

# Nursery Charging Policy

## Schools, Learning and Education



## Nursery Charging Policy

Stirling Council remains committed to the implementation of a Charging Policy that is fair and provides access to affordable early childhood services.

### Key Principles of Charging Policy

- Charges only apply for extended hours nursery provision (provision over and above entitlement).
- Fairness and equity.

All Stirling Council nurseries currently offer extended hours. The following establishments are able to offer extended, flexible sessions for 0-5 years:

0-5 years establishments:	Baker Street Cowie Hillview Park Drive	Cornton Fallin Killin and Crianlarich Raploch
2-5 years establishments:	Arnprior Doune Callander Nursery Class	Croftamie Wellgreen Dunblane Nursery Class

See [Appendix 1](#) for list of establishments who offer places for 3-5 year old children only.

Charges may also apply in ANY Stirling Council nursery where the child attending is deferring entry to primary school and where his/her application for a continued funded place has been refused by the Deferred Entry Panel.

## Entitlement to Free Provision

The Scottish Government is committed to improving and increasing high quality, flexible early learning and childcare which is accessible and affordable for all children and families. In line with Scottish Government commitments, Stirling Council's priorities are to:

- improve outcomes for children, especially those who are more vulnerable or disadvantaged;
- support parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 introduced new early learning and childcare entitlements to replace the funded 12.5 hours per week during term time of pre-school education for 3 and 4 year olds.

### Children Aged 2-5 Years

All children aged 3 or 4 years old and certain 2 year old children who meet the criteria are currently entitled, under the Government's arrangements for the provision of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), to a free nursery place for a maximum of 15hrs 50mins, per week, term time (600hrs per year), spread over an academic or extended year contract.

This entitlement for 2 year old children will normally be delivered to parents in local authority nurseries.

### Criteria for "eligible" two year olds

Entitled is determined as:

- Two year olds who are (or have been since they turned two) cared for by the local authority (looked after);
- Two year olds who are (or have been since they turned two) cared for under a kinship care order;
- Two year olds from workless or job seeking households; and,
- Two year olds whose parents are on certain welfare benefits (low income families).

Eligibility criteria are set by the Scottish Government.

Any two year old within the following claimant households would be eligible for 600 hours of early learning and childcare:

- Income Support;
- Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Employment and Support Allowance;
- Two year olds from "Low Income" households in receipt of certain Child Tax & Working Tax Credits;
- Disability Living Allowance (being replaced by Personal Independence Payments)
- Pension Credit; and,
- \*Where the local authority is satisfied that the household parent(s) are undertaking work related activity or are engaged in family support.

\* Such work-related/family support activities may include:

- Job seeking;
- Employability pipeline programmes;
- Training and studying;
- Family support such as participation in parenting programmes;
- Family centred based early learning and childcare
- Community child-minding.

In addition, this includes workless but not on benefits group, including:

- A divorced parent supported by an ex-partner;
- A parent with funds from redundancy;
- A widowed parent supported by a partners pension or savings;
- Students;
- Parents on carers allowance;
- Young parents living with their parents.

Entitled children, aged 3-5 years, whose parents wish it, are placed in either a Council nursery or partnership nursery or playgroup.

#### Deferred Entrants to Primary School

The weekly free entitlement also applies to children aged 4 or 5 years old, with birthdays in January/February, who are deferring entry to Primary 1. Such children have an automatic entitlement to defer entry and government funding is in place to support the provision of nursery places.

Children whose birth dates fall out-with the months of January and February are not automatically entitled to defer entry and the Council receives no funding to support these places.

#### Children Aged 0-3 Years

Other than the 2 year old children who meet the eligibility criteria, children under 3 years old have no entitlement to any free nursery provision in line with national early years policy.

### Payment Structure – Standalone Nurseries

A standalone nursery is open 48 weeks of the year. They offer flexible childcare options to meet the needs of families

Charges for extended hours provision is linked to the nursery admissions policy and criteria and to the principle of equity. Therefore, all parents accessing extended hours provision, who do not fall within the exemption categories, will be expected to pay for the hours of childcare their child is allocated.

Charges for extended hours provision apply to all 3 - 5 year olds (including January/February and agreed by panel deferred entrants) accessing nursery provision over and above their national free entitlement.

Charges for extended hours provision for children aged under 3 apply to all hours of nursery provision. This includes entitled 2's accessing more than their 600 hours provision.

### Unit Charge (Hourly Rate)

The unit charge is based on an hourly rate calculated on occupancy, cost and comparison with other providers. The hourly rate applies all year round, term-time and during school holiday periods. The hourly rate will be reviewed annually in line with inflation. The hourly rate is £2.85 per hour.

