

## 09 Early years practice procedures

### 09.01e Prime times – Fee and payment procedure

Little Doves Christian Pre-School is a registered charity aiming to provide a service to local children and families. The pre-school is a non-profit organisation, but it does need to ensure that it does not make a loss at the end of the year. This aim can only be fulfilled if the pre-school has enough income to cover its outgoings. The pre-school is aware of differing family situations and encourage any parent/carer with financial hardship to talk with the manager/deputy.

#### **Fees**

Little Doves CP's fees are based on an hourly fee, details of which are available to read on our website in the 09.01f Parent payment agreement plan and will be notified to parents/carers in advance of their child starting. The fees may be reviewed at any time, and the parent/carer will be informed of the revised amount at least half a term before it takes effect. If the parent/carer does not wish to pay the revised fee, they may end their Agreement with the pre-school by giving 2 weeks' notice, by completing the Notification of Leaving Date form which can be obtained from the pre-school manager.

#### **Fees for non-funded self-paying children:**

- Hourly rate depending on the age of the child
- Healthy snack charge per day a child attends
- Afternoon healthy snack charge if a child stays after 2pm
- Additional activity charge per day a child attends which goes towards the extra items that we use in the activities of the pre-school to provide the child with an enhanced pre-school learning experience. Due to Coronavirus adjustments a lot of materials can now only be used once.
- Half termly charge towards Shining Stars football, our external educator who visits the pre-school on a Friday.
- Contribution charge towards "Big book of me" learning journal which is passed onto the parent/carer when a child leaves. This is included on a child's last invoice.
- Early drop off, late pick up charge (per 15 mins).

#### **For children who receive Essex County Council funding, we ask for voluntary daily chargeable extras, and these are:**

- Healthy snack chargeable extra (if preferred a parent/carer can provide their child with their own healthy snack)
- Afternoon healthy snack charge if a child stays after 2pm (if preferred a parent/carer can provide their child with their own healthy snack)
- Additional activity chargeable extra towards the extra items that we use in the activities of the pre-school to provide a child with an enhanced pre-school learning experience. These activities go above and beyond the delivery of the government FEEE funding. Due to Coronavirus adjustments a lot of materials can now only be used once.

- Chargeable extra contribution towards our external educator (Shining Stars) who visits the pre-school on a Friday. (Photos of these sessions are available to view [here](#)).
- Chargeable extra towards a child's "Big book of me" learning journal which is passed onto the parent/carer when their child leaves. This is included on a child's last invoice.
- Chargeable extra early drop off, late pick up charge (per 15 mins).

These voluntary chargeable extras are not mandatory or a condition of accessing a place. If a parent/carer does not wish to pay for the voluntary chargeable extra's, for example, because a parent/carer wishes to provide their own/alternative, we ask them to make us aware so next steps can be discussed.

### **Voluntary Donation**

In addition, the pre-school also encourages a suggested half termly voluntary donation to the Little Doves charity, which provides an outstanding service, in a safe and caring environment, where the children's wellbeing is treated as the highest priority.

### **Payment of fees**

As part of a parent/carer signing up their child to attend the pre-school, the parent/carer is asked to sign the 09.01f Parent payment agreement form which is given to them when they first visit the pre-school. This form clearly states the hourly fees and the amounts for each chargeable extra.

Fees, chargeable extras and any voluntary donations are paid on a half termly or weekly basis. The amount payable by a parent/carer is calculated each half term by multiplying the hourly rate with the number of hours their child does per week and then by the number of weeks in the half term.

For healthy snack, afternoon snack and additional activity, the chargeable extras are calculated for each day/long afternoon a child attends and for the external educators, the chargeable extra is calculated per half term.

Any reduction in hours/snack/ additional activity due to afternoon/day closures, for example, Wonky Wednesday afternoons or polling day, are deducted from the invoice.

Payments can be made by bank transfer, standing order, cheque or cash and can be made daily, weekly or half termly. The date that payment must be received by is written on the invoice and Little Doves reserves the right to charge interest on the overdue amount 2% above the base rate at the bank if late payment or non-payment persists.

Little Doves CP is set up to receive payments via childcare voucher schemes (e.g. Edenred) and HMRC Tax Free Childcare accounts. More information on how to set up an account can be found on [www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare](http://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare).

If the parent/carer has failed to pay any fees that are due or is having difficulty paying the fees, then the manager will look to negotiate a payment plan and/or reduce the hours their child attends the setting to stop the bill accumulating. Please see our [09.01g Financial hardship procedure](#).

If the parent/carer has requested additional sessions or has repeatedly been unable to collect their child by the official collection time and the pre-school has, as a result, provided their child with additional childcare facilities, applicable charges will be raised on a separate invoice for payment.

No refund will be given for periods where the place is unfulfilled due to illness or holidays on the part of either party. The pre-school is closed on bank holidays and for a maximum of 3 training days per year to support the continuing professional development of the staff for the benefit of the children and families. There is no charge for these days. Little Doves CP accepts no liability for other costs which the parent/carer may incur if the pre-school is unable to provide childcare for any reason.

In the event of persistent late collection of a child, the pre-school reserves the right to charge for each additional 15 minutes, or part thereof, on a pro-rata basis.

If the pre-school must close due to local lockdown restrictions, such as, during a pandemic for a prolonged period, parents/carers will be asked if they would like a refund for any hours paid for and not received. This refund is typically taken off the next invoice, however, repayment can be made via bank transfer into the bank account details provided by the parent/carer. Bank account details are kept for 6 months after the child leaves (in line with the [07.12a Data retention document](#) for Little Doves Christian Pre-School) in case further repayments are necessary.

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