

# Parent Funding Policy for Early Education Entitlements (0–4 years)

## 1. Introduction

At Maria Poppins Nursery and Preschool, we are proud to offer funded early education places for children aged 9 months to 4 years. This policy outlines how these entitlements are delivered, in line with guidance from the London Borough of Lewisham and national legislation. It also explains our approach to additional services and charges.

For working families requiring full-day care throughout the year, we offer reduced fees supported by government funding. To facilitate this, we stretch the funded hours over 52 weeks. This allows families to benefit from a consistent reduction in fees across the year. Invoices during funded weeks will show the applied government-funded hours, any additional hours booked, and charges for consumables.

## 2. Who Is Eligible for Funded Hours

From September 2025, eligible working families will be entitled to up to 30 hours of funded childcare per week for children aged 9 months to 4 years. The funding is provided over 38 weeks (term-time), but at Maria Poppins Nursery and Preschool, we stretch the hours across 52 weeks per year.

Eligibility is determined by HMRC based on the parents' working status and income. The entitlements are:

- **9 months to 2 years:** Up to 30 hours per week for children of eligible working parents.
- **2-year-olds:** Up to 30 hours per week for working families (via HMRC) or 15 hours per week for income-based eligibility through Lewisham 2-years-olds.
- **3- and 4-year-olds:**
  - Universal entitlement:** 15 hours per week for all children.
  - Extended entitlement:** An additional 15 hours per week for eligible working families (total of up to 30 hours).

Eligibility must be confirmed through HMRC or Lewisham Council and is reviewed regularly. Funded hours begin the term *after* a child becomes eligible.

### **3. Access and Attendance**

Funded hours are delivered across 52 weeks per year, ensuring consistent access throughout school holidays. Parents must complete a Parent Declaration Form to confirm their child's eligibility and allocation of funded hours.

### **4. Parent-Supported Contributions**

Government funding covers the cost of early education only. It does not include meals, consumables, or enrichment activities. These additional items help us maintain high standards and enriching experiences for all children.

We kindly ask for parents supported contributions for the following:

- Meals and Snacks – Healthy, nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day.
- Consumables – Items such as nappies, wipes, sun cream, art/craft materials, etc.
- Enrichment Activities – Specialist sessions such as music, movement, phonics, or outings.

We recognise that every family's circumstances are different. These contributions are optional, and no child will be excluded or treated differently if parents choose not to contribute. We welcome a conversation to explore alternatives (e.g. providing meals or supplies from home).

### **5. Invoicing and Transparency**

To maintain the quality of our provision and ensure we can sustainably offer the highest standards of care, we charge a consumables fee that also supports ongoing reinvestment into the nursery.

Invoices are issued with clear, itemised breakdowns that include:

- The funded hours (free of charge)
- Any additional agreed items or hours
- Accepted payment methods and due dates

We follow the London Borough of Lewisham's guidance on providing transparent financial documentation.

## 6. Change in Eligibility

If your eligibility status changes (for example, if your working hours change or your household income exceeds thresholds):

- A grace period may apply, during which funding continues temporarily.
- After this period, the funded place may end unless you choose to pay privately.
- We will work with you to plan next steps and ensure a smooth transition.

## 7. Working Together

We value open, respectful partnerships with parents. If you have any concerns about funding, payments, or eligibility, please speak with us directly. We aim to provide flexible, inclusive care that supports both children and families.

## 8. Fees

### Standard Monthly Fees

	2 days / week	3 days / week	4 days / week	5 days / week
Under 2's	£845.00	£1,267.50	£1,690.00	£2,112.50
Over 2's	£780.00	£1,170.00	£1,560.00	£1,950.00

### Funded Monthly Fees (52 Weeks Stretched Funding)

	2 days / week	3 days / week	4 days / week	5 days / week
Under 2's (30 hours)	£227.50*	£341.50	£763.75	£1,186.25
Under 2's (15 hours)	£381.87	£804.38	£1,226.88	£1,649.38
2 years old (30 hours)	£210.00*	£315.00	£705.00	£1,095.00
2 years old (15 hours)	£352.50	£742.50	£1,132.50	£1,522.50
Over 3's (30 hours)	£379.10*	£568.65	£958.65	£1,348.65
Over 3's (15 hours)	£479.33	£869.33	£1,259.33	£1,649.33

\*Children who are eligible for the 30 hours funded childcare entitlement but attend the nursery for only two full days per week (typically 20 hours) will have funding claimed for those 20 hours

only. As funding can only be claimed for the hours a child actually attends, we are unable to claim the full 30 hours in such cases.

## **9. Parent Responsibility for Funding Code Renewal**

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that their eligibility codes for funded childcare (such as 30 hours or Tax-Free Childcare) remain valid and up to date.

Parents must reconfirm their eligibility with HMRC every three months and provide a valid, current code to the nursery before each termly deadline. To guarantee continued access to funded hours, codes must be resubmitted no later than the 30th of March, August, and December each year. These dates align with the start of the new funding terms set by the local authority.

Failure to reconfirm or resubmit the code by the required deadline may result in the loss of funding for the following term. In such cases, parents will be responsible for the full cost of childcare until a valid code is re-established and accepted by the local authority.

## **10. Parent Acknowledgement**

While signing a declaration is not a requirement to access funded hours, we believe that transparency and mutual understanding between the nursery and families are essential.

By accepting a funded place at Maria Poppins Nursery and Preschool, parents acknowledge that:

- Funded hours are provided free of charge in line with government regulations.
- Additional services, including meals, consumables, and enrichment activities, are parent-supported and clearly itemised.
- Invoices will provide a transparent breakdown of funded hours, consumables, and any additional hours attended.
- Families are welcome to speak with the nursery management team at any time to discuss funding arrangements or payments.

We are committed to maintaining clear communication and ensuring families fully understand how funded childcare is applied within our full-day provision model.