

## Guidance for Early Years settings who wish to make additional charges for funded places

Early Years providers may charge for additional costs in relation to funded childcare places.

This is acceptable practice and may cover a contribution towards:

- additional activities such as specialist tuition e.g. French lessons, yoga, trips etc.
- consumables such as sun cream, wipes, nappies etc.
- meals and snacks

The [\*DfE Statutory Guidance Early education and childcare...\*](#)

advises that providers can charge for meals and snacks as part of a funded entitlement place and they can also charge for consumables such as nappies or sun cream and for services such as trips and musical tuition. Providers should be mindful of the impact of charges on families, particularly the most disadvantaged. Providers who choose to offer the free entitlements, are responsible for setting a policy on providing parents with options for alternatives to additional charges. This policy must offer reasonable alternatives that allow parents to access the entitlement for free, including allowing parents to supply their own, or waiving the cost of these items.

*What the Early Years Entitlement funding includes....*

The base rate funding is calculated to include the cost of all necessary resources and facilities to deliver a child's funded education place as identified within the Early Years Foundation Stage. This includes basic equipment, such as stationery, paints, toiletries etc.

*What providers can do....*

- consider not applying refundable deposit charges to disadvantaged parents (i.e. funded 2 year olds where families receive some additional forms of financial support or meet other criteria). If you still choose to charge parents a deposit to secure their child's funded place, ensure the deposit is not an excessive amount and is refunded in full to the parents within a reasonable time scale.
- ensure you do not charge parents a non-refundable registration fee as a condition of taking up their child's funded place.
- offer parents alternative meal options where parents identify that they cannot afford to purchase meals in addition to their funded entitlement place. For example, allowing a child to bring in their own packed lunch.
- review your charging policies to ensure it does not enforce parents to purchase additional hours or weeks as a condition to access their funded entitlement. Providers can offer different options that enable parents to take up their child's free place in patterns of hours that "stretch" their child's entitlement by taking fewer hours a week over more weeks of the year. Providers should help parents understand which hours/sessions can be taken as funded provision.
- Be clear with parents what is included in a charge in advance of them accepting the place or moving onto the funding, so they have chance to seek an alternative placement before the start of a term if they are not happy with the proposed charges. This information should be available and issued to parents in written format, either in your welcome pack, fees sheet or website (also a reminder of this information on invoices is useful to the parent).
- Be prepared to resolve any queries from parents who query such charges, as the Local Authority is not in a position to serve as an arbitrator in contractual arrangements between parents and providers.

Thank you for your continued support and efforts in delivering funded childcare which, without doubt, makes a real difference to the lives of young children and families in Nottinghamshire.