From the start of term in August, families will be charged for the full extended hours allocated to their child.

### Contracts

- Term Time contracts are based on 40 weeks per annum, rather than 48, this includes a fee for retaining a child's place, equivalent to two weeks' fees per year;
- Extended Year contracts are based on 48 weeks per year;
- Student contracts are based on 38 weeks only.

### Students

Where the student receives a childcare allowance as part of any funding award, monies must be paid in full to the childcare provider. Any additional hours requested by the student are charged at £2.85 per hour.

### Children Accessing Extended Day/Year

If a child is absent due to long-term illness (over 2 weeks), no charge will be applied and the place will be held open for their return.

Note: This relates only to the child being absent through long-term illness not a family member

Easter closure: Easter Monday (Public Holiday) plus the following 4 days.

Note: Should Easter Monday fall out with the first two weeks in April, stand alone nurseries will be closed for the second week in April (i.e. the second week of the school holiday).

Christmas closure: Christmas Day and Boxing Day (Public Holidays) plus the following 3 working days. Nurseries will close at end of business on Christmas Eve and re-open on the first working day after 2<sup>nd</sup> January each year.

Note: No charges will be applied over the 4 other public holidays throughout the year when the nursery service is unavailable.

Other Public Holidays: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> January; Good Friday; first Monday in May.

Note: No charges will be applied over the 5 annual staff development days throughout the year when the nursery service is unavailable.

Staff Development Days: 1<sup>st</sup> day of term in August; 2 days in November; 2 days in February.

### Payment Structure – Nursery Classes

Parents will be able to purchase additional sessions within nursery classes where space is available. Lunch time provision is also available in these nurseries.

The unit charge is based on an hourly rate calculated on occupancy, cost and comparison with other providers. The hourly rate applies all year round, term-time and during school holiday periods. The hourly rate will be reviewed annually in line with inflation. The hourly rate is £2.85 per hour.

Families will be charged termly for the full extended hours allocated to their child. Nursery classes operate on a term-time basis and are open for 38 weeks per year.

No charges will apply over the 5 local holiday days or 5 staff development days throughout the year.

If a child is absent due to long-term illness (over 2 weeks), no charge should be applied and the place should be held open for their return.

Note: This relates only to the child being absent through long-term illness not a family member.

### Exemption from Payment in Standalone Nurseries and Nursery Classes for Extended/Flexible Hours and Free Meals (0-5 years)

As part of Stirling Council's commitment to supporting vulnerable children and families and its aim of providing access to affordable early childhood services, exemption from payment categories as follows:

#### Children on the Child Protection Register

Any child whose name is placed on the Child Protection Register held by Child Protection Services; or any child whose likely to have their name placed on the Child Protection Register; or any child likely to be received into care without the support of a nursery place.

#### Referrals

Where children are subject to formal referral as a result of having their names recorded on the Child Protection Register, they may be exempted from charging.

In all other cases no further exemptions will apply unless otherwise agreed by the Education Service due to extreme / emergency circumstances.

#### Low Income

The qualifying criteria used to assess eligibility for exemption from charges on the grounds of low income, are the same as those applied when assessing eligibility for Free School Meals.

#### Child Tax Credits

Families receiving Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit, and income is less than £16,105 (as assessed by the Inland Revenue on their Tax Credit Award Notice TC602) will be exempt from charges. The gross annual income level will be reviewed annually. Further advice may be obtained from Stirling Council Communities and Partnership Advice on Stirling 01786 233528 or at [moneyadvice@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:moneyadvice@stirling.gov.uk).

Families receiving both maximum Child Tax Credit and maximum Working Tax Credit where income is under £6,420 will be exempt.

Parents/Carers will be asked to show their Child Benefit book or letter of entitlement and their current Tax Credit Award notice TC602 as proof of qualification.

#### Charges for Provision of Lunches

Lunches can be provided within standalone nurseries and nursery classes by Catering Services. Lunches are charged at the rate of £2.10 per meal.

## Free Meals

Families who are exempt from charging for extended hours provision as they are in receipt of Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance or other government benefits because their child's name has been recorded on the Child Protection Register, will automatically qualify for free meals.

Families receiving Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit, and income is less than £16,105 (as assessed by the Inland Revenue on their Tax Credit Award Notice TC602) will be exempt from charges. The gross annual income level will be reviewed annually. Further advice may be obtained from Stirling Council Communities and Partnership Advice on Stirling 01786 233528 or at [moneyadvice@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:moneyadvice@stirling.gov.uk).

Families receiving both maximum Child Tax Credit and maximum Working Tax Credit where income is under £6,420 will be exempt.

