



Free Entitlement, Fees, Payments and Refunds

At Desmond Anderson Nursery we aim to provide an affordable, flexible and high-quality service that meets the needs of all families, whilst ensuring that the nursery remains financially viable. Staff, where needed, will support families by signposting them to government sites that deal with Free Entitlement, Tax-Free Childcare and Childcare Vouchers, where applicable. Staff may be able to help families complete their applications. This would be on a case by case basis and subject to the Trust's Confidentiality policy and procedures.

What is Free Entitlement?

Free Entitlement (FE) is government funding for free childcare and education for all eligible children, regardless of their individual needs, or their citizenship status.

- Some Rising 3s are eligible for the **2 year old FE** up to a maximum of 15 hours per week.
- All children from the term after they turn three years of age are entitled to a maximum of 15 hours funding per week, this is known as the **Universal FE (UFE)**.
- Some 3 and 4 year olds may be eligible for an additional 15 hours funding per week (up to 30 hours per week) if the families meet the eligibility criteria. This is known as the **Extended FE (EFE)**.

Accessing the Free Entitlement

The nursery will display the actual Headcount date for FE applications on the parent notice board. Parents wishing to change their child's session option must do so before this date. We will acknowledge your request by email.

The nursery can only apply for FE funding on behalf of parents once their child's birth certificate or passport has been provided. The document is used to verify their child's name and date of birth.

Parents are required to provide the eligibility codes for both 2 year old FE (if their child is starting as a Rising 3) and the Extended FE (30 hours) prior to being offered a place at the nursery. If an application for the Extended FE (30 hours) is rejected, parents will still be able to access the Universal FE (up to 15 hours per week).

- If eligible for the 2 year old FE, families will be sent a confirmation letter or email from the Family Information Service, which will include the eligibility code/reference number and the date from which 2 year old FE can be accessed. The letter or email with the eligibility code/reference number needs

to be forwarded to the nursery before a session option can be confirmed. Details of how to apply can be found at www.westsussex.gov.uk/freechildcare.

- Families must provide the nursery with their 30 hour eligibility code (11-digit number) prior to any sessions being offered for the additional 15 hours. This will then be validated by the nursery, with the Family Information Service.
- Parents can only apply for the Extended Free Entitlement up to 16 weeks before their child's third birthday. For example: If your child turns three on 31st August, you can apply for your 30 hour eligibility code on or after the third week of May, in the year your child turns three.
- Parents will need to complete the **Free Entitlement Parent Declaration Form** with their child's name, date of birth, address and birth certificate or passport I.D. number. Parents will also need to record their own name and date of birth, contact telephone number and their National Insurance Number or National Asylum Support Service Number.
- The funded hours declared on the Free Entitlement Parent Declaration Form are known as the Government funded FE hours. If families are not eligible for the 2 year old FE, Universal or Extended FE and wish to access a 15 or 30 hour place at the nursery, fees will be payable.

The Local Authority (LA), West Sussex County Council, has a duty to audit the nursery register to ensure that all FE is being claimed as per their terms and conditions. Children who do not attend on a regular basis or who are dropped off late/collected early on a regular basis may have their FE reduced or stopped by the LA. If this should happen, fees will be backdated to the point at which the LA decide to withdraw all or any of the FE and you will be invoiced accordingly.

Our Offer

Desmond Anderson Nursery offers both Government funded Free Entitlement (FE) sessions and Non-funded sessions as follows:

Early Years Free Entitlement Sessions	
Morning: 8:30am – 11:30am	Funded session - No payment required
Afternoon: 12:30pm – 3:30pm	Funded session - No payment required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lunch session can be added to a funded morning or afternoon session. • To attend all-day, parents have the option of paying for the lunch session or taking their child home for lunch and returning for the start of the afternoon session. • The lunch session is 11:30am – 12:30pm and will be charged at £6.00. 	

Non-Funded Sessions	Payment
Morning: 8:30am – 11:30am	£18.00 per 3-hour session
Lunch: 11:30am – 12:30pm	£6.00 per 1-hour session
Afternoon: 12:30pm – 3:30pm	£18.00 per 3-hour session
All-day: 8:30am – 3:30pm	£42.00 all-day session

- Parents can choose a combination of mornings, afternoons and whole days. These can also be a combination of funded and non-funded sessions.
- Once parents have completed the Free Entitlement Parent Declaration Form at their child's taster session prior to their start date, when the child is eligible, the nursery will claim FE funding on behalf of families for up to 38 weeks (term time only, inset days and bank holidays are not included).
- Paid sessions can be accessed before a child is eligible for the 3 and 4 year old FE (as a Rising 3).
- If your child is only eligible for the Universal FE, you can pay for additional sessions.

