

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following many meetings with our governors and leadership team we are now in a position to update you regarding our day-care fees and the new free entitlement.

Many of you may have read or heard in the news that the national roll out of the new 'extended free entitlement' for day-care is proving to be quite a challenge for the early years sector.

The hourly funded rate does not cover costs; therefore, it is more like a contribution than a free entitlement, and the sector can neither recruit or increase the numbers of places they provide easily in the current landscape, making it hard for nurseries to fulfil the government's promise to working families.

St Pauls day-care provision is integrated into St Pauls maintained Nursery School – which is a School, hence led and staffed by Headteachers, Teachers and School governors.

Being an LA School does ensure rigour in regards to the quality of leadership and teaching and learning opportunities here, but it also means we incur considerable extra costs. For instance: we pay between 20-28% pension contributions for all our staff as opposed to some of our non-LA based competitors who often pay less than 5%, we pay our staff in line with Bristol CC pay grades, and we also have considerably high LA overheads and charges e.g. just this month we have been told to budget for at least a 5% pay rise for all non-teaching staff.

There are huge benefits for our children who come to our setting:

- EYs Qualified Teacher expertise and input
- Headteacher leadership, accountability and ambition
- Practitioner leadership opportunities and inspiring professional development
- Being part of a National Hub – where we learn from the best in the region
- A fabulous learning environment inside and out
- Enrichment opportunities e.g., creative partnerships, 'out and about' experiences

But we do need to charge more because of this unique maintained nursery school LA context.

Having worked through our adjusted expenditure for the financial year 24 – 25 we realise we must considerably increase to our hourly rate to remain open.

We think the fairest way to do this is to charge a flat Enhanced Provision Charge to cover our 'enhanced St Pauls Nursery School offer.

This reduces your costs if you are accessing 2 or 3 days day-care with us, but in adjusting the hourly rate to match the actual hourly costs to us it does mean that once you go beyond 3 days and the funded 12 hours per week (all year round) with us it is considerably more expensive.

We can only apologise for this. Our moral purpose has always been to first serve the most disadvantaged children in our community and then next to support working families in our area, in this climate it is becoming impossible to maintain a balance between meeting these needs and remaining sustainable.

FEES for paying day care and optional 'Enhanced Provision' charges for Eligible 2's and Universal Nursery School hours:

2 Year Old Provision: From 29th April 24 (the free funding will start from 15th April 24)

Fee Paying/Working Families Free Entitlement (Priority will be given to those families accessing 2 days or more child care). Free funded hours only apply to 8.30-4.00 session

	Full cost	Cost with free funded hours per week
2 DAYS	165.24	71.40
3 DAYS	247.86	154.02
4 DAYS	330.48	236.64
5 DAYS	413.10	319.26

Free Eligible 2 Entitlement

Voluntary Enhanced Provision charge/offer: £5.00per month

0-2 Year Old Provision: from September 1st 2024 to align with free funded hours (Priority will be given to those families accessing 2 days or more) Free funded hours only apply to 8.30-4.00 session

	Full cost	Cost with free funded hours per week
2 DAYS	209.49	80.25
3 DAYS	314.24	185.00
4 DAYS	418.98	289.74
5 DAYS	523.73	394.49

Nursery School Free 15/30 hours:

Voluntary Enhanced Provision charge/offer: £5.00per month

Wraparound: from 29th April 2024

Charge increases to £10 per hour

Late payment charge introduction from 29th April 2024

Payments that are made more than 3 working days after the due date (without prior approval) will incur a £10 late payment charge, which will be invoiced in arrears

I hope this makes sense to you, and that you understand the dilemma we face in this current climate. Our Parent Governors are happy to host a surgery session, when you can drop in and chat to them if you have any questions or concerns regarding our position. They will be sharing an invitation with you shortly.

Thankyou so much for your patience and continued investment in St Pauls. Please rest assured that despite the challenging times our nursery is facing we continue to strive to provide the very best learning opportunities, love and care for your incredible children.

Kind Regards

Lucy Driver

Executive Headteacher & Strategic Lead

St Pauls Nursery School & Central Bristol Children's Centre

Bristol Early Years Teaching Hub

Bristol and Beyond EYS Stronger Practice Hub

Area Lead for Bristol Experts & Mentors Covid Recovery Programme