Entitlement to free meals ceases immediately if Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers allowance ceases.

## Children Under 3 Years of Age

As children under 3 have no statutory entitlement to nursery provision, all hours attended are considered to be extended / non-entitled hours. Children under 3, therefore, may be exempt (if they have met the relevant exemptions criteria below) for hours up to the equivalent of the current weekly free entitlement for 3-5's of nursery provision. If a family qualifies for exemption, they will remain exempt across holiday periods.

## 5-12 Years

Extended year provisions are able to offer child care for children aged 5-12 years, during holiday periods. The cost for this provision is £2.85 per hour. Please note there are no exemption rates for school aged children.

## Evidence Required

Families must provide evidence on a 6 monthly basis to support the exemption process e.g. Benefits Book/letter of entitlement/evidence that they are in receipt of Council Tax Benefit. Exemption from payment ceases immediately if Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers allowance ceases.

For general advice and support on policy matters related to nursery charges, please contact the Education Service or the Early Childhood Co-ordination Officer, [campbellju@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:campbellju@stirling.gov.uk), 01786 233206.

For advice and support for parents on tax credits and family income, please contact the Income Maximisation Team on 01786 442460 or email [incomemaxteam@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:incomemaxteam@stirling.gov.uk).





## Stirling Council

### Schools, Learning and Education

### Extended Day/Year Contract (48 weeks)

**Name of Nursery:**

This contract between Stirling Council and the Parent(s) or legal Guardian (referred to as the 'the Parent) of a child (or children) who is enrolled in the nursery.

Child's Name:	Funding Starts:
Date of Birth:	Cross Boundary:
Funded Hours at Nursery:	Split Place:

**Effective from (date):**

Day	Start Time	Finish Time	Hours
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
<b>Total Weekly Hours</b>			

## Nursery Fees

Nursery fees are calculated based on a 48-week year, as nurseries are closed for 4 weeks per year. If your child is entitled to a government funded place, this will be deducted from the invoice at the start of your contract. All additional hours are payable at £2.85 per hour. Due to demand we do not allow swapping of days unless it is permanent and there is availability. (We will try to accommodate swapping of days in cases of emergency or under special circumstances).

Nursery fees are payable on 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Any additional sessions will be invoiced at the end of each month and due for payment immediately. Unpaid fees will result in your account being passed to Stirling Council's finance department where a formal invoice will be raised and issued. In addition all extended hours are suspended until the invoice is paid in full. Fees are payable by cash or cheque which should be made payable to Stirling Council. Full time and part time fees are based on booked days, not on attendance, therefore parents are responsible for fees whether your child attends or not.

## Illness

If a child is absent due to long-term illness (over 2 weeks), no charge should be applied and the place should be held open for their return.

Note: this relates only to the child being absent through long-term illness not a family member.

Please carefully read all written information before signing this contract:

- I accept/reject the above hours. **\*delete as appropriate**
- I understand that I cannot leave my child before the agreed start time or after the agreed finish time, unless previously agreed with the Head of Establishment.
- I verify that I have provided confirmation from my employer/college/training provider and understand that should my work/study/training hours or circumstances change I am required to inform the Head of Establishment as soon as possible and that the extended hours may be subject to review.
- I understand that if my child is off sick for less than 2 weeks, normal charges will apply. Full information regarding Stirling Council's Charging Policy available on request.
- I understand that if I have difficulty in paying any bill, I can make an appointment to discuss with the Head of Establishment.

Name of Parent/Carer:

Signature:

Date:

Signature of Head/Depute Head of Establishment:



## Stirling Council

### Schools, Learning and Education

### Extended Day/Term Time Contract

**Name of Nursery:**

This contract between Stirling Council and the Parent(s) or legal Guardian (referred to as the 'the Parent') of a child (or children) who is enrolled in the nursery.

**Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday	Times

Child's Name:	Funding Starts:
Date of Birth:	Cross Boundary:
Funded Hours at Nursery:	Split Place:

**Effective from (date):**

Day	Start Time	Finish Time	Hours
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
<b>Total Weekly Hours</b>			

## Nursery Fees

From the start of term in August, families will be charged for the full extended hours allocated to their child.

All additional hours are payable at £2.85 per hour. Due to demand we do not allow swapping of days unless it is permanent and there is availability. (We will try to accommodate swapping of days in cases of emergency or under special circumstances).

Nursery fees are payable on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Unpaid fees will result in your account being passed to Stirling Council's finance department where a formal invoice will be raised and issued. In addition all extended hours are suspended until the invoice is paid in full. Fees are payable by cash or cheque which should be made payable to Stirling Council. Full time and part time fees are based on booked days, not on attendance, therefore parents are responsible for fees whether your child attends or not.

