

Southwater Village Hall Pre-School Policies and Procedures



Registered Charity No: 1027293

Information and Records

Universal Free Entitlement Funding Policy

'Universal Free Entitlement' funding for Pre-School children is for up to 15 hours per week for a maximum of 38 weeks a year. This covers all 3 and 4-year-old children from the term after their 3rd birthday, with the termly cut off dates being 31st March, 31st August and 31st December. Our fees are reviewed in the Spring Term with any increase being implemented from the following Autumn Term. Any fees increase will not affect your 15 hours per week. We do not offer the Extended Free Entitlement (also known as 30 hours free childcare).

A child born between:	Will be eligible from:
1 st April and 31 st August	Start of the Autumn term
1 st September and 31 st December	Start of Spring term
1 st January and 31 st March	Start of Summer term

Children must be attending the setting prior to headcount day (usually in the first two weeks of the start of term) to be eligible.

In order to receive Universal Free Entitlement, we will ask you to complete and sign a parent declaration form, providing proof of your child's date of birth. Any changes must be agreed prior to headcount day to be eligible as part of Universal Free Entitlement.

At Southwater Village Hall Pre-School we offer the flexibility of funded morning (9:15am – 12:15pm) and/ or afternoon (1:00pm – 4:00pm) sessions. Back- to- back sessions linked by lunch are also available (spaces permitting) three times a week, (payable at £7.00 per session as not part of the Universal Free Entitlement hours).

As part of our PLA pre-school constitution there is a fee of £10 per term for membership to our pre-school. For children only accessing Universal Free Entitlement hours this will be requested from you on a voluntary basis. However, if your child attends sessions or lunch links which are hours over and above the Universal Free Entitlement you will pay the full £10 per term membership fee.

To implement the Universal Free Entitlement, we have considered all of the following:

- **Loss of income:** the level of funding we receive is far less than the fees charged for 3 hours. Therefore, our Pre-School is **losing** income every day on every funded child.
- **Sustainability:** if we cannot meet our ongoing liabilities (including salaries, rent and insurance), then our future will come under threat.
- **Fairness:** we want all parents to have access to the funding but cannot guarantee that each child will be able to attend for 15 hours (5 sessions). Sessions cannot be reserved for children who may wish to increase their number of hours at Pre-School, when they are eligible for funding, as this will impact upon the group's sustainability.
- **Balance:** we want to maintain a mixed aged group of children in our Pre-School sessions including up to 12 under 3's in each session. This is essential to ensure the ongoing viability of the Pre-School.

With this in mind:

- Once parents accept sessions a £40 non-refundable joining fee is required in order to guarantee the actual number of, and times of sessions. For Universal Free Entitlement children only accessing up to the maximum 15 funded hours we suggest a voluntary donation of no more than £40.00
- Patterns of attendance of funded children will be monitored. If a child is absent from any set session on a regular basis the session will be offered to another funded child waiting for further hours.
- We will operate a waiting list for extra sessions in the same way that we operate a waiting list for children joining us.
- Up to 12 under 3's will be allocated spaces in all Pre-School sessions. This number will change during the academic year as children become older but remain in the same sessions. By limiting the number of funded children in Pre-School sessions we can also aid sustainability for the following year.
- Invoices will only be sent out showing the total of Universal Free Entitlement sessions your child has for that term. You will be invoiced for any sessions over and above the 15 hours where applicable.
- The Fund-Raising team will plan fund raising events to raise funds for resources and activities so that we can continue to offer both outstanding care and education for every individual child attending our Pre-School. However, we may request voluntary payments for activities to enrich the children's learning that we do not have funds for.

It is important to understand Southwater Village Hall Pre-School's policy in offering the Universal Free Entitlement and any obligations implied in it. If you have any queries, please discuss them with the manager before signing the application to join form. By signing the application to join form you agree to these terms and conditions regarding our admission policy, the Universal Free Entitlement funding policy, our fees, the payment terms, and the period of contractual notice.

If you have any queries regarding The Universal Free Entitlement then please contact the Children's Information Service 01243 777807 / family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk

Fees and Free Entitlement Policy

Signed on behalf of the management committee: Heather Clarke

Name of signatory: Heather Clarke

Role of signatory: Manager

Date to be reviewed: April 2023