

FEES POLICY 2018-19 (PRE-SCHOOL)

Pre-school sessions are available to children who turn 3 years old during the academic year. Sessions run every weekday morning during term-time, and children can attend between 3 and 5 sessions per week.

Pre-school is governed by the Pre-school Group Committee. The Committee reviews the fees annually, in advance of the start of each new academic year, to ensure that they cover the base costs and are comparable to the fees of other similar settings. The Pre-school Group will give families a full half-term's notice should any fee increases be necessary during an academic year.

The address of Pre-school is: Oliver Bird Hall, Church Hill Road, Solihull, B91 3RQ. We are registered as 'St. Alphege Pre-school', our Ofsted Registration Number is 250123.

FEES PAYABLE

Fees for the 2018/19 academic year are as follows:

- A **Registration Fee of £45** is payable upon confirmation of a place at Pre-school, in order to secure the child's place. It covers some of the administration required to prepare for the child joining Pre-school.
- An **Attendance Fee of £11.70 per session** is payable half-termly, based on the number of sessions due to be attended during the half-term. If you are eligible for a Government-Funded place (see next section), then the Government Funding will cover this fee, i.e. the basic 'childcare' element of the place.
- An **Extra Services Fee of £5.90 per session** is payable half-termly, based on the number of sessions due to be attended during the half-term. This covers the extra services that we provide in addition to the basic 'childcare' element of the place – for example: consumables (like snacks, drinks, paper towels, craft materials) through to access to our Forest School Garden and Electronic Learning Journals. If you do not wish to have access to any of the extra services we provide, or if you are experiencing financial hardship, please speak to the Pre-school Manager in confidence as soon as possible.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Families may be eligible for a certain number of Government-Funded sessions at our Pre-school. The Government funds the 'childcare' element of these sessions (i.e. covers our **Attendance Fee**). Families wishing to access any of the extra services that we provide will be required to pay our **Extra Services Fee** in addition to any Government Funding they receive.

Early Education Funding for 3 year olds

Children are eligible to receive up to 15 hours of Government-Funded childcare from the term after their 3rd birthday. For 2018/19, if the child's 3rd birthday falls:

- before or on 31 December 2018, they will qualify for this benefit for terms 2 and 3;
- between 1 January and 31 March 2019, they will qualify for this benefit for term 3;
- on or after 1 April 2019, they will not qualify for this benefit at all during their time at Pre-school.

Pre-school claims the funding on parents' behalf, and will contact parents before a child becomes eligible so that the necessary forms can be completed.

Early Education Funding for 2 year olds

Some children may be eligible for '2 Year Old' Early Education Funding from the Government; for example, families who are in receipt of Income Support, if the child is 'looked after' by a local council, has an Adoption Order, Disability Living Allowance, or if the child has additional needs. Full details can be found on the SMBC website or via the Pre-school Manager.

Additional Funding for some 3 year olds

The Government recently introduced 30 hours of funded childcare for some working families with 3 year old children. As Pre-school is only open for 15 hours a week, we are not able to offer the maximum 30 hours per week entitlement. We are, however, able to accept some of the 30 hours funding for any children attending another setting in addition to Pre-school. Please contact the Pre-school Manager if this is something you are interested in.

Splitting Funding between settings

If a child attends more than one setting (such as a private day nursery or child-minder), the Government Funding can be split in order to maximise the child's entitlement.

ADDITIONAL CHARGES

Late/unpaid fees

Unless prior arrangements have been agreed, an administration charge of £10 per week will be applied to any fees received after the payment deadline.

If after 2 weeks, payment has still not been received, the child will not be able to attend Pre-school until all outstanding fees are paid in full.

If fees remain unpaid, Pre-school will pursue the outstanding amount (plus any additional costs incurred) through the small claims court.

Late collections

The Pre-school session finishes at 12:10 p.m., and we request that all parents arrive by 12 p.m. to allow time for some brief feedback from staff before the session ends.

Late collections, even for a few minutes, may cause distress to a child, plus our staff have their own commitments.

If a child is not collected on time, an additional charge will be incurred. The late collection charge is £10 for every 15 minutes (or part thereof) that the child remains at Pre-school awaiting collection. Multiple late collections may result in the child being excluded from Pre-school.

Duplicate invoices

Duplicate invoices (hard copy or e-mail) requested after the payment deadline, will incur an administration charge of £5 for the first invoice, plus £3 for each additional invoice requested at the same time.

Confirmation of payment

A receipt will be issued immediately for all cash payments received.

Duplicate receipts will incur an administration charge of £5 for the first receipt, plus £3 for each additional receipt requested at the same time.

A summary of all payments made during the academic year will incur an administration charge of £15.

PAYING YOUR FEES

Payment Deadlines

All fees are payable in full by the date noted on the relevant invoice. For Registration Fees this will be shortly after confirmation of a place, and payment will be required to secure the place. Attendance and Extra Services Fees are usually payable by the last day of the previous half-term. Fees for any additional sessions or trips must be paid in advance of the session in order for the child to attend.