## Illness

If a child is absent due to long-term illness (over 2 weeks), no charge should be applied and the place should be held open for their return. Note: this relates only to the child being absent through long-term illness not a family member.

Please carefully read all written information before signing this contract:

- I accept/reject the above hours. **\*delete as appropriate**
- I understand that I cannot leave my child before the agreed start time or after the agreed finish time, unless previously agreed with the Head of Establishment.
- I verify that I have provided confirmation from my employer/college/training provider and understand that should my work/study/training hours or circumstances change I am required to inform the Head of Establishment as soon as possible and that the extended hours may be subject to review.
- I understand that if my child is off sick for less than 2 weeks, normal charges will apply. Full information regarding Stirling Council's Charging Policy available on request.
- I understand that if I have difficulty in paying any bill, I can make an appointment to discuss with the Head of Establishment.

Name of Parent/Carer:

Signature:

Date:

Signature of Head of Establishment:



## Stirling Council

### Schools, Learning and Education

### Flexible Hours/Termly Contract

**Name of Nursery:**

This contract between Stirling Council and the Parent(s) or legal Guardian (referred to as the 'the Parent') of a child (or children) who is enrolled in the nursery.

**Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday	Times

Child's Name:	Funding Starts:
Date of Birth:	Cross Boundary:
Funded Hours at Nursery:	Split Place:

**Effective from (date):**

Day	Start Time	Finish Time	Hours
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
<b>Total Weekly Hours</b>			

## Nursery Fees

Unpaid fees will result in your account being passed to Stirling Council's finance department. In addition all extended hours will be suspended until the invoice is paid in full. Fees are payable by cash or cheque which should be made payable to Stirling Council. Full time and part time fees are based on booked days, not on attendance, therefore parents are responsible for fees whether your child attends or not.

## Illness

If a child is absent due to long-term illness (over 2 weeks), no charge should be applied and the place should be held open for their return. Note: this relates only to the child being absent through long-term illness not a family member.

Please carefully read all written information before signing this contract:

- I accept/reject the above hours. **\*delete as appropriate**
- I understand that I cannot leave my child before the agreed start time or after the agreed finish time, unless previously agreed with the Head of Establishment.
- I understand that if my child is off sick for less than 2 weeks, normal charges will apply. Full information regarding Stirling Council's Charging Policy available on request.
- I understand that this provision is only on a term by term basis
- I understand that if I have difficulty in paying any bill, I can make an appointment to discuss with the Head of Establishment.

Name of Parent/Carer:

Signature:

Date:

Signature of Head/Depute:



## Stirling Council

### Schools, Learning and Education

#### Nursery Contract – Exemption from Nursery Fees

**Name of Nursery:**

This contract between Stirling Council and the Parent(s) or legal Guardian (referred to as the 'the Parent') of a child (or children) who is enrolled in the nursery.

**Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday	Times

Child's Name:	Funding Starts:
Date of Birth:	Cross Boundary:
Funded Hours at Nursery:	Split Place:

**Effective from (date):**

Day	Start Time	Finish Time	Hours
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
<b>Total Weekly Hours</b>			

## Illness

If a child is absent due to long-term illness (over 2 weeks), the place should be held open for their return. Note: this relates only to the child being absent through long-term illness not a family member.

Please carefully read all written information before signing this contract:

- I accept/reject the above hours. **\*delete as appropriate**
- I understand that I cannot leave my child before the agreed start time or after the agreed finish time, unless previously agreed with the Head of Establishment.
- I verify that I have provided confirmation from my employer/college/training provider and understand that should my work/study/training hours or circumstances change I am required to inform the Head of Establishment as soon as possible and that the extended hours may be subject to review.
- Families must provide evidence on a 6 monthly basis to the head nursery to secure my child's place.

Name of Parent/Carer:

Signature:

Date:

Signature of Head/Depute:



## Stirling Council 3 – 5 Years Establishments

- Aberfoyle Nursery Class
- Balfron Nursery Class
- Bannockburn Nursery Class
- Borestone Nursery Class
- Braehead Nursery Class
- Bridge of Allan Nursery Class
- Cambusbarron Nursery Class
- East Plean Nursery Class
- Fintry Nursery Class (am only)
- Killearn Nursery Class
- Newton Nursery Class
- Riverside Nursery Class
- St Mary's Episocopal Nursery Class (am only)
- St Ninians Nursery Class
- Strathblane Nursery Class

## Schools, Learning and Education

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### Stirling Council

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