

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 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.

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 fees and BHFT rates please see the Nursery Fees Sheet for your nursery.

ALLIED PARTNER & NON NHS FEES

The Allied Partner rate is for parents who are employed by any other NHS organisation, GPs and their staff, dentists and their staff, any police employee, any fire brigade employee, students training within the NHS but not actually employed by an NHS Trust, staff in schools, colleges and universities within a local borough in Berkshire (independent schools are not included) and employees of a local council within Berkshire.

To be placed on the Allied Partner rate proof of employment is required, 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.

Parents employed by any organisation not already listed will be placed on the NON NHS rate.

For information of the current fees please see the Nursery Fees Sheets for your nursery.

CALCULATION OF FEES

Fees are calculated on a monthly basis and the same fee is payable each month throughout the year. For full time attendance there is a monthly fee listed on the Nursery Fees Sheets that is a reduction on the daily rate. For part time attendance the monthly fees are calculated as follows; daily rate times by number of days attended in a week times by 51 (weeks that the nursery is open for) and divided by twelve.

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

Fees reduce after a child's second birthday and for the purpose of this calculation birthdays that fall between the 1st-15th day of the month will reduce in that month and birthdays that fall between the 16th-31st day of the month will reduce in the following month.

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 TFC, please complete the salary deduction form and return it to the Nursery Manager prior to you child joining the nursery. Fees may also be paid by childcare voucher or Tax Free Childcare (TFC).

All other fees must be paid by standing order set up online or via your bank, by childcare voucher, by Tax Free Childcare 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, 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 the Nursery Manager or 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 5th of the month. We only accept payment by electronic childcare vouchers. Please keep the Nursery Manager/Katie Baker up to date with any changes to your voucher payments.

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 funding.

15 hours = 570 hours per year. 30 hours = 1,140 hours per year.

Details of the 15 hours and the 30 hours funding can be found on the Nursery Fees sheets.

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.

There is a 10% discount available when one or more siblings attend the nursery. The discount applies to the older child/ren and ends when they leave the nursery. For twins, a 5% sibling discount will be applied per child.

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 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.

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 the Nursery Manager/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.

Nursery Fees Policy updated September 2023. Reviewed annually in September.

www.nurseries.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk

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. This increase takes into account increases in the running costs of the nursery and is kept to a minimum. 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 Acting Nursery Manager or Shaahidah Akhtar Acting Deputy Manager
Jack In the Box Nursery, 01753 635480
carly.byrne@berkshire.nhs.uk or shaahidah.akhtar@berkshire.nhs.uk

Leigh Kelly Nursery Manager or Lorna LePetit Deputy Manager
Kiddies' Cabin Nursery, 01753 638733
leigh.Kelly@berkshire.nhs.uk or lorna.lepetit@berkshire.nhs.uk

Becca Croft Nursery Manager or Louise Wye Deputy Manager
Little Dragons Nursery, 0118 9585316
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