

Fee Paying policy.

Gill Blowers Nursery understands that the cost of registered child care may seem expensive to a parent. However, providing a high quality, safe and stimulating service for children is not cheap and to ensure the continued high standards and sustainability of the nursery, it must ask that parents respect its policy in respect of fees. Gill Blowers Nursery value their relationship with parents/carers and will be sympathetic towards any difficulty in paying their child's fees. However, we are unable to function effectively without these payments.

- **Fees are due at the start of each week or month, and must be paid in advance.** This applies to all payment methods, including Childcare Vouchers. Individual payment arrangements can be negotiated.
- Fees can be paid by standing order, direct debit, cash, cheque (made payable to "Gill Blowers Nursery School") or Childcare Vouchers. We recommend using a standing order or a direct debit as the easiest method of payment. Please ask Amy for details of how to set these up if you are unsure.
- Day Care fees are payable 48 weeks a year.
- The Day Care closes for four weeks during the year; at Christmas, Easter and summer, bank holidays and staff training. You are not charged for these periods.
- Non-attendance due to holiday, illness* or other reasons will be charged for.

*Illness- full fees are payable for the first week of absence, subsequent days will then be charged at half rate, up to a maximum of 2 weeks. (A week refers to Monday to Friday period)

- Sessions cannot be swapped, any extra sessions will be charged for.
- A retainer fee will be charged if your child does not attend during school holidays, (as long as the nursery has been given written notice of this) this fee will be 50% of their usual weekly amount. If we do not receive notice, you will be charged your usual full weekly amount.
- You enter into a contract with the Nursery when a starting date is agreed. Your agreement to our terms and conditions is legally binding.
- Please inform the Day Care Manager if you have difficulties in paying your fees. Failure to meet payments will result in the termination of the Nursery place.

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Late payment/ Non-payment of fees procedure:

- After one week of non-payment or late payment, you will receive a verbal reminder of the contract.
- After two weeks of non-payment, we will suspend the childcare place, and children will not be allowed to come into the nursery until the fees are paid in full. Fees will still be applicable during the two weeks the nursery suspends the place.
- If the fees are not paid in full after four weeks, the nursery will terminate the contract and send a letter to confirm this.
- All costs incurred in the collection of unpaid fees including administration costs and costs from using solicitors or debt collection agencies where needed will be recoverable in full.

Help with childcare costs:

There are several ways in which you may be able to get help paying your childcare costs. The Family Information Service in Luton can provide advice about this. You can contact them on 01582 54 88 88, or their email is: **cfis@luton.gov.uk**. The DirectGov website is another useful source of advice.

- Educational Grant for 3 and 4 year olds: for all parents

Nursery grant funding is available for all 3 and 4 year olds from the term following their third birthday. With a Day Care place, this funding can be spread over 39 or 48 weeks of the year. Please note if you choose to spread the grant over 38 weeks then full fees are payable during other times. This grant is claimed by and paid to the nursery, and this is then discounted from your weekly rate. The nursery will ask parents to sign a form each term to confirm their grant.

- Childcare Vouchers: for working parents

Employers offer these schemes as a salary sacrifice scheme. Even if your employer does not currently have a scheme set up, in most cases they should be able to do so. Childcare vouchers are exempt from National Insurance contributions on the first £55 you earn a week; tax is only paid on the remainder of the income. This may affect your entitlement to other benefits if you receive any, so you should check this out first. For more information, speak to your employer about which scheme they offer, or call the Daycare Trust on 0845 872 6251. The nursery accepts a wide variety of Childcare Vouchers.

- Working Tax Credits: for working parents

Parents currently working more than 16 hours per week may qualify for Working Tax Credit, which includes a childcare element designed to help towards the cost of childcare. This can be up to 70% of eligible childcare. Call the Tax Credit Helpline on 0845 300 3900 for more information on how much you may be eligible for, or go to <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits> and use the Tax

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Credits Calculator for an estimate of help you may receive. You need to keep HMRC up to date with any changes in your circumstances.

The nursery can provide more information on both Childcare Vouchers and Working Tax Credits and how to set them up.

For students: there are a variety of different schemes available. These include:

- Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work: this is aimed at out of work parents who have a partner who is working. For more information call the Learner Support helpline on 0800 121 8989.
- Care to Learn: this is aimed at parents who are under 20 and are undertaking training or studying. Their helpline is 0800 121 8989.
- Learner Support Fund: Contact Student Support or the Welfare Officer at your college for more information about how to access funding to help with childcare costs.
- New Deal for Lone Parents: this is aimed at parents who are either not working or work less than 16 hours per week. Call Jobcentre Plus for more information on 0845 604 3719.
- Childcare Grant: for parents in full time education, this is available through your Student Services department