Fees

The nursery aims to keep all fee increases to a minimum; however, it may be necessary to make increases from year to year.

- Parents will be informed, *in writing*, of any fee increases, one term in advance.
- Parents of children due to start at the nursery later in the year will also be informed, *in writing*, of any fee increases.
- Nursery fees will be displayed on the parents' notice board.
- Parents will be informed, in writing or by email of any other costs that may be incurred throughout the year. Costs may include any of the following: reminder letters for overdue payments, trips, photos, parties or deliberate damage to resources that can be attributed to your child.

Payments

The following details the payment procedures for the nursery:

- Any fees due, not covered by the FE, will be invoiced in the last week of each term (there are 6 terms per year).
- All fees are due in advance. Payments must clear the University of Brighton Academies Trust's bank account before the start of each new term.

Payment can be made by one of the following:

- Bank transfer (BACs)
- Tax-Free Childcare
- Childcare Vouchers

Late payments

- If payments have not cleared the University of Brighton Academies Trust's bank account before the start of each new term and there is no explanation as to the reason why, a reminder email will be sent requesting payment by the end of the current week.

- Should payment still be outstanding by the end of the current week, a final email will be issued requesting immediate payment and detailing the nursery's next course of action. The final reminder email will incur a **£20.00** administration charge. An invoice for this amount will be attached to the email and must be paid together with the overdue amount.
- If, after the final reminder, fees remain outstanding the debt will be passed to the University of Brighton Academies Trust for recovery and you will then only be able to access your child's FE place. If your child is not accessing FE, you risk losing your child's place at the nursery.
- If your child attends nursery before they are eligible for the FE, all outstanding costs must be settled before your child takes up their FE sessions. Failure to do so could result in the loss of your child's FE place, and the debt will be passed to the University of Brighton Academies Trust for recovery.

Late collection charges

- Children need to be collected promptly at the end of their session. Parents will be charged a late collection fee if they consistently collect their child late. It is important to note that in line with our *Late Collection and Uncollected Child* policy, if your child has not been collected within 30 minutes, and we have not been able to contact an authorised adult, the Nursery Leader or the next senior member of staff will contact Children's Social Care to inform them that a child has failed to be collected.

Occasions when fees are still due

- If your child has planned or unplanned absence due to illness, appointments, holidays etc. fees are still due where applicable.
- Occasionally, the nursery may have to close due to events outside their control. Parents will be advised as soon as staff are able to contact them. All fees will still be due during any closures that are outside the control of the nursery.

The nursery may take action or engage the University of Brighton Academies Trust to resolve any disputes or to recover any financial losses incurred through failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Parent and Carer Agreement. We reserve the right to pursue for costs incurred as a result of any such action or engagement.

Fee refunds

Refunds will be issued at the discretion of the University of Brighton Academies Trust. However, the nursery will not refund fees in the event of the following conditions:

- Planned or unplanned absence of a child, due to illness, appointments, holidays etc.
- Closure on advice from the Health Authority, e.g. due to clusters of vomiting and diarrhoea, an infectious disease, where several children from one session show symptoms, or a pandemic.

- Closure due to sudden staff absences, resulting in ratios not meeting statutory requirements. 1:8 for 3 and 4 year olds (or 1:13 if a QTS, EYP, EYT or other suitable level 6 qualified person should be working directly with the children).
- Adverse weather conditions
- School closure, where the nursery is included
- Damage to the building resulting in a Health and Safety issue
- Nursery trip attendance, as this is still a nursery session, but held off site
- Inset days and bank holidays. As they are not charged, they are not refundable.

This is not an exhaustive list of conditions and will be amended as events arise.

Where a child accesses both government funded FE hours and fee paid hours, refunds will only be paid where a planned closure falls on a fee paid session. Each situation will be treated on an individual basis.

This policy was written by: Ann Agg – Nursery Leader

And implemented by: Desmond Anderson Primary Academy
Desmond Anderson Nursery

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Review date 4th November 2021

Name of signatory Clare Hoggan
Role of signatory Chair of Local Board

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Nursery Closures policy

Late Collection and Uncollected Child policy.