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Oxhey Early Years Centre

Charging and Remission Policy

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Charging and Remission Policy

Purpose:

In general, no charge can be made for admitting children to maintained schools. Oxhey Early Years Centre is a local authority maintained Nursery School offering 15 hours per week fully funded to children the term after their third birthday.

Nursery School free sessions are either:-

9 am to 12 noon

or

1 pm to 4 pm

Additional paid for “wraparound sessions” (in addition to the 15 free hours per week nursery school funded places) together with paid “holiday sessions” are also available through Oxhey Early Years Centre Limited (OEYC Ltd) our not for profit charitable organisation. These sessions incur a charge based on an hourly rate plus any meals taken. Please ask Office for currently up to date fee list. For further information see Appendix 1 for OEYC Ltd’s terms and conditions.

Roles and responsibilities of Head of Centre, other staff, school governors of Oxhey Early Years Centre

The Head of Centre, staff and school governors will ensure that the following applies:

No charges will be made for:

- Education provided during nursery school free hours (including the supply of any materials books, instruments or other equipment)

Voluntary Contributions

The Head of Centre or Governing Body ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any nursery school activity which takes place during nursery school hours, i.e. yoga and drama sessions
- nursery school snacks
- nursery school equipment;
- nursery school funds generally

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the children of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make an activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled.

Legislation does not prevent the school from asking parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of a given activity or visit. This contribution, however, must be optional, and with prior parent agreement.

Parents receive details of voluntary contributions in the form of a letter which is included in the "Welcome Pack". The letter states that voluntarily contributions go towards the cost snacks and the activities detailed above.

FUNDING:

3 & 4 year old Funded Sessions (15 Free Hours per week – term time only)

All three and four year olds are currently entitled to receive 15 hour per week free place funding, up to a maximum of five sessions per week for each academic term (a session is regarded as 3 hours morning or afternoon). It is also possible to combine a child's entitlement to free sessions between 2 or more providers from the state, private and/or voluntary sector, although you will still only receive funding for a maximum of 5 sessions per week. Funding is available from the term after your child's third birthday until they are required to attend Reception class at a primary school-

Extended Services Fees – provided by Oxhey Early Years Centre Ltd (OEYC Ltd)

For further information please see OEYC Ltd Terms & Conditions (Appendix I)

As detailed above - all nursery age children are entitled to 15 hours free EYFS education and care. Any extra hours over and above the 15 free hours per week will be deemed wraparound/daycare hours and will be invoiced by Oxhey Early Years Centre Ltd. These are subject to availability and must be requested in writing, on the appropriate form. Regular bookings for additional hours should be requested at time of application. Priority is given to working parents. Parents will be invoiced for any additional sessions in the usual manner.

Hours of Opening & Fees

The Centre is open from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. There is one week's closure at Christmas and one week's summer closure in August.

Fees are based on an hourly rate plus meals and reviewed annually (increasing yearly in September by 2-4%). Please enquire at the Office for current prices.

Fees are payable in advance on receipt of a monthly invoice. Cheques should be made payable to 'Oxhey Early Years Centre Ltd'.

Registration

OEYC Ltd hold a waiting list and priority is given to parents wanting full day care from 8am to 6pm 5 days a week.

Initially parents/carers are invited in to the Centre for a guided tour prior to registration. A non-refundable administration fee of £25 (for 15 hours per week) or £50 (for over 15 hours) will be required in order for applications to be managed and placed on the waiting list.

A minimum of 2 sessions per week is required.

Childcare Vouchers

We accept certain **childcare vouchers** from employers who offer this benefit to their eligible employees as a paper or e-voucher. Vouchers are non-taxable and exempt from NI contributions for employees, whilst offering NI savings for employers. Both parents are eligible to claim as long as they are both in employment. Further information can be found at www.childcarevouchers.co.uk.

Tax Credits

These are available from the HM Revenue and Customs, based on household circumstances. You may be able to access help with the cost of 'Ofsted approved' childcare if you are working for a minimum of 16 hours per week. Check online at www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits for further information and eligibility.

Change of Attendance Pattern

All requests for a change in attendance pattern must be given in writing, with a minimum of 4 weeks' notice. All changes to attendance will be at the discretion of the Head of Centre and availability permitting.

Notice

8 weeks' notice must be given in writing before removal of your child from our daycare facility or 4 weeks' notice for any permanent change to your child's session.

Late Collections & Fees

It is important that your child is collected promptly. However, if for any reason you are unable to pick your child up on time please contact Oxhey Early Years Centre on 01923 330300. A fee will be charged for any late collections for wraparound/holiday sessions.

