First Steps Bath

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. If your child attends just for their funded hours, a £20 deposit is required. If you decide your child will no longer start at First Steps, this is non-refundable. If you decide to reduce your original sessions booked at the point of your child starting or with less than 4 weeks' notice before starting, the deposit for the reduced sessions will be non-refundable.
2. Your child will be booked in for two introductory sessions (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, the 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. If you need to delay your start date, this can be considered for up to 4 weeks when you give us at least 4 weeks' notice.
4. Invoices are issued on all accounts monthly ***in advance.***
5. 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.
6. Fees can be paid directly on the nursery App or by childcare vouchers, bank payment, standing order, or cash.
7. Childcare places funded by a college or University will require written evidence of approved funding and the timetable of your course.
8. First Steps childcare places are all year round (unless your child receives the free Early Years Entitlement and has opted for term-time only.
9. Full fees and meal costs are required if your child is sick or absent from the nursery. Nursery Managers should be informed 4 weeks in advance of any planned absences/holidays via message on our nursery App, email or in person. Parents can request to waive the meal charge if they give 4 weeks' notice of the absence by emailing Finance@firststepsbath.org.uk.
10. To help with our planning, a 1-month notice is required for a permanent change or cancellation of your child's sessions for any paid sessions/hours. 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.
11. If you need your child dropped off or picked up from school, a fee of £5 is chargeable per drop off/ pick up.
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; our aim is 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. At First Steps, we want every child to feel included and supported. If your child has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), we provide tailored support during their funded Early Years hours (15- or 30-hour term-time only or 11 or 21 hours all year round, excluding BOP). If your child has additional financial support to enable inclusion and you would like them to attend **extra hours beyond their funded entitlement**, please note: **Inclusion Funding does not automatically increase** for additional hours. Extra hours may mean extra costs, and we may not always be able to offer them. Please speak with your setting manager before booking extra hours to make sure our child's needs can still be met.
17. A voluntary 75p a week donation is added to each invoice to support our free meals/snacks programme for low-income families. Parents can opt out by emailing Finance@firststepsbath.org.uk, and this will be removed from the invoice.
18. 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 your circumstances change, and your children are no longer entitled to these free hours. Meals (Snack, Lunch and Tea) are chargeable, although parents can opt to bring in packed meals.
19. To claim Early Years Entitlement for your free funded place, parents must commit to a full term of funding. (Terms being Spring, Summer, and Autumn as defined by B&NES). If you decide to leave mid-term, the funding is not transferable. B&NES rules regarding Early Years Entitlement Funded hours are that any new starters during the term have to attend for a minimum of 4 weeks in that term to claim funding.
20. For parents wanting to increase their funded hours, this is only allowed at the start if each full term (September/January/April) Any increases in hours mid-term will not be funded and therefore will be chargeable to parents. Any requests to reduce funded hours can only occur with a full term's notice before the start of the term. Changes from term time to all-year-round attendance or vice versa can only be processed at the start of the term, **giving a full term's notice**. Contact finance to check if you have enough funding hours left in the 12-month period.
21. If your usual session falls on a bank holiday or staff training day, your funded hours will not be reallocated that week; any other charges will not apply on a bank holiday or staff training day.
22. Children of parents claiming their extended Early Years Entitlement cannot claim funding if they start during their grace period of funding or change providers. Parents are responsible for ensuring they re-validate their code in line with the dates advised when the code was issued. Failing to reconfirm your code by the date advised will result in you losing your funding for that term. Full fees will be charged to parents.
23. Absences of more than 4 weeks per full term will result in Early Years Entitlement funding being withdrawn for those weeks, and full fees will be charged to parents. Please speak with your nursery manager or email finance@firststepsbath.org.uk if you expect to need prolonged periods of absence.

24. In the event of an Ofsted inspection report card rating of 'Not Met', 'Urgent Improvement' or 'Needs Attention' B&NES may withhold funding until our re-inspection. In this unlikely event, parents are required to pay full fees until the funding is received.
25. 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.
26. 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 inclusiveness.
27. 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.
28. 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 the 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, you will be invited 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.*
29. 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).
30. First Steps regularly reviews nursery fees with trustees; parents are informed via the nursery software App of any increase at least one calendar month before the increase.
31. 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, it 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

Updated August 2026