

# **FERNBANK CHILDREN'S CENTRE CHARGING POLICY**

This policy details procedures agreed by the Governing Body and Head Teacher of Jubilee Primary School and Fernbank Children's Centre.

The management of Jubilee Primary School and Fernbank Children's Centre understand that the cost of registered childcare may seem expensive to parents/carers. Nevertheless, providing a high quality, safe and inspiring service for children entails substantial funding to ensure the continued high standards and sustainability of the Centre. Therefore we require all parents/carers to adhere to these procedures at all times.

## **AIM**

- To provide clear information on fee payment.
- To construct a framework for dealing with non-payment in a rapid and unbiased manner.

## **DEPOSIT**

A minimum deposit, the equivalent to Two weeks' fee or part time equivalent must be paid on admission. This will be refunded when your child leaves Fernbank if four weeks' written notice has been given and your account is in credit.

## **FEES**

The Governing Body of Jubilee Primary School and Fernbank Children's Centre has a duty to ensure that all fees are paid to the centre.

You must pay the fees as specified in the **Admission Contract**. Fees are payable in advance either monthly or weekly. This applies to all payment methods, including Childcare Vouchers. Fees are calculated for 48 weeks.

The first 3 days of the placement represent a settling in period when your child may not attend for full days, (please refer to the Settling In Policy). Payment in full must be paid on the 4<sup>th</sup> day. A strict "**no arrears**" policy is applied at Fernbank Children's Centre. Failure to adhere to this will result in suspension of the place after one week of nonpayment and withdrawal of the place after two weeks of nonpayment.

The normal daily charge is applied for absence due to sickness or holiday. The Children's Centre will not charge for inset days (currently 3 per year) and any additional unplanned closures.

Six monthly reviews of salary and proof of address will be held for parents/carers in Fee Bands 1, 2, 3 and 4. Families who are not Hackney residents will be charged a minimum Band 3 rate, irrespective of income.

A minimum of 4 weeks' written notice is required if you decide to withdraw your child from the Children's Centre. Fees are payable even if your child does not attend during this period.

Please remember that you enter into a contract with Fernbank when your child starts. Your agreement to our terms and conditions is legally binding.

## **Invoicing**

You will be issued a weekly invoice. If you require a statement or any other fee information please contact Laura Collins in the office.

## **NON-PAYMENT OF FEES**

Fees are due to be paid in advance, as stated in your contract and in this policy.

After one week of non-payment or late payment, you will receive a written letter of a possible suspension if fees cannot be paid by the deadline set out in your letter. Fees will still be applicable during the time the nursery suspends the place.

Two weeks of non-payment will result in withdrawal of the childcare place; your child/ren will not be permitted to come into the nursery until the fees are paid in full. - If the fees are not paid in full after four weeks, the nursery will terminate the contract and send a letter to confirm this.

The person with parental responsibility will be pursued for nonpayment of fees and debts outstanding to the Children's Centre by the Centre itself. The Children's Centre will exercise its right to prosecute the debtor for non-payment after all reasonable methods have been exhausted.

If you have been discharged or left owing fees within any of the Hackney Education Children's Centre's you will be unable to obtain a further day care place within any other Children's Centre as this information will be shared across agencies. Should a day care place be obtained and information has come to light that you have previously left an outstanding debt at another Children's Centre, this matter will be legally pursued and your current day care place is likely to be withdrawn.

In case of overdue fees or overdue late fee charge the Children's Centre is entitled to charge interest and compensation at rates prevailing from time to time under the *Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998* on any sum, as well as before or any time after the judgment not paid by the person with parental responsibility by the due date. The Children's Centre is entitled to charge the person with parental responsibility all and any reasonable cost incurred by the Children's Centre, whether administrative, collection or legal, in recovering or attempting to recover, any payment due, by 1st of the month. In respect of collection costs it is agreed by Hackney Education Legal Team that the 10% of sum outstanding shall constitute a month. It is also agreed that this is the agreed liquidated damages in respect of collection costs.

## **OUTINGS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES**

We believe that the curriculum is enriched by educational visits and other activities such as visiting drama groups or storytellers and these come with a cost to the Children's Centre. To cover the costs the Head of Centre and governing body of Jubilee Primary School ask for parental contribution towards these extra activities. Wherever possible, we will aim to organise trips that are free of charge. However, where charges do apply we will ask for a contribution from families towards covering the cost. In these circumstances no child will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. If insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities.

All parents sign a permission slip when their child is admitted to Fernbank Children's Centre agreeing to allow their child to leave the premises and go on outings as part of the curriculum. Trips further than Fernbank's locality will always be preceded with a specific consent form with full details of the trip

**I confirm that I have read and understood this Charging Policy.**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_