OEYC Ltd will take all reasonable measures to vigorously collect debts.

It is at the discretion of the Directors of OEYC Ltd to decide any legal action required to recover bad debts or a debt may be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.

School and Daycare staff are expected to follow the following procedures to secure the collection of all debts. Recording of goods or services supplied where payment is not received in advance or 'at the point of sale'.

A record will be kept of all such supplies that details what was supplied, the value, the date(s) and the identity of the 'debtor', e.g. child, parent, hirer, etc.

Where invoices are raised these should state the date by which payment is due.

In all other cases correspondence with parents, etc. should indicate the maximum period that the daycare regards as reasonable before payment is overdue.

The Head of Centre should determine what the reasonable 'credit period' is if this is not otherwise specified.

Debt Chasing

Initial reminders

Initial reminders may be informal and made either in person (when a parent comes to collect/drop off the child) or by telephone or email. Normally, the Finance Officer will undertake this having built up a good relationship with the parents.

First reminder letter

A formal reminder letter should be issued one week from any informal reminder/the date of supply, e.g. two weeks. If action is to proceed further, it is necessary to prove that all reasonable attempts have been made to recover the debt, and that these attempts have been made in a timely manner, i.e. at the time that the debt first became overdue.

Second reminder letter

A second reminder letter will be issued one week after the First reminder letter.

Using reminder letters

Should a debt need to be taken beyond two reminder letters, formal written evidence may have to be produced. It is therefore important that at least one, but preferably two, written reminders are sent. Details of all reminders, whether verbal or in writing, should be maintained. Where a letter is issued, a copy must be retained on file. The debtor may be advised that additional hours will no longer be available to them. This decision and its basis will be recorded.

Failure to respond to reminders / settle a debt

If no response is received from the reminders issued, a letter will be sent to the debtor advising them that the matter may be referred to the Small Claims Court and a County Court Judgement may be issued against them.

Negotiation of repayment terms

Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the first 'overdue reminder'.

If a debtor asks for 'repayment terms/payment plan' these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Head of Centre. A record of all such agreements will be kept and signed by both parties. A letter will be issued to the debtor confirming the agreed terms. The settlement period should be the shortest that is judged reasonable.

Costs of debt recovery

Where additional costs in recovering a debt occur then the Directors will decide whether to seek to recover such costs from the debtor. This decision and its basis will be recorded.

Reporting of outstanding debt levels

The Finance Officer reports to the Head of Centre on a monthly basis regarding any outstanding debts. The Head of Centre will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is known to the Directors of OEYC Ltd. The Directors will review the level of outstanding debts every term to determine whether this level is acceptable and whether action to recover debts is effective.

Bad debts

Write-off of any debt requires the written approval of the Directors.

The Head of Centre/Finance Officer will maintain a formal record of any debts written off and this will be retained for 7 years.



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Oxhey Early Years Centre

OXHEY EARLY YEARS CENTRE: TERMS AND CONDITIONS April 2016

Child's Name.....

Registration Fees:

1. If your child is receiving **only Free Hours**, you will not have to pay an administration fee.
2. You will need to pay a £25 non-refundable fee for sessions other than longer day care. This is not a guarantee but an 'administration' fee to process your application and maintain your place on the waiting list.
3. You will need to pay a £50 non-refundable fee for longer day care sessions (ie: 8-4, 8-6, 9-4, 9-6). This is not a guarantee but an 'administration' fee to process your application and maintain your place on the waiting list.

Fees:

1. We require a deposit payment of 4 weeks in hand. This will be offset against your final invoice and will be issued once you accept your place.
2. Monthly invoices are payable in advance and are calculated per calendar month. Your first invoice will be issued at the end of the month prior to your child's start date and will require immediate payment. Your child will be unable to start until both payments are received in full. *Exceptional circumstances will be considered on written request, at the discretion of the Head.*
3. Thereafter fees are due monthly in advance on or before the 1st working day of the month, preferably by bank transfer.
4. Fees are charged at a monthly rate for the 50 weeks of the year that the Centre is open. NB: *You are charged by the calendar month so monthly fees will vary.*
5. Your invoice will inform you of the invoice period.
6. No fees are payable when the Centre is closed i.e. 1 week at Christmas, 1 week in August and Bank Holidays.
7. In Service Training Days (INSET) will be chargeable. There are 5 per year plus an 'Occasional Day'. *(This is a Government requirement for all schools and ensures quality and training of all practitioners who work with your children. As an integrated Centre we uphold the same quality standards for all our staff).*
8. In unforeseen circumstances caused by extreme weather conditions or other acts of nature or disaster, the first 2 days closed are chargeable and any additional closure days will be considered on an individual basis.
9. Full fees are payable during the **2 month notice period** if you decide to terminate your child's place here. *Please give us a full 2 months' notice of your child's intended leaving date.*

