



## Wise Owls Nursery School

### EYFE Policy 2026

#### 1. Introduction

Wise Owls Nursery School is committed to providing early education and care in line with the Government's Early Years Free Entitlement (EYFE) and Brighton & Hove City Council funding guidance. This policy outlines how we deliver funded hours, the responsibilities of parents/guardians, and how funding is managed in accordance with national and local authority regulations.

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#### 2. Universal Entitlement (15 Hours)

Universal EYFE funding (15 hours) is available from the term following a child's third birthday. In addition, some children may be eligible for funded hours from 9 months old through the Government's expanded childcare entitlement for working families.

Wise Owls Nursery School offers up to 15 funded hours per week, delivered as 12 hours per week stretched over 47.5 weeks per year, in line with the nursery's operational model.

For children aged 9 months to 3 years, funded hours are available between 08:15am and 4:00pm, subject to availability.

From the term after a child turns 3 years old, the funded hours structure changes to the following options:

- 9:00am – 3:00pm, or
- 8:15am – 12:15pm.

Any hours used outside of these funded times will be charged at Wise Owls Nursery School's full hourly or sessional rate as set out in the current Fee Sheet.

Funded hours are subject to availability. For children aged 9 months to 3 years, all consumables (including meals, snacks, nappies, wipes, and sun cream) are included in the nursery fees.

From the term after a child turns 3 and becomes eligible for EYFE, voluntary parental contributions may be requested to support the cost of consumables and wider provision.

Parents/Guardians will receive an itemised invoice clearly showing funded hours, unfunded hours, food charges and any additional services.

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Parents/Guardians must provide original identification (birth certificate or passport) to verify their child's age and eligibility. Copies will be held securely for Local Authority audit purposes.



### 3. