



Wise Owls Nursery School

EYFE Policy September 2026

Policy effective from: September 2026

Applies to: All children accessing funded early education at Wise Owls Nursery School

Review date: August 2027

1. Introduction

Wise Owls Nursery School is committed to providing high-quality early education and care in accordance with Government Early Years Free Entitlement (EYFE) requirements and Brighton & Hove City Council funding arrangements.

This policy explains:

- how Wise Owls delivers funded early education;
- our stretched funding model;
- the funded session structures available;
- the responsibilities of parents and carers;
- how voluntary parent contributions are managed;
- how families may opt out of voluntary contributions;
- funding code and eligibility requirements;
- additional funding available to support eligible children; and
- notice requirements relating to funded places.

This policy should be read alongside the current Wise Owls Nursery School Fee Sheet and Parent Contract & Terms and Conditions.

The current Fee Sheet provides the applicable session rates, voluntary contribution amounts and additional charges.

2. Early Years Free Entitlement

Wise Owls Nursery School offers EYFE funded places for eligible children from 9 months old to school age. Depending on a child's age and family circumstances, this may include:

- Universal Entitlement, providing up to 15 funded hours per week for all eligible 3 and 4-year-olds;
- Working Family Entitlement, providing eligible working families with funded childcare from 9 months old; and
- Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding, for eligible children from the term after their second birthday.

Eligibility for funded childcare is determined by Government and Local Authority criteria. Funded places at Wise Owls are subject to availability and are offered in accordance with the nursery's operational model and available attendance patterns.

3. Wise Owls Stretched Funding Model

Wise Owls Nursery School is open for 47.5 weeks per year and operates a stretched EYFE funding model. Rather than offering funded hours over term time only, the annual entitlement is stretched across the weeks



that the nursery is open.

Under our stretched model:

- a 15-hour entitlement is delivered as 12 funded hours per week; and
- a 30-hour entitlement is delivered as 24 funded hours per week.

A child's total funded hours must not exceed their individual entitlement.

Funded hours cannot be banked, saved, transferred to another week or exchanged for another session if they are not used.

4. Funded Session Structure: 9 Months to 3 Years

For eligible children aged 9 months to 3 years, EYFE funded hours may be accessed between 08:15 and 16:00, subject to the child's entitlement, agreed attendance pattern and nursery availability.

Our funded session structure may include:

- Breakfast Club: 08:15 to 09:00
Up to 0.75 EYFE funded hours.
- Morning Session: 08:15 to 13:15
Up to 5 EYFE funded hours.
- Core Day: 09:00 to 16:00
Up to 7 EYFE funded hours.

Children accessing the stretched 15-hour entitlement may access up to 12 funded hours per week.

Children accessing the stretched 30-hour entitlement may access up to 24 funded hours per week.

The exact combination of sessions offered will depend upon availability and the child's regular attendance pattern.

Any hours attended once a child's funded entitlement has been fully used will be charged at the nursery's applicable full rate, as set out in the current Fee Sheet.

5. Funded Session Structure From the Term After a Child Turns 3

From the term after a child turns 3 years old, the Wise Owls funded session structure changes.

EYFE funded hours are available during the following periods:

- 09:00 to 15:00, providing up to 6 funded hours; or
- 08:15 to 12:15, providing up to 4 funded hours.

For example, where a child attends a Core Day from 09:00 to 16:00, the period from 09:00 to 15:00 may be funded and the additional hour from 15:00 to 16:00 is charged at the nursery's applicable full rate.

Breakfast Club from 08:15 to 09:00 is not included within the funded Core Day structure for children in the 3 and 4-year-old funding structure and is charged separately.

Current charges and voluntary contribution amounts are shown on the Fee Sheet.

6. Food, Consumables and Voluntary Contributions

Wise Owls provides a range of food and everyday consumable items for children during their nursery day. Depending upon the session, these may include:



- breakfast;
- morning and afternoon snacks;
- lunch;
- nappies and wipes;
- nappy bags;
- suncream;
- non-dairy or other required milk; and
- other everyday personal care consumables.

Full-rate private nursery fees include the food and consumables provided as part of the relevant session.

For EYFE funded sessions, Wise Owls may request voluntary parent contributions towards food and consumables in accordance with the current Fee Sheet.

These contributions are voluntary and are not a condition of taking up or continuing to access an EYFE funded place.

7. September 2026 Phased Introduction of Food and Consumables Contributions

From September 2026, Wise Owls is introducing a phased approach to voluntary food and consumables contributions.

For children joining Wise Owls under the new fee structure from September 2026, a voluntary contribution towards food and consumables may be requested during EYFE funded sessions from the start of their funded place.

The applicable amounts are clearly itemised on the current Fee Sheet.

This change is being introduced in stages to minimise disruption for families already attending Wise Owls while allowing the nursery to move towards a consistent and financially sustainable funding structure.

Children already attending Wise Owls before the introduction of the new structure will continue under their existing arrangements until the relevant funding structure applicable to them changes.

From the term after a child turns 3 years old, the nursery's existing 3 and 4-year-old funding structure applies.

8. Voluntary Contributions from the Term After a Child Turns 3

From the term after a child turns 3 years old, Wise Owls operates a different funding structure. This reflects the different funded session structure applying to this age group.

Under this structure, Wise Owls may request:

- a voluntary contribution towards food and consumables provided during funded sessions; and
- a separate voluntary parent contribution towards the delivery of funded hours.

Any such contributions will be clearly identified and itemised on the nursery's current Fee Sheet and invoices. All contributions shown against funded hours are voluntary.

Payment of a voluntary contribution is not a condition of taking up or continuing to access an EYFE funded place, and choosing not to make a voluntary contribution will not reduce a child's funded entitlement.

9. Opting Out of Voluntary Contributions



Parents and carers have the right to opt out of voluntary contributions.

Families may opt out each term by completing the nursery's Opt-Out Declaration Form before the beginning of the relevant term.

Opting out will not affect the child's entitlement to or access to their funded early education hours.

Where a family opts out of the voluntary food and consumables contribution, they will be required to provide the relevant items their child needs during their nursery session.

Depending on the child's age and session, this may include:

- nappies;
- wipes and nappy bags;
- suncream;
- required milk;
- morning and afternoon snacks; and
- a packed lunch or other required meals.

Food supplied from home must comply with Wise Owls Nursery School's food safety, allergy, healthy eating and dietary requirements.

Families should speak to the management team before opting out so that appropriate arrangements can be agreed for their child.

10. Stand-Alone EYFE Funded Places

Wise Owls offers the option of accessing EYFE funded hours without payment of voluntary parent contributions.

Stand-alone funded places are subject to nursery availability and the attendance patterns available under our operational model.

Families accessing a stand-alone funded offer are not required to purchase additional private hours, food, consumables or other optional services as a condition of receiving their funded entitlement.

Where food and consumable contributions are not made, parents/carers will be responsible for providing the relevant items required for their child in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

Funded hours remain free and access to them is not conditional upon the purchase of additional hours or services.

11. Additional Activities, Outings and Enrichment

Wise Owls provides a broad and stimulating curriculum as part of children's everyday early education. From time to time, the nursery may also offer additional activities, outings, events or enrichment opportunities that fall outside the funded early education entitlement.

Where an additional charge or voluntary contribution applies, this will be communicated to parents in advance.

Where a family chooses not to purchase an optional additional activity or service, this will not affect their child's access to their EYFE funded hours.

Where reasonably possible, the nursery will provide an appropriate alternative so that children remain



included within the nursery day.

12. Working Family Funding

Eligible working parents may access funded childcare from the term after their child reaches the relevant qualifying age, subject to Government eligibility requirements and a valid Working Family Code.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- applying for their Working Family Code;
- ensuring the code is obtained before the applicable Government deadline;
- reconfirming eligibility approximately every three months;
- providing Wise Owls with the valid code;
- providing the relevant parent's National Insurance number;
- providing the child's date of birth; and
- completing the required Parent Declaration documentation.

Funding can only be claimed once eligibility has been successfully validated.

13. Funding Codes and Deadlines

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring all required information is provided accurately and within the relevant funding deadlines.

The usual deadlines are:

- 31 August for funding beginning from 1 September;
- 31 December for funding beginning from 1 January; and
- 31 March for funding beginning from 1 April.

Each child must have their own unique funding code. Funding codes cannot be shared between siblings.

Where a valid code is not received, validated or reconfirmed within the required timeframe, Wise Owls may be unable to claim funding and full nursery fees may apply until eligibility is confirmed.

14. Funding Loop and Parent Declarations

Wise Owls uses Funding Loop to support the administration of EYFE funding.

Parents/carers will be required to complete the relevant Parent Declaration and provide information required by Brighton & Hove City Council.

This may include:

- the child's full name and date of birth;
- parent/carer details;
- National Insurance number;
- Working Family Code or E-number;
- proof of the child's date of birth; and
- details of the funded hours being claimed.

Parents/carers must ensure that all information supplied is accurate and notify Wise Owls of any relevant changes.

15. Changes to Attendance



Any change to a child's regular attendance pattern that affects EYFE funded hours must be agreed with the nursery.

Parents/carers will be required to complete and sign a Change of Attendance Form where funded hours are being changed.

Changes remain subject to nursery availability and Local Authority funding requirements.

Where changes are requested after Local Authority cut-off dates, funding adjustments may not be possible immediately.

16. Notice Period for EYFE Funded Hours

Wise Owls requires a minimum of one month's written notice where a parent or carer wishes to:

- withdraw their child from an EYFE funded place;
- reduce their funded EYFE hours; or
- transfer their funded entitlement to another early years provider.

The one-month notice period applies specifically to EYFE funded hours.

Private nursery hours are subject to the separate notice period set out in the Parent Contract & Terms and Conditions and current Fee Sheet.

Where insufficient notice is provided, parents/carers may be responsible for any resulting fees or funding shortfall.

17. Code Expiry and Grace Periods

Parents/carers accessing Working Family funding are responsible for reconfirming their eligibility when required.

Where a funding code expires during a funded period, Brighton & Hove City Council will determine whether funding can continue under applicable grace period arrangements.

If eligibility ends following the expiry of the grace period, or a valid code is not renewed, parents/carers may become responsible for the full cost of the child's attendance until valid funding is available again.

18. Audit, Overpayments and Recovery of Funding

Brighton & Hove City Council may audit EYFE funding claims.

Wise Owls will maintain appropriate attendance records, Parent Declaration Forms and supporting funding information in accordance with Local Authority requirements.

Where funding is reduced, withdrawn or reclaimed by the Local Authority because of inaccurate, incomplete or late information supplied by a parent/carers, changes in attendance or an invalid or expired funding code, Wise Owls reserves the right to recover any resulting funding shortfall from the parent/carers.

19. Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding

Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding is separate from Working Family funding and is subject to its own eligibility requirements.

Eligible children may receive funded early education from the term after their second birthday.



Parents/carers must apply through the appropriate Local Authority process and provide Wise Owls with a valid E-number before funding can begin.

Funded places are subject to nursery availability and may be offered on specific days or within attendance patterns depending upon staffing, ratios and available capacity.

Where eligibility has been confirmed, Wise Owls may waive or reduce the usual deposit requirement at its discretion.

20. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Some eligible children may attract Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP).

EYPP is additional funding paid directly to the nursery to support eligible children's learning, development and inclusion.

Wise Owls may use EYPP to:

- enhance learning experiences;
- provide targeted resources;
- support interventions;
- provide relevant staff training; and
- support children's progress, development and school readiness.

EYPP does not reduce a child's funded entitlement and is not paid directly to parents.

21. Disability Access Fund (DAF)

Eligible children may attract Disability Access Fund (DAF).

DAF is paid directly to the nursery and is intended to support access to early education for eligible children with disabilities or additional needs.

Eligibility and the amount payable are determined by Government and Local Authority requirements in force at the time of the claim.

Parents/carers may be required to provide appropriate evidence of eligibility.

Wise Owls will use DAF to support accessibility, inclusion and reasonable adjustments appropriate to the individual child.

22. Additional Support Funding (ASF)

Wise Owls may apply for Additional Support Funding (ASF) through Brighton & Hove City Council where a child has identified or emerging additional needs requiring support beyond ordinarily available provision.

Where appropriate, the nursery will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify the child's needs and apply for appropriate support.

ASF is paid to the setting and must be used to support the child's access to and participation in early education.

23. Absence and Funded Hours

Parents/carers should notify Wise Owls as soon as possible when their child will not be attending nursery.



Funded hours cannot normally be:

- carried forward;
- banked;
- exchanged for another day; or
- refunded to the parent/carer.

Regular attendance is expected for funded places.

Wise Owls will monitor attendance in accordance with its safeguarding responsibilities and Local Authority funding requirements.

24. Parent Responsibilities

Parents/carers accessing EYFE funding are responsible for:

- checking their child's eligibility;
- obtaining and maintaining any required funding code;
- reconfirming Working Family eligibility when required;
- providing accurate information to Wise Owls;
- completing required Parent Declaration documentation;
- informing the nursery promptly of changes in circumstances that may affect funding;
- notifying the nursery of attendance changes;
- observing the relevant notice period; and
- providing food and consumables where they have opted out of the applicable voluntary contributions.

25. Transparency of Fees and Contributions

Wise Owls is committed to ensuring that families understand what is funded and what they may choose to pay for in addition to their funded entitlement.

Our current Fee Sheet sets out:

- full-rate private nursery fees;
- funded session structures;
- hours that can be claimed as EYFE;
- charges for hours outside funded periods;
- voluntary food and consumables contributions;
- voluntary contributions applicable to the 3 and 4-year-old funding structure;
- what is included within full-rate fees; and
- how families may opt out of voluntary contributions.

Invoices will provide a breakdown of the relevant funded hours, private hours and applicable contributions. Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to the management team if they are unsure about how their child's funding or invoice has been calculated.

26. Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes are made to Government or Brighton & Hove City Council EYFE funding requirements.

Wise Owls Nursery School will update its Fee Sheet and associated parent information where necessary to ensure families receive clear and transparent information about funded entitlements, private fees and



voluntary contributions.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Wise Owls Nursery School Fee Sheet
- Parent Contract & Terms and Conditions
- relevant nursery food, allergy and safeguarding policies.

Policy effective from: September 2026

Policy review date: August 2027

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