10. Full fees are payable if a child is absent due to illness, occasional days off or for family holidays. You cannot have another session to compensate for any hours missed.
11. All Year Round children are entitled to one week holiday (i.e. 5 consecutive days) during the year, chargeable at 33% of weekly fees, provided we are notified in writing, at least one month in advance.
12. Term-time only children who do over 15 hours will be charged 33% of weekly paid hours as a retainer fee during holidays.
13. Term-time only children funded for their 15 hours and Nursery School children are expected to take holidays out of term-time. Any holiday in term time is subject to approval from the Head and your request must be in writing in advance. Holidays or absences that have not been approved in advance by the Head will be recorded as 'unauthorised absence'.
14. The Centre will only accept children who are registered for sessions across a minimum of two days per week. Local Authority guidelines recommend that children receiving their 15 free hours should do so over a minimum of 2 days.
15. A full fee is charged (if applicable) whether or not your child attends the full session.
16. Free hours can only be taken between 9am-12pm and 1-4pm. A maximum of 6 free hours per day is allowed. Any hours outside of these sessions will be charged at the hourly rate.

Lunches

1. **There are limited lunch time spaces available. Longer session children with working parents take priority. 8am – 1pm sessions are packed lunch only. Exceptional circumstances will be considered, if requested in writing to the Head of Centre.**
2. **Free School Meals – Universal free schools meals does not apply to 3-4 year old free early education. If you think you may be eligible you need to apply to Herts County Council but places are subject to availability.**

Late Payment:

1. A charge of 10% of your weekly fee for the sessions your child attends will be made for payments not received in accordance with the invoice terms, with a £5 minimum charge.
2. If your fees are in arrears by more than 4 weeks, we cannot guarantee a place for your child until your account has been brought up to date.

Notifications:

The Centre must be notified:-

- a) Of planned absences e.g. family holidays (in writing).
- b) Of any absence on any day. Please telephone the centre to give reasons for absence. We need to know of absences through illness especially contagious or infectious diseases.
- c) If anyone other than those named on the registration form is to collect the child.

- d) If you choose to remove your child from the Centre, 8 weeks' notice in writing is required (payment is required in full for the whole notice period).
- e) If you wish to change your sessions, we require 4 weeks' notice in writing (you can use the Centre form for this).
- f) If you face any difficulty in making payments or will be making a late payment in extenuating circumstances.

Changes & Additions to Sessions: Forms must be completed and put in the red box outside the Office. Forms can be found in Reception.

Additions will usually be accommodated, subject to availability. A reduction in hours can be accommodated but the usual 8 weeks' notice period must be applied. Extenuating circumstances will be considered in writing at the discretion of the Head.

Collection of Children / Late Pick-up Charges:

Parents/Carers are expected to collect their child on time. If you are going to be late you must let us know as soon as possible. Late collection will be charged at our hourly rate 5 minutes after collection time. For persistent lateness of more than 5 minutes you will be charged our hourly rate for every 5 minutes of lateness. .

Sickness:

In fairness to other children and staff the Centre is unable to take responsibility for sick children. Parents or other emergency contacts will be phoned and are expected to collect their sick child as soon as possible. This is to minimise the spread of infection to other vulnerable young children and their families. If a child has an accident or becomes seriously ill at the Centre, staff may decide in your absence that it is in the interests of the child to seek medical attention. In signing the terms and conditions you are agreeing to this policy. The Centre will inform parents/carers with a notice displayed in the Centre of any known infections with which their child may have come into contact. Please note our Medicines and Sickness Policies. After sickness or diarrhoea 48 hours is required before a child returns to minimise the spread of infection.

Closure:

The Centre will usually be closed annually for up to 1 week between Christmas and the New Year, for 1 week in August and on all the Bank holidays and Centre INSET Days.

The Centre reserves the right to amend Terms and Conditions subject to prior notification in writing.

Information Pack:

These can be viewed on our website - oeyc.herts.sch.uk. Please read carefully as they include rules and policies which you are required to abide by.

Parking:

Parking on site is very restricted. You may only park in allocated bays. Alternative parking is off site. Please respect these rules to keep everyone safe.



I agree with all the Terms & Conditions as stated.

I have read & signed the 'Working Together Learning Together' Partnership Agreement and agree to abide by the rules and policies of the Centre.

Signed.....

Date.....

(Parent / Carer)

