



Terms and Conditions for Payment of Fees at First Steps Nurseries

1. A deposit of 2 weeks' fees (based on your requested sessions) is required to secure your child's place when you complete our registration forms. This deposit will be refunded when your child leaves less any outstanding fees or if attending just for Early Years funded hours when your child starts. If you decide your child will no longer start at First Steps this is non-refundable.
2. Your child will be booked in for 2 introductory sessions, (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a one or two-week period depending on individual needs, age and stage of development. After these full fees are payable. You are welcome to stay with your child to build up their attendance slowly if this helps them to settle.
3. Invoices are issued on all accounts monthly ***in advance***.
4. All Fees in respect of any child's attendance at First Steps must be paid promptly by the **5th of the month** as shown on your invoice.
5. Fees can be paid directly on the nursery App or by childcare vouchers, bank payment, standing order, or cash.
6. Childcare places funded by a college or University will require written evidence of approved funding and the timetable of your course.
7. First Steps childcare places are all year round (unless your child receives the free Early Years Entitlement and has opted for term time only)
8. Full fees and meal costs are required if your child is sick or absent from the nursery. For planned holidays of a week or more, parents can request to waive the meal if they give 1 month's notice of the holiday by emailing Finance@firststepsbath.org.uk.
9. To help with our planning, a 1-month notice is required for a permanent change or cancellation of your child's sessions. Shorter notice may be available in exceptional circumstances in response to a written request. In this situation, please speak to a manager. One session change is permitted per month; any further session changes will incur a charge of £5 each.
10. To keep your place, a **retainer fee of £150** is payable if you decide not to bring your child in during the whole 6 weeks of the summer school holidays (July and August).
11. If you need your child dropped off or picked up from school, a fee of £5 is chargeable per drop off/ pick up for schools offsite from the nursery.
12. Please give as much notice as possible of your child's leaving date (a minimum of 1 month) to ensure your child's smooth transition to school/another nursery.
13. There is a 15% discount on childcare fees for second or further children which will be applied to the younger child.
14. If your child is collected late or brought in early **a £10 charge will be applied for every 15 minutes**. I.e., 1 minute to 15 mins = £10, 16 mins to 30 mins = £20 etc. (if this impacts your ability to collect an older child from school please speak to a member of staff, we aim to be as flexible as possible).
15. Additional hours are charged at the usual rate. Additional hours will not be given to families who are in arrears.

16. Children who attend in the term after their 3rd Birthday (or 2nd Birthday for entitled 2-year-olds) may use their Early Years Entitlement at First Steps nurseries. The number of funded childcare hours your child can receive will depend on whether you qualify for the extended hours. Please speak to the Nursery Manager for details. The maximum hours per week is 22 hours all year round (AYR) or 30 hours term time only (TTO). You must select which option you prefer i.e. AYR or TTO. This can be changed on the anniversary of receiving the funding. If changed before that you may not have the full amount of EYE funding (22hrs/30hrs) left in your annual allowance and will have to pay for the unfunded hours. Parents are responsible for the fees if their circumstances change, and your child is no longer entitled to these free hours. Meals (Snack, Lunch and Tea) are chargeable although parents can opt to bring in packed meals.
17. B&NES rules regarding Early Years Entitlement Funded hours are that any new starters or leavers during the term need to attend for a minimum of 4 weeks in that term (Terms being Spring, Summer, and Autumn as defined by B&NES). For parents wanting to increase or decrease their funded hours, this is only allowed at half term. Any increases in hours mid-term will not be funded and therefore chargeable to parents. Changes from term time to all-year-round attendance or vice versa can only be processed at the start of the term. Contact finance to check if you have enough funding hours left in the 12-month period. In the event of an Ofsted rating of Inadequate B&NES may withhold funding until our re-inspection. In this unlikely event, we will require parents to pay full fees until the funding is received.
18. Parents whose children receive **Early Years Entitlement funded** hours may opt out of the First Steps nutritious hot meals and balanced snacks, they may instead provide packed snacks and lunch with their child. See the policy on Healthy Eating, Active Lifestyle and hygiene.
19. Families are encouraged to contribute towards outings and additional activities to enhance their child's learning, which are often supported by charitable donations. Participation is entirely optional. However, if sufficient funding is not secured to cover the costs for all children, the activity or outing may need to be cancelled to ensure fairness and inclusivity.
20. As part of First Steps charitable offer families of children in receipt of Early Years Entitlement funded hours will not be charged for First Steps hot nutritious meals and balanced snacks or outings and extra activities if on low income and the child qualifies for Early Years Pupil Premium. This can be checked if you provide your National Insurance number and date of birth.
21. If fees fall into arrears, the following procedure will take place: -
- *A £10 charge will be applied for late payment for each calendar week after 5th of each month if no repayment plan exists*
 - *a member of staff will request payment of the arrears within 1 week.*
 - *if overdue fees are not paid, we will invite you to a meeting within 2 weeks to agree on a repayment plan for the debt.*
 - *the child's agreed hours at the nursery will be reduced to an affordable level if payment is not forthcoming within 4 weeks and you may be asked to pay on entry before dropping off your child.*
 - *if a satisfactory resolution cannot be found First Steps will cancel the child's place.*
 - *If after following the above procedure there is still no satisfactory arrears settlement, First Steps will take further action to recover the debt.*
22. If you require a **refund of your fees due to overpayment a charge of £10** will be applied to cover our costs (not applicable if your child is leaving).
23. First Steps regularly review nursery fees with trustees, parents are informed via the nursery software App of any increase at least one calendar month before the increase.
24. We aim to always keep the centres open but to ensure the health and safety of our staff, children, and families, if, in the event of extreme circumstances for example heavy snow, we may have to

close. This is subject to the Manager deeming it dangerous for children and staff to travel or access the nursery or there is a risk of children and staff being stranded. Unfortunately, fees (including any extra hours booked) for any whole or part day are non-refundable, and Early Years funding is not transferable.

Parent Signature

Date.....

Parent copy given or shared electronically: (circle) yes / no