



Government Funded Early Years Education Entitlement Policy

Please read the information below very carefully.

An Explanation of universal and extended hours

The 'universal' hours refers to the entitlement of 15 government-funded hours, which is offered to all 3 and 4-year-olds, and the 'extended' hours refers to the entitlement of 15 additional hours, which are based on eligibility. Together they make the 30 Hours Free Childcare. Parents have to apply via HMRC for the extended 15 free hours and renew their circumstances/eligibility every 3 months.

If you choose to use your universal hours (and/or extended) with us, please read below.

Opening hours and days

We are open 4 days a week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The main session times are 8:00-15:30, 7.5 hours a day.

Children must attend a minimum of 2 days a week.

We do not offer half-day sessions.

Children can be dropped off anytime between 8:00 and 9:00.

We ask that all children arrive by 9:00.

Children can be collected anytime between 15:00 and 15:20, allowing time to collect belongings and talk to your child's key worker.

We also offer an 'After Kindie' session three days a week Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On Thursdays, we have our team meeting. This session runs from 15:30 until 17:30.

Funded Places

We offer funded places 4 days a week from 8:00-17:30. You can also use your funded hours to pay for the 'After Kindie' club.

Examples;

- If your child does two 2 days with us, and you use your funded hours, we will claim for 15 hours.
- If your child does 3 days and one After Kindie, we will claim for 24.5 hours.
- If your child does 4 days, we will claim for 30 hours.

Operational method

Funded hours can only be used Term Time Only (TTO) over 38 weeks of the year and cannot be used to pay for holiday club sessions.

Food Options 2023/2024

We do not provide lunch and all children are required to bring a packed lunch.

We will provide an (optional) organic mid-morning snack to all children. This is included in our Sustainability Contribution (see below). You will need to let us know if you would rather provide your child's own healthy snack and have £1.00 removed per day.

We also provide a light Afternoon Tea at a charge of £1.00 a day for people who use funded hours to cover the After Kindie session. If paying for After Kindie the Afternoon Tea is included in the session price.

This will increase to £1.50 a day from Sept 2024.

Sustainability Contribution 2023/2024

We request that parents/carers contribute towards delivering our provision at the cost of *£8.50 per day.

Please note our Sustainability Contribution for 2024/2025

Our sustainability fee will increase to *£10.00 per day.

The following is taken from our local provider agreement with the council:

*Government funding is intended to cover the cost of delivering 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high-quality, flexible childcare. **It is not intended to cover the cost of meals, consumables, additional hours or services.***

Therefore, we apply a charge for morning snack, consumables and our additional services.

The sustainability contribution goes towards the following and more:

- Regular (and almost daily) trips off-site to local green spaces for forest school activities and nature walks
- Higher adult:child ratios to allow for these frequent local trips (currently 1:5)
- Qualified Early Years teachers working directly with the children
- Qualified Forest School leaders working directly with the children delivering Forest School Sessions mostly at our designated forest school sites but also on site when doing tool work and fire for example.
- A range of enrichment activities and workshops such as storytelling, music, art, dance, cooking
- Specialist resources for delivering Forest School sessions such as tools for woodwork and cooking on the fire
- Organic morning snack*

We call it a **Sustainability Contribution**, as without this additional income, and if we were to rely solely on the funding from the government, our provision wouldn't be able to operate according to our vision and values. The government funding is not sufficient to sustain a setting such as ours, with higher adult:child ratios and additional resources and services. We strive to work towards greater diversity and inclusion for all, and whilst we would love to not have to ask for this contribution, we have to prioritise places for those who are able to pay the Sustainability Contribution over those who opt out in order to keep our kindergartens running.

The Sustainability Contribution is only applied to those using government-funded hours, it does not apply to those self-funding the full daily fees.

Our great hope is that the Government increases the hourly funding for 3 and 4 year olds to reflect what it truly costs a setting such as ours to operate successfully and safely.

You can find out more about the plight of Early Years Funding here:

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/freedom-information-investigation-findings>

<https://www.earlyyearesequality.com/post/what-do-we-mean-by-underfunded>

Please note: We do not charge the fee to parents in receipt of the Early Years Pupil Premium (eligible lower income families). If you think you may be eligible for EYPP, you must state this on your EYR1 form and provide evidence so that we can assess the likelihood of you receiving EYPP status. If your EYPP application is successful, we will not request a Sustainability Contribution.

How we invoice for this

You will be invoiced monthly through FAMLY for this additional contribution.

* Please note that parents have the option to provide their own snack and reduce the £8.50 fee to £7.50, provided they do so in line with our policies on allergies, healthy eating and health & safety guidelines around food. If unsure, please speak to a member of staff.

Partial Sustainability Fee 23/24

If you use some government funded hours and partially self fund your child's place, you will pay a portion of the sustainability fee as follows.

- If you use 2 hours or less of funded hours, you will not be charged the Sustainability Contribution
- If you use between 2 hours and 3.75 hours, we charge a Partial Sustainability Contribution (£4.25)
- If you use 3.75 hours or more of funded hours, we charge the full Sustainability Contribution (£8.50)

Cost of non-funded hours 2023/2024

We currently charge £ 7.00 per hour for any non-funded hours. For example, if self-funding for After Kindie, the session (15:30-17:30) costs £14.00.

Non funded hours 2024/2025

Please note that our hourly rate will increase to £7.50 per hour from September 2024. We are always reluctant to increase our fees, but, with rising costs and, ultimately, paying above and beyond the real living wage, we have no choice but to increase our fees. We have seen no significant increase in government funding. Raising our fees will bring us into line with other similar (Forest School, nature-based) providers in the south west.

A Kindie day (8:00 - 15:30) will increase to £56.25

After Kindie (15:30 -17:30) will increase to £15.00

A full day at our kindergarten (8:00 - 17:30) = £71.25

Sibling discounts

We do not offer a sibling discount.

Tax-Free Childcare, including your unique reference, starting 5000XXXXXX

This is for self-funded childcare – not the government-funded hours. If you want to access tax-free childcare you will need our code. Please see the website for details: <https://outtherekindergartens.co.uk/preschool-admissions>.

Please note **deposits** must be paid directly through Family and we cannot accept childcare vouchers or tax free allowance for this payment.

Notice periods for the Government Funded hours

We require a minimum of six weeks **written notice** on a place via email to admin@outtherekindergartens.co.uk

Informing the Kindie manager or your child's key person does not constitute giving notice on a place and your notice period will only begin when you have given written notice via the email above

If your place is funded, we will continue to make a claim for the funded hours up until the end of the term (Autumn, Spring or Summer) provided we have a signed EYR1 form and unless you tell us otherwise (see below).

You should let admin@outtherekindergartens.co.uk know if you wish to stop using your funded hours with us and move to a different provider under Bristol City Council. We will then return the funded hours to the new provider (via Bristol City Council) minus the 6 weeks notice period.

The Sustainability Contribution will be removed at the point the child no longer physically attends.

NB: The above does not apply to funded two-year-olds who can move their funded hours with no notice.

Admissions methods

Please see our separate [Admissions Policy](#)

Waiting list for increasing or changing days

We operate a waiting list in order of request. To be added to a waiting list please email admin@outtherekindergartens.co.uk

Holding Deposits

If you are successful in getting a place, we ask for a holding deposit of £100.00 to reserve the place. **This must be paid via the FAMILY app payment system. We do not accept tax free childcare or childcare vouchers for the deposit.**

The deposit is only refundable if your child starts attending and is returned when you leave, provided you have paid your fees in full. The return of the deposit will be made in September (or within 2 months of leaving if giving up

your place mid year) once your child has left our provision and fees are paid in full. Deductions will be made as appropriate.

Registration fees

A registration fee of £25.00 will also be charged to those parents self funding their child's place or paying for any additional hours. This fee will be added to your first invoice or when you begin to self fund any part of your child's day.

Appeals process

If a parent has a complaint about any aspect of our delivery of the funded hours, you can contact Bristol City Council to discuss it further. Please email the Family Information Service, askcyps@bristol.gov.uk or call 0845 129 7 217.

If you choose to use your extended hours with us, please read below.

15 Free Hours (Extended) – known as '30 Hours Free Childcare'

30 Hours Eligibility Criteria

If you want to book some or all of your extended 15 hours with us, we need to check you are eligible. We will use the Bristol City Council Portal to check your 11- digit 30 Hours Code (which usually begins with 5000XXXXXXX, unless it is a temporary code, in which case it will begin with 11). We will also need your National Insurance number, child's date of birth and written consent from you, in the form of the EYR1 Parental Declaration Form, to verify your eligibility. Once the code has been verified, we can move forward with your booking. Bristol City Council (using Pioneer) will let us know if your 30 Hour Code is invalid and we can work towards getting a new one.

How to apply online for the extended hours

You can check eligibility via www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. Parents can apply for both the extended hours and Tax-free Childcare at the same time.

Tax-Free Childcare is the system that is gradually replacing the old voucher scheme - paying for childcare through the employer.

Three-month renewal cycle for the extended hours

You will be prompted every 3 months to reconfirm the details you entered are still correct. You will be prompted by HMRC by email or text 4 weeks before, then again, 2 weeks before if you have not reconfirmed. We will also remind parents they need to reconfirm when asked by HMRC. If parents miss the deadline, your code becomes ineligible and the grace period will come into effect.

Grace periods for the extended hours

If a child who has a 30 Hours Code becomes ineligible during the first half of a term, the child will be funded until the end of that term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. If a 30 Hours Code becomes ineligible during the second half of a term, the child should be funded until the end of the following term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. Ineligibility would only affect extended hours – the child can still have their Universal hours.

In the event of you losing your 15 free extended hours you can:

- keep the child in the setting and pay the private hourly rate for any hours that are not the universal entitlement hours
- reduce the amount of time your child attends our setting each week to just the universal hours. In this case, I (the provider) may fill the vacant hours with another child.

Non-Funded Places

Cost of non-funded sessions 23/24

We charge £7.00 per hour for non-funded sessions. A non-funded place at the kindergarten from 8:00-15:30 costs £52.50. The after-kindie session (15:30-17:30) costs £14.00 per session.

NB: We do not charge a Sustainability Contribution on top of self-funded places.

Invoicing frequency

You will be invoiced on a monthly basis at the beginning of each month. Payment will be due within 10 days of receiving the invoice. **Payment**

Payment can be made through the Family app by adding yourself as a payee. Family use a payment system called Stripe. When making payment this way the money will automatically be cleared from the balance owed.

We also accept childcare vouchers and tax-free childcare credits. Please let us know if you have made a payment with vouchers or tax-free childcare by emailing finance@outtherekindergartens.co.uk so the payment can be located and allocated against your child's account

Notice Period for Cancellation of Non-Funded Kindergarten and After Kindie places

We require six weeks written notice for a change in hours or cancellation of the contract on any paid for hours via email to admin@outtherekindergartens.co.uk.

Informing the Kindergarten

Please do not inform the manager or your child's key person does not constitute as an official way of giving notice on a place and your notice period will only begin when you have given written notice via the email above.

If you leave before your notice period has ended, your child will be marked as absent on the register and we will invoice you as normal up until the end of the notice period. This also applies to those who receive EYPP, but self fund. You will be required to accept these terms and conditions on Family in the permissions section.

Please note that this includes any bookings made for After Kindie.

Payment during the Settling-in Sessions

Please note that places have to be paid in full (£56.25 per day from Sept 2024) for the three weeks settling-in period.

Exceptional circumstances

If you are experiencing financial difficulty please get in touch with finance@outtherekindergartens.co.uk immediately so that we can work out a manageable payment plan.

Ad-Hoc Care

We do not offer ad-hoc sessions unless it is for an emergency. Circumstances in which we will allow you to book ad-hoc care include things like: a member of the family in hospital, a parent or carer sick or unexpected and last minute changes to work patterns. Ad-hoc sessions are also subject to availability

This policy was adopted by:	Out There Forest School and Kindergarten
Date	July 2017
Reviewed:	July 2023
To be next reviewed:	July 2024
Signed	Jenny Brough