credit card** are for deposits and deposit top up's only.

The nurseries accept **Tax Free Childcare (TFC)** payments. When you join this scheme, you will be given a reference number, this will start with the initial of your child's first name and the first three letters of their surname followed by some numbers. Please send this via email to Katie Baker katie.baker@berkshire.nhs.uk because without it we will not know who the payment is for and will be unable to allocate the funds to your nursery account.

TFC payments usually take 1 or 2 working days to reach us so please set these up by 5th of the month at the latest.

The nurseries still accept **childcare vouchers** from a number of voucher companies. Please speak to Katie Baker to obtain all of the details you require. When paying by childcare voucher it is very important that you quote your nursery account number as the reference on the payments rather than your child's name.

As childcare voucher payments take a few days to reach our account please ensure that they are paid by the 3rd of the month. We only accept payment by electronic childcare vouchers. Please keep Katie Baker up to date with any changes to your voucher payments.

Fees are payable throughout the year other than for the week in which the nurseries are closed at Christmas which includes closure at 1pm on Christmas Eve and this is allowed for in your monthly fees.

Monthly fees are calculated as the weekly fee times 51 (weeks the nursery is open) and divided by 12 (months).

Fees remain payable when your child is absent from the nursery due to sickness, holiday and when the nursery closes on Bank Holidays. Fees will remain payable if the nursery is closed due to adverse weather conditions, such situations are beyond the control of the nursery and to remain viable full fees will be charged.

A sibling discount of 9.5% is available when one or more siblings attend the nursery. The discount applies to the oldest sibling's fees and ends when they leave the nursery. For twins or triplets, the 9.5% discount will be split evenly between the children.

Extra sessions may be booked with the Nursery Manager and will depend upon availability. The fees for extra sessions will be added to your next invoice. Due to staffing arrangements 24 hours' notice is required to cancel any extra sessions booked and if this is not given the fee remains payable.

Please note that for all children who are in receipt of the 15 or 30 hours funding, there is a headcount date each term and if a child is not attending the nursery at this time they are not entitled to receive the funding for the entire term. Therefore, if your child is leaving the nursery before this date the fees will be charged at the non-funded rate and Katie Baker will advise you of the fees.

If your child receives funding and is due to leave the nursery, please check the cost of the final fees with Katie Baker.

Please note that exceptions to payment methods/dates can only be agreed by Katie Baker and will be allowed in exceptional circumstances only.

FUNDING

All children are eligible to receive the universal 15 hours funding from the term after their third birthday. In the BHFT nurseries this is 1st April, 1st September and 1st January.

In addition, where the parents of these children meet the criteria, they are eligible to receive an additional 15 hours extended funding. Please see the [Childcare Choices](#) website for full details.

Funding is for 38 weeks per year however; we stretch this across the 51 weeks that the nurseries are open.

15 hours = 570 hours per year = 11.17 hours per nursery week.

30 hours = 1,140 hours per year = 22.35 hours per nursery week, 22.5 hours are given.

With effect from 1st April 2024 the expanded entitlement of 15 hours funding for children the term after their second birthday starts. This is for eligible children only and parents need to meet the criteria found on the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

With effect from 1st September 2024 the expanded entitlement of 15 hours funding for children the term after they are 9 months old starts. This is for eligible children only and parents need to meet the criteria found on the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

Details of the 15 and 30 hours funding for all age groups can be found on the Nursery Fees sheets. In addition, Katie Baker will send an email to all parents whose children may be eligible to receive the funding, in the term prior to this.

LATE COLLECTION CHARGE

If you are late collecting your child from the nursery a late collection charge will be added to your invoice at the rate of £1 a minute. This is not just for collection after 6pm, it also applies if your child stays at the nursery for longer than ten hours unless there are exceptional circumstances or there has been a prior agreement with the Nursery Manager.

NON PAYMENT OF FEES

Invoices are issued towards the end of the month and are due to be paid by the 10th of the following month (e.g. January fees invoiced 31st January and due to be paid by 10th February). Failure to pay the fees on time will result in a suspension letter being sent to you around the 12th of the following month. At this time your child's place will be suspended with immediate effect with fees being charged throughout this period. Please bear in mind that at times the suspension letter will be sent as a payment is received and if you are sure that your fees have been paid, please contact Katie Baker to advise her.

If the fees are not paid within 7 days of this letter this will result in the permanent loss of your child's place in the nursery and the referral of your account to our legal department. This may result in future court action to recover the outstanding balance plus additional legal costs. At this time your deposit will be transferred onto your account and used to reduce the debt.

Once you receive a suspension letter the fees must be paid by card, online or by transfer directly into the BHFT bank account. Your child will be unable to return to the nursery until payment has cleared in the BHFT bank account or proof of this payment is provided to Katie Baker.

The suspension letter is automatically generated by the finance system's computer, Katie Baker, Nursery Business Administrator makes all reasonable checks to establish whether the invoice has been settled or remains outstanding before sending an email with regards to this.

Repeated late payment of fees will result in the suspension of the nursery place, with full fees payable until a satisfactory method of payment is set up. Alternatively, if after corresponding with you regarding this matter the fees remain unpaid your child's place at the nursery will be terminated with immediate effect and fees to that date will remain payable with legal action being sought to recover any unpaid fees.

INCREASE OF FEES

Fees are valid from 1st April-31st March each year. They are reviewed on an annual basis and any increase in fees will take effect from 1st April. Parents will be given at least four weeks' notice of any increase.

NOTICE PERIOD

If your child is leaving the nursery or you wish to reduce their sessions one month's notice in writing is required. If this is not given, we reserve the right to charge fees in lieu of notice.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Katie Baker, Nursery Business Administrator
07789 374217, katie.baker@berkshire.nhs.uk

Carly Byrne Nursery Manager or Shaahidah Akhtar Deputy Manager
Jack In the Box Nursery, 0118 904 4636
carly.byrne@berkshire.nhs.uk or shaahidah.akhtar@berkshire.nhs.uk

Leigh Kelly Nursery Manager or Lorna LePetit Deputy Manager
Kiddies' Cabin Nursery, 0118 904 4637
leigh.Kelly@berkshire.nhs.uk or lorna.lepetit@berkshire.nhs.uk

Becca Croft Nursery Manager or Louise Wye Deputy Manager
Little Dragons Nursery, 0118 904 4638
rebecca.croft@berkshire.nhs.uk or louise.wye@berkshire.nhs.uk

Please see our website for further information regarding the fees and the nurseries.

www.nurseries.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk