

Funding and Fees Policy

Statement of intent

At Ditton Church Preschool (hereafter known as DCPS) we believe that we offer a level of service for which it is reasonable to recover our costs. DCPS is a not-for-profit charity and as such we will only recover funds sufficient enough to cover our overheads.

Aim

To operate a financial system which is both fair, reasonable and in line with market value, which covers the cost of operating and maintaining the Preschool.

Methodology

Funded Children

- All children aged 3 and above are currently entitled to 15 hours of funded childcare per week. Some children are entitled to 30 hours per week.
- Funding can be split over a maximum of 2 settings and is claimed from Kent County Council (KCC) by the setting.
- The funding claimed and is based on the hours which DCPS can offer parents.
- There is no guarantee that a child will be able to have the full 15/30 hours at DCPS as those offered to you are dependent upon the number of children already attending at that time.
- DCPS is only open for 24 hours per week for childcare (that is funded by KCC) and cannot therefore offer 30 hours per week to any child.
- Priority is given to the children who will be attending mainstream school in the next academic year.
- Funding is claimed for a total of 38 weeks which covers the academic year and accounts for Bank holidays and normal school holidays. Staff Development Days are outside of the 38 weeks.
- Funding is available for children at 3 points in the year (Term 1 - September, Term 3 – January and Term 5 – After Easter) and is only available to claim in the term following a child's 3rd birthday.



- Parents/Carers (hereafter known as parents) are entitled to claim funding until their child reaches compulsory school age should they choose not to take up a place in a state-funded school reception class in the September following their child's fourth birthday.
- Parents of children entitled to either 15 (or 30) hours of funding will be charged for any additional hours they agree to take up at DCPS current fee rate. See **Table of Fees** below.
- Midday sessions do not form part of the KCC funding and are charged for at DCPS current rate. See **Midday Sessions** and **Table of Fees** below.
- Parents of children funded by KCC should note that, if they decide to switch their child to another setting they will not be reimbursed for any funding already received by DCPS. They would be required to pay the new Setting until such time as funding is available again.

Fee Paying Children

- Parents of children attending DCPS who are not entitled to funding will be charged for the hours agreed with the setting. See **Table of Fees** below.
- A notice period of four weeks (term-time only) must be given in the unlikely event that you wish to withdraw your child from Preschool. Fees must be paid in full for this period. This applies to non-funded hours. Therefore, parents of funded children who stay for the midday session would still be liable for the four-week notice period.
- Parents will be billed in advance for their agreed hours. Refunds will not be available for absence including (but not restricted to) short-term sickness or holidays. DCPS (in exceptional circumstances) reserves the right to review this on a case by case basis.
- DCPS reviews its fees annually. Any alteration to fees will come into force on the 1st September following the review. Notice will be issued to parents prior to this and will be advertised on the website.

Midday Sessions

- DCPS offers a midday session to all children attending the setting all-day on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Packed lunches must be provided by parents.
- Midday sessions do not form part of the KCC funding and are charged for at DCPS current rate. See **Table of Fees** below.



Table of Fees

Morning session 9:00 – 12:00	£16.50
Afternoon session 12.30 – 15:30	£16.50
Midday session 12:00 – 12.30	£5.00
Session hourly rate	£5.50 (except midday care)

Invoicing

- Invoices will be sent out at least two weeks prior to the start of Term.
- Full settlement must be received before the start of term to which the invoice applies.
- DCPS prefers to receive payment by bank transfer in order to maintain security and reduce costs.
- Only the DCPS administrator or senior member of DCPS staff have the authority to receive cash payments. Preschool staff that are looking after children cannot accept cash payments.
- In the event that parents have to pay in cash or cheque it is their responsibility to ensure that they receive a receipt for their payment as disputes cannot be resolved without one.
- Parents paying by bank transfer will receive an acknowledgement of payment.

Non-Payment of Fees

- It is the responsibility of parents to inform the DCPS Administrator or Treasurer of any difficulties they may be facing in respect of making payments.
- If full payment has not been received by the invoice date, a reminder letter will be sent to the parents.
- DCPS will charge a £10 administration fee for **each** Fee reminder letter sent out. The fee will be added to any amount already outstanding.
- If full payment has not been received within one week of the date of the reminder letter, the child's place shall be immediately withdrawn.
- In cases of extreme financial hardship and at their sole discretion the DCPS Supervisor, Treasurer or Chairperson may permit continued attendance of the child on the understanding that the parent provides a written commitment to an acceptable payment schedule. However, if the payment schedule is not adhered to, the child's place shall again be immediately withdrawn.



- In all such circumstances DCPS reserves its legal right to pursue repayment of any outstanding fees.

Consumable Materials

- Consumables such as cooking ingredients, snacks and other consumable materials used in Preschool are not included in either Local Authority Funding or Session Fees.
- At the start of each term the parents of all children attending the Preschool will be invoiced 25p per session for consumables.
- Parents that wish to opt out of paying for consumables should make arrangements with the Preschool management to provide suitable alternatives.

Christmas Party

Parents of all children who attend the Christmas party will be charged at the normal hourly rate if the party falls outside of their usual agreed session days.

Closures in Exceptional Circumstances

- In exceptional circumstances DCPS may have to close. Wherever possible notice will be given to parents and information will be posted on our website (www.dittonchurchpreschool.org).
- In the event of this occurring DCPS will offer parents a refund for those closed days (of any fees already paid).

Late/Non-Collection of Children

- DCPS reserves the right to make an additional charge for children who are not collected on time at school end. The Preschool operates out of shared premises and as such cannot impinge on the next user's time.
- Parents will be asked to sign the preschool register if they are late collecting their child and will be reminded of the need to collect them on time.
- Parents who are persistently late will be charged a Late Collection fee, derived from the following:
 - Up to 30 minutes late the charge will be £12.
 - Over 30 minutes late a further £12 will be added for each 15 minutes or part thereof.
 - Late Collection fees may be waived at the sole discretion of the Setting Supervisor and/or the Officers of the management committee.



Free for Twos

DCPS is registered for the KCC ‘Free for 2’ scheme. Eligible families will be entitled to up to 15 hours funded childcare per week for their child, subject to availability. However, places will be allocated in accordance with DCPS admissions policy and procedures.

For more information on Free for 2s please contact your local Children’s Centre or speak to the Pre-school Supervisor.

Holding Fee

- Parents will be charged a £25 ‘Holding Fee’ by DCPS when they confirm that they wish to accept the offer of a place.
- The Holding Fee will be deducted from the first term’s invoice. If a parent subsequently chooses to withdraw their child from DCPS the amount is not refundable. This applies to non- funded hours only.
- If your child’s eligibility for ‘Free for 2’ funding has been confirmed at the time the offer is made, the holding fee will not apply.

This policy was adopted by
Committee

Ditton Church Pre-school Management

Date

February 2021

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

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Role of Signatory

Chair of Management Committee

Next Review Date

January 2022

