

Funding and Fees Policy

Legal Framework

This policy follows:

- DfE statutory guidance on the delivery of funded childcare
- Buckinghamshire Council's Local Management of the Funded Entitlement
- EYFS statutory framework

Government funding is intended to deliver free childcare, not to cover meals, consumables, or additional services.

Funding Options Offered

We offer the following funded entitlements:

38-Week Term-Time Offer

- 15 or 30 hours per week (depending on eligibility)
- Delivered across 38 weeks

47-Week Stretched Offer

- Funding is stretched across 47 weeks.
- Residual hours will be offered as hours only, not as a cash value.

Funded Hours Availability

Funded hours can be used Monday–Thursday, 08:00–18:00.

Parents may use funded hours without purchasing private hours.

There are no artificial breaks in the funded day.

Consumables & Optional Charges

Government funding does not cover consumables, food, or activities.

We charge a voluntary £10 daily consumables fee, broken down as follows:

Daily Optional Charges Breakdown

- Food: £4 per day (includes breakfast, snacks, drinks, hot lunch, tea)
- Non-Food Consumables: £3 per day (nappies, wipes, sun cream and general consumables)
- Activities & Outings: £3 per day (playgroups, soft play, farm visits, special activities)

Important:

- This charge is voluntary.
- Parents who do not wish to pay may provide:
 - All meals and snacks
 - Nappies and wipes
 - Sun cream
 - Payment for any outings or trips
- No child will be disadvantaged for not paying the consumables charge.
- Consumables charges are not a top-up to funded hours.

Additional Private Hours

Parents may purchase additional hours at our standard hourly rate:

Private Hourly Rate: £6.50 per hour

Purchasing private hours is **not** a condition of accessing funded hours.

Invoicing

Invoices clearly separate:

- Funded hours
- Private hours
- Consumables
- Meals (if applicable)
- Outings
- Other optional extras

Invoices are issued monthly in advance.

Deposits & Registration Fees

Deposit Amount

- A £50 deposit is required to secure a place.
- For funded-only children, this deposit is refunded within 6 weeks of the child starting.
- For children accessing a mix of funded and private hours, the deposit is held and deducted from the first invoice.

Registration Fees

- No registration fee is charged for funded-only children.
- Registration fees may apply for children accessing private hours only.

Withdrawing a Funded Place

Before withdrawing a funded place, Little Home Learners will seek advice from the Buckinghamshire Council Early Years Funding Team.

Non-Payment of Fees

If fees for private hours or optional extras remain unpaid:

1. A reminder will be issued
2. A payment plan may be offered
3. Continued attendance may be reviewed if fees remain outstanding

Funded hours will not be withdrawn due to non-payment of optional consumables.

Absence & Missed Hours

- If Little Home Learners is closed (illness, emergency, training), any funded hours missed will be offered at another time.
- If your child is absent, funded hours are forfeited and cannot be re-claimed.

This is in line with DfE funding rules.

Eligible Working Parent Funding

Parents are responsible for:

- Applying for their code before 31 March, 31 August, 31 December
- Reconfirming their code every 3 months

If a parent falls out of eligibility:

- They may enter a grace period
- They may continue at the setting during the grace period
- They cannot start at a new setting until eligibility is reconfirmed

Codes confirmed after the cut-off date cannot be used until the next term.

2-Year-Old Funding (Benefits-Based)

Eligibility is checked by BFIS and remains valid until the term after the child turns 3.

Notice Period

A minimum of 4 weeks' written notice is required to end a place, unless otherwise stated in the contract.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or local authority guidance changes.

Registration

We are in the final stages of our registration process. Once completed we will be registered with the Childminding Agency (CMA) Unique Support Early Years. This process is likely to be completed by the end of May.

Date of next review: February 2027.