We will write to parents before the start of the academic year to set out all of the fees we expect will apply to them whilst their child is at Pre-school. We will then issue half-termly fee invoices approximately two weeks before they are due for payment. All fee correspondence is usually issued by email; however, paper copies can be provided upon request.

How to pay

Our preferred payment methods are direct bank transfer, Childcare Vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare (please see below for further details on Childcare Vouchers and Tax-Free Childcare). Please include your child's name and 'Pre-school' in the reference field so we can allocate your payment correctly.

We will also accept cheques or cash if required. Cheques should be made payable to 'St. Alphege Pre-school', and may be handed to the Pre-school Manager directly or placed in a clearly marked envelope and posted through the wire letter-box attached to the rear/side door of the Oliver Bird Hall. All cash payments must be handed directly to the Pre-school Manager in a clearly marked envelope – an immediate receipt will be issued for any cash received.

We are not able to refund fees if your child is unable to attend Pre-school (e.g. due to illness, holiday or appointments), or if Pre-school has to close due to unforeseen circumstances like heavy snow.

Unless otherwise agreed in advance, any overpayments at the end of an academic year will not be carried over to the next academic year, and will instead be treated as a donation to the Pre-school Group.

If any families are having, or envisage having, any difficulties paying their fees, they should speak in confidence to the Pre-school Manager as soon as possible. We will do our best to work with you to ensure a mutually agreeable arrangement.

TAX EFFICIENT WAYS TO PAY FOR CHILDCARE

Childcare Vouchers are a tax-efficient scheme, provided through employers, to pay for childcare costs. Pre-school accepts Childcare Voucher payments and has existing arrangements with a number of Childcare Voucher Providers.

If paying by Childcare Vouchers, please ensure there is enough money in your account to cover the first invoice (which may take a couple of months as there is a maximum monthly deposit amount).

A new tax-efficient Government scheme for working parents, called '**Tax-Free Childcare**', has recently been set up. The Government has a website with further information for parents: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>. As well as information on the new 30 hours funding (for some families), the website also confirms that all Childcare Voucher Schemes are expected to close to new entrants during October 2018. If you are employed, but not already in a Childcare Voucher Scheme, it is worth speaking to your employer as soon as possible so they can help you decide if you would be better off joining a scheme before the cut-off date. The replacement scheme – Tax-Free Childcare – may be better for some, but not all, families.

Please note that we cannot refund any overpayments made via Childcare Vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare. We are also unable to transfer funds to any other children (unless they are siblings).

CHANGING SESSIONS

Additional sessions

Extra regular sessions may become available towards the end of the academic year, as our adult-to-child ratios change when more children are 3 years old. Any requests for additional sessions should be directed to the Pre-school Manager for consideration, should places become available.

Permanent session changes usually take place from the start of a half-term, and would need to be agreed no later than 3 weeks before the end of the previous half-term.

Any additional or one-off sessions need to be agreed with the Pre-school Manager in advance.

Reducing sessions

All children are expected to attend 3 or more sessions a week to fully settle and appreciate what Pre-school has to offer.

Any reduction to sessions must be advised in writing (e-mail or letter) to the Pre-school Manager.

Permanent session changes usually only take place at the start of a half-term. For half-terms 2, 3 and 4, changes need to be agreed by the first day of the previous half-term.

Permanent session changes for half-terms 5 and 6 may be possible if notice is provided by the first day of half-term 3 (i.e. by 8 January 2019), in order to provide Pre-school with sufficient time to reallocate the place and potentially invite another family to join.

If sufficient notice is not provided, payment will still be required until the end of the relevant term or half-term (for example, if notice is received after 8 January 2019, full payment up until the end of the academic year will be required).

The Pre-school Manager may, at their discretion, permit later notification if it is considered in the best interests of the child, and if it does not jeopardise the financial stability of the Pre-school Group.

LEAVING PRE-SCHOOL

Sufficient notice is required in writing (e-mail or letter) to the Pre-school Manager should you wish to remove your child from Pre-school during an academic year.

Notice is required as follows:

- leaving during Term 1 (10 Sep to 21 Dec 2018) – Notice is required by 15 August 2018;
- leaving during Term 2 (8 Jan to 12 April 2019) – Notice is required by 5 November 2018;
- leaving during Term 3 (29 Apr to 19 July 2019) – Notice is required by 8 January 2019.

If sufficient notice is not provided, payment will still be required until the end of the relevant term (for example, if notice is received after 8 January 2019, full payment up until the end of the academic year will be required).

The Pre-school Manager may, at their discretion, permit later notification if it is considered in the best interests of the child, and if it does not jeopardise the financial stability of the Pre-school Group.

CONFIRMATION AND QUESTIONS

Your agreement

All families are asked to agree in writing to the above Fees Policy before the child is able to attend Pre-school. A form to this effect is included in each child's welcome pack.

Contact details

If you need any further information, please contact the 'St. Alphege Pre-school Finance Manager' at fiona.staps@outlook.com.