Payment Policy

North Halifax Partnership (NHP) is a not for profit organisation and is reliant on fee income for funding. It cannot accept, or withstand non-payment of childcare fees and requires prompt payment of such fees for the services which parents/carers and children have received. It is necessary for all parents/carers to be aware that by signing the Registration Contract you are taking up a contract agreeing to pay your fees in full and will remain responsible for the payment of those fees until such time as full payment has been received.

Childcare fee invoices will be raised and distributed by the 15th of each month in advance for the following month. Full payment of the invoice is required in advance, on or before the 1st of the month. When children take up a place part way through a month an invoice will be raised, and payment is required in advance to the end of that month; this must be paid prior to a child starting nursery. Subsequent invoices will be payable in advance in the usual way. When the payment date falls within a weekend, fees are payable on or before the last working day of the month prior to the start of the new month.

Payments can be made in the following ways:

- Part payments are accepted and will be receipted accordingly and paid off against individual records of accounts, subject to the invoice being paid in full by 1st of the month.

- Cash payments can be made at the main office, a receipt will be issued at the time for cash payments.

- For those parents who want to pay directly from their bank account; we accept BACS transfer, please ask at the office if you wish to pay in this way for our bank details and a reference to ensure payments received are allocated against the correct account.

- Where childcare fees are being paid by an external agency on behalf of a parent/carer the person signing the child's registration form will remain responsible for unpaid fees **not** the agency.

- You may build up credit on your account this will be recorded, and you can ask for an account update at any time; any credit on your account can only be used as payment for childcare fees.

- **Please note** - We do not offer annualised invoices for childcare fees

When fees remain unpaid on 1st of the month:

- Where our accounts show that childcare fees remain outstanding on 1st of the month, we reserve the right to **suspend** your **childcare place immediately**. Where a child's place is suspended due to non-payment of fees the ongoing fees will **continue to accumulate** irrespective of the child's nonattendance due to suspension, to a maximum of one month from the date of suspension which is equal to a one month notice period.

- If a child is entitled to Early Education funding this will still be available, but no additional hours or cost will be offered.

- Where childcare fees remain outstanding nursery practitioners will be instructed not to admit children until fees are settled in full.

- Where a child's place is suspended due to outstanding childcare fees, we **cannot guarantee** there will be a childcare place available once outstanding fees are paid.

- We reserve the right to defer from the payment policy considering individual circumstances.

What happens if a childcare place is suspended?
The parent/carer will be contacted by a member of the Senior Management Team to explain the next steps and a letter stating the reasons for suspension will be sent to the parent/carer.

Where outstanding childcare fees remain unpaid:
We will pursue outstanding fees rigorously and use a variety of methods to recover outstanding debt; these could include any or all the following methods:

- Written communication

- Telephone calls

- Making a record of outstanding fees on our database which is shared with other nurseries in the organisation.

- Debt recovery agency – this will include debtor personal details including home/ workplace addresses and contact details being passed to the appropriate debt agency. As a result of this debtors may receive any, or all of the following: letters, telephones calls, home visits and workplace visits to collect outstanding debt

- Use of County Court procedures which could result in County Court Judgment, bailiffs or orders giving attachment of earnings.

- These are not exclusive methods of debt recovery and may change subject to individual circumstances.

- Where outstanding debt has to be pursued any costs of pursuing such debt will be passed on to the debtor. This may include, but is not limited to; administrative costs, costs incurred through debt recovery agencies, County Court costs and any other costs associated with recovering the original debt.

- The nursery reserves the right to add interest charges to any outstanding debt at the rate applicable to judgment debts.

- Parents/carers should note that failure to pay childcare fees can result in an adverse credit rating.

Non attendance

If a childcare place is booked and this includes 30 hrs charges and EEF wraparound sessions and your child/ren do not attend due to absence for any reason fees will be charged. If the reason for absence is due to illness and is likely to be longer term, (over 2 weeks or in cases of hospitalisation) reductions in the level of fee payment will be considered on an individual basis by the Family Hub Manager if requested in writing. The nursery reserves the right to use discretionary powers to reduce or waive fee payments following such consideration.

Extra sessions

Where possible extra sessions can be booked when there is availability within your child's room. To do this you must speak to a member of the senior management team. Please be aware that any additional sessions booked must be paid for in advance or on the day the child attends regardless of attendance.

Swapping sessions

It is <u>not</u> practice of the setting to swap your child's session. If you do require your child to attend on a different day or time from the pre-booked session, please speak to a member of the senior management team and follow the extra session request process. These sessions are payable at the current rate.

Notice Period
To terminate or change a childcare place a one month notice period is required. Notice must be given in writing. If children do not attend during that one month notice period full fees for the period will still be payable.

Late Collection of children
It is required that all children are collected promptly after each session. If parents/carers are unavoidably delayed and are unable to collect a child by the end of the session you must contact the Nursery and inform a member of the nursery staff. The nursery reserves the right to charge a fee where children are not collected promptly at the end of their session at a rate of £15.00 for the first half hour. Each further fifteen-minute period will be charged at £10.00 per period.

Information sharing with partners and other agencies
All parents/carers must be aware that debt information will be recorded on the nursery database and will be shared with other nurseries within the organisation so that it will not be possible to use a nursery at a different Family Hub while the fees are outstanding.

Closure days
The nursery will close for Bank Holidays and other set closure days throughout the year. Full details of these dates can be found on our website at any time North Halifax Partnership – A better future for all generations
We do not make any charges for the planned closure days.

Emergency Closures
In the event the nursery has to close due to an emergency situation or adverse weather conditions no charge will be made for full day closures or for any partial closure eg morning or afternoon session. Under these circumstances the following month's invoice will be adjusted accordingly.

Tax free childcare
Tax free childcare is a government scheme to support working parents with childcare costs. For further information and to check eligibility please visit Homepage | Best Start in Life
Information is also available in nursery.