

Hippitots Children's World Fees Policy

Hippitots understands that the cost of registered early years education and care may seem expensive to a parent/carer. However, providing a high quality, safe and stimulating environment for children is not cheap and to ensure the continued high standards, Hippitots must ask the parents/carers to respect its policy in respect of fees.

This policy forms part of the contract with the parents/carer and Hippitots Children's World (Limited)

Fees

Hippitots is open for 51 weeks per year. Places can be booked attending all year or term time only (38 weeks per year).

- **Opening times and hours for the setting are:**
 - Private fee hours with or without funding deduction
 - Full day: 8.00am – 5.45pm
 - Morning session: 8.00am – 12.30pm
 - Afternoon session: 1.15pm – 5.45pm
 - Funded only sessions
 - Full day: 8.00am – 5.45pm
 - School day session: 8.00am – 3.30pm
 - Morning session: 8.30am – 11.30am
 - Afternoon session: 12.45pm – 3.45pm

Children will not be admitted before the start of their session time and must be collected before by the end of their session time. Early drop off or late collection charges will be applied (£1.00p per minute)

- **Securing a nursery place:**

Once a nursery place has been offered, parents/carers are required to:

 - Complete and sign a My Details registration form, contract, parent declaration form for funding, produce your child's birth certificate or passport for Hippitots to copy and check details.
- **Deposit**

A refundable retainer of one weeks expected fees will be charged to secure your child's place once the place is confirmed. The deposit will be refunded on your first month's fee invoice. This deposit will be forfeit if you fail to take up the place as per the agreement.
- **Fees**

Fees are charged on a calendar month basis (first to last day of the month) and are payable one month in advance upon receiving an invoice. For example, 1st May to 31st May. Fees are calculated on the first day of the month, or closest working day to the first day of the month.

Fee invoices are issued via Famly, the parent app used by Hippitots.

Fees, both for private fee-paying sessions and funded sessions where Hippitots provide an additional service (such as snacks and meals), must be paid by the 14th day of the month, unless parent/carer has made an alternative arrangement with the management.

If fees are not paid on the agreed date a late payment charge of £10 per day will be issued and the debt policy procedure implemented.

- **Fee rates**

Changes to fee rates apply on your child's birthday. EYE, if eligible, will apply on the date set out by the Department for Education. These fee rates are before EYE funding discounts are applied.

 - Under 2's
 - Full day session £72.24p
 - Half day session £37.21p

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- 2, 3 & 4 year olds
Full day session £66.39p
Half day session £35.23p

Where Hippitots are providing snacks and meals during funded hours there will be a charge or alternatively parents can provide their own snacks and meals. The charges are:

- Snack – 50p per half day session or £1.00p per full day session
- Lunch - £2.60p per day
- Tea - £2.00p per day

Hippitots operates **51 weeks per year**, closing for a week at Christmas, on all Bank holidays, and for two or three teacher training days per year. **These closure days are still chargeable.**

○ **Non-attendance, holidays and sickness**

Fees/charges for snack, meals and football skills remain payable during periods of:

- Child sickness
- General absences
- Family holidays. Families are eligible to a two-week 50% discount per year (from 1st January to 31st December). A holiday form must be completed and handed in with one month's notice.
No refunds or discounts will be given for non-attendance.

○ **Charges:**

At Hippitots children can attend using three different ways of booking and fees,

- Private fee hours with no Early Years Entitlement funding deduction,
- Private fee hours with funding deduction, and
- Early Years Entitlement funding only

Should a session last longer than the EYE funding available parents will be required to pay for the private fee hours that exceed the EYE funding hours.

Private fee hours:

EYE funding will be shared across the sessions booked with funding deducted from fee paying hours.

There will be, if Hippitots are providing, a charge for snacks and meals during funded hours (alternatively parent/carer can provide their own packed snacks and meals).

Where fees are charged for private fee hours snacks and meals are included within the fees.

Parent/carer will be issued with an itemised invoice for private fee hours, funding hours and snacks and meals charged each calendar month.

Four weeks written notice is required to cancel/terminate the private fee hours place.

Funded only hours:

Where parent/carers choose for Hippitots to provide to snacks and meals for their child, who is attending using funded hours only, they will be issued with an itemised invoice each calendar month.

Alternatively, parents and carers can provide their own healthy snacks, lunch and tea.

No notice is required to cancel/terminate funded only places.

Invoices:

Invoices, even once you are in receipt of EYE funding, are not annualised therefore the overall cost will vary slightly from month to month. Your invoice will be itemised showing the funding hours and the non-funded private hours which are being charged, and any additional charges parent/carer agree too.

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Additional charge:

Hippitots provide mid-morning, and mid-afternoon snacks, 2 course lunch and snack tea for an additional charge in funded hours.

Parent/carers have the option for their child to have food provided by Hippitots, alternatively parent/carer can provide packed snacks and meals for their child while at Hippitots.

The current costs are:

Snacks; 50p/£1.00p per half day/full day

2 course lunch; £2.60p per day

Snack tea; £2.00p per day

Snacks and meals provided by Hippitots will be invoiced monthly via Family. This charge will remain in place regardless of your child attending (unless a holiday form has been submitted) as the food is budgeted for the number of children attending each day.

Football skills/other additional activities

Football skills is an additional activity offered at Hippitots.

Parents and carers will be asked prior to the activity taking place if they wish for their child to attend/take part in other activities which will incur additional costs. They will be informed of costs that will be required to be paid.

Football skills charges per session per week;

2 year olds - £3.00p per session, term time only

3 years plus - £3.50p per session, term time only

Football skills will be charged for the number of sessions per calendar month; these are charged one month in advance. Failure to make the payment will result in the cancellation of the child's participation of football skills.

Failure to collect

Failure to collect your child on time will incur a charge of £1.00p per minute.

Early drop off/Late Collection

Dropping your child off early or collecting later than the agreed time will incur a charge of £1.00p per minute.

Late payment of fees

£10.00p per day will be added to the account until the payment is received in the Hippitots account after the agreed payment date.

Early Years Entitlement Funding (EYE funding)

EYE funding is available at a date set by the Department of Education for from 9 month olds, and from the term following the child's second/third birthday.

Hippitots is in receipt of EYE funding for from 9 months, two, three and four year olds; this is paid for 38 weeks per year. Hippitots is open all year round and uses the "stretch offer" funding which allow the funding to be spread over 52 weeks per year, or "term time only" for 38 weeks per year.

Where children attend all year invoices will show the funding spread across the year.

To claim the EYE funding the following information is needed

- For working family EYE funding an 11-digit code is needed, the parent/carer must provide this to Hippitots before the child's start date alongside the following.

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- Birth certificate or passport. A copy is needed to confirm the child's date of birth.
- A completed parent declaration form
- It is the parent's responsibility to provide this documentation, if child's legal documentation is not produced then parents/carers will be charged the settings full fees and Hippitots will be unable to claim EYE funding for the child.

For the working parent 11-digit code, go to www.beststartinlife.gov.uk (formerly childcare choices)

For the 2-year olds Play and Learn 15 hours funding code, go to <https://education.durham.gov.uk/SynergyWeb/enquiries/citizen/Earlyyears.aspx>

EYE funding 15 hours

- EYE funding entitlement is 570 hours per annum of which three days are teacher training days.
- A maximum of 9.75 hours can be claimed in any one day at Hippitots.
- Children can claim up to 10.96 hours per week stretch offer or 15 hours term time.
- You can use more than one provider but can only claim the maximum entitlement of hours per funding period in total.

EYE funding 30 hours (working parents)

- EYE funding entitlement is 1140 hours per annum of which three days are teacher training days.
- A maximum of 9.75 hours can be claimed in any one day at Hippitots.
- Children can claim up to 21.92 hours per week stretch offer or 30 hours term time.
- You can use more than one provider but can only claim the maximum entitlement of hours per funding period in total.

○ **Payment options:**

Cash

Tax Free Childcare (for information about Tax Free Childcare see www.beststartinlife.gov.uk)

Bank transfer

A receipt for payments will be issued via Famly, the parent app.

Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to the Manager if they have any queries about the fees policy or if for any reason, they are likely to have difficulty in making a payment on time. An early meeting or conversation is recommended to avoid the addition of the late payment charge and to avoid jeopardising the child's place at Hippitots.

○ **Working Tax Credits:**

If parent/carers are in receipt of Working Tax credits, you may be able to get help towards the cost of childcare. For further details contact Tax Credits helpline on 0345 300 3900.

If we are contacted by HMRC for details of your child's sessions and invoices, we will provide them with this information unless instructed by parents/carer in writing not to do so.

You may be required by HMRC to provide evidence of nursery fees and receipts for payment therefore parents and carers are asked to keep monthly invoices and receipts for evidence.

If you have not Hippitots will print a history of nursery fees charged and payments received but will not be able to provide individual copies of invoices or receipts.

○ **Terminate or Change of sessions:**

If parent/carer decide to decrease or terminate their child's attendance, we require four weeks' notice in writing.

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If a parent/carer wants to change days or increase a child's booked sessions, Hippitots will look at availability and offer the change if there is capacity to do so. If no capacity is available at the requested date but is available at a later date the change can be reserved when a place is available.

Any extra sessions, early start or late finish charges in a month will be added the following month fee invoice.

Booked sessions cannot be swapped, however Hippitots may be able to offer additional days short term; please ask the manager.

- **Termination of contract:**
 - **Parent/carer:**

Parents/carers must give four weeks' written notice and ensure payment of outstanding fees is made in full when cancelling/terminating their child's place at Hippitots.
 - **Setting:**

The setting reserves the right to terminate the contract without notice in the event of unsuitable behaviour from parents/carers or non-payment of fees, Hippitots will follow the non-payment procedure below. Settings notice period i.e., 4 weeks' notice in writing will be given

Non-payment of fees procedure

Invoices will be sent via Famly, parent app, on the first day of the month or nearest working day to the first; payments should be made by the 14th day of the month. Parent/carer can make an alternative date for payment with management if required.

Failure to pay on time will result in a late payment charge of £10.00p per day until the payment is received in full.

Parents will be required to sign the 'Working Agreement Contract' in their child's My Details Registration pack and Parent Contract.

Failure to pay by the end of the month will result in a letter/message being issued reminding parents that fees should be paid in advance and that immediate payment is required of the outstanding balance.

Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to the Manager if they have any queries about the fees or if for any reason, they are likely to have difficulty in making a payment on time. An early meeting or conversation is recommended to avoid jeopardizing the child's place at Hippitots.

If fees are paid persistently late or no payment is made with any explanation, Hippitots will issue a formal warning to the parent/carer and inform them that continued late payment would result in their child's place being withdrawn or hours reduced to be covered by EYE funding hours only.

Fees that are paid persistently late or not at all with no explanation, will force Hippitots to terminate the child's place.

Hippitots will pass details of any unpaid nursery fees onto other agencies to claim the outstanding monies back.

Debt Policy Implementation

Following the initial £10.00p per day late payment charge the manager will meet with the parent/carer to agree payment and discuss any extenuating circumstances.

Should the payment not be made, a letter will be issued by the Manager requesting a meeting to discuss the matter and arrange payment.

- Reminder letters will be sent as follows

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1. If fees payment are 1 month late. The Manager will, after one month missed payment, issue a formal warning in writing to the parent/carer informing them that immediate payment is expected; continued late payment will result in the childcare place being suspended at the manager's discretion.
2. If no payment one week later. If the payment has not been received one week later the Manager will issue another letter regarding immediate payment; continued late payment will result in the childcare place being suspended at the manager's discretion.
3. If no payment one week later. If the payment has not been received one week later the Manager will issue a final letter regarding immediate payment; continued late payment will result in the childcare place being suspended at the manager's discretion.

Three letters in total will be sent over a period of 6 weeks.

Should a payment plan be implemented between the parent/carer and Hippitots, and if parent/carers do not keep to the payment plan, the child will then only be permitted to attend EYE funded hours and provide own snacks and food. Then, with a one month notice the place will be withdrawn.

If payment has not been received two weeks after the third and final letter, then court action will be taken to recover monies owed and the child's place will be withdrawn at Hippitots.

Fee review

Fees are reviewed annually in April but may be revised with one month's notice. EYE Funding rates are reviewed by the Department for Education each year and if there is a change it will come into effect from 1st April.

Private fee hours and any additional services offered at Hippitots such as a charge for snacks and meals, and football skills, are payable for all booked sessions even if these fall on a bank holiday or teacher training day when Hippitots will be closed, for 50% of two weeks pre-booked holidays, or if your child is sick. In the case of long-term sickness or absence due to family issues this will be at the discretion of the Manager and owner.

Special Circumstances

Hippitots reserves the right to refuse admission, cancel sessions, and alter opening times without notice should events occur beyond its control (i.e. snow, contagious disease outbreak, etc.).

In these circumstances' fees are non-refundable for up to a maximum of five consecutive days.

Epidemic and Pandemic (Covid)

In the event of Hippitots being advised to close due to an epidemic/pandemic (Covid) the following fee charges will be issued.

- Parents will be charged for the days their child uses Hippitots for education and care
- Parents not using Hippitots during this time will be charged a 30% retainer. 10% to secure the child's place for when child returns to Hippitots, 10% for online learning activities posted on Family, parent app, 10% for ongoing support from management and staff at Hippitots
- If parents are unable or choose not to pay a retainer, then their child will be added to a waiting list for a place in the future
- If meals are not provided, then families will be discounts for the cost of meals per day

Monitoring of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the setting manager/management team, new government legislation and policies will be incorporated appropriately as and when required or informed.