Next Steps Pre-school, Elms Vale, Church Road, Dover, CT17 9LW
Tel: 01304 226234
Registered Charity No. 1156391

Payment of Fees Policy

Statement of intent

Opening hours

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday: 8.30am to 3.30pm

Tuesday: 8.30am to 11.30am

The pre-school receives Free Early Education funding for 3- and 4-year-olds. When a child becomes eligible depends on their date of birth:

- Born 1 January to 31 March (inclusive): from the start of Term 5 following their third birthday (after the April holiday).
- Born 1 April to 31 August (inclusive): from the start of Term 1 following their third birthday (after the summer holiday).
- Born 1 September to 31 December (inclusive): from the start of Term 3 following their third birthday (after the Christmas and New Year holiday).

There is one delivery pattern for all Free Early Education, working parent entitlement and free funding for 2-year-olds. If your child attends any extra hours above the funding you have claimed on your funding form, you will be charged for these hours. From September 2026, this will be £6.30 an hour.

Once your child has settled in after their first term at the pre-school, all extra wraparound childcare booked must be paid for, even if your child is absent.

Method of payment

Parents can pay weekly, fortnightly or monthly in advance (depending on the arrangement made), but must pay any balance in full within that term. Fees for childcare (not funded) and wraparound care will be invoiced and must be paid within 5 days. If there are any problems, please discuss them with us as soon as possible.

Parents/carers can register for Free Early Education or working parent entitlement funding from the term after their child turns three or two respectively, and are entitled to up to 30 hours of educational sessions. These hours will be deducted from their account and no payment will be required for them (see the Payment/Funding Procedure).

The Manager will arrange your child's hours and will need to see your child's birth certificate. Hours can be changed, but notice is required.

Payments must be put into an envelope, with the sessions and dates the money covers written on the envelope. Parents/carers can request an invoice at any time and will be given a receipt once they have paid.

The Finance Manager operates a four-weekly system under which reminder letters are sent after a set period. This system is used for everyone paying fees (not funded) and for wraparound care. There is a policy for late payment and late collection, which all parents need to be aware of.

Payments can be made by cheque or in cash. Banking is done weekly and cheques take four days to clear, so please bear this in mind when writing your cheques.

The pre-school applies an automatic 5% fee increase on 1 September each year, as costs continue to rise because of outside factors.

If you receive letters reminding you about a late payment, a £25 administration charge will be added to your invoice after three invoices. If the balance is still not settled, a further charge of £10 will be added each time a further invoice is issued.

This policy was adopted at a meeting held in September 2026.

Next review: September 2027.

Signed on behalf of the management committee 

Name of signatory: Virginia McCarthy

Role of signatory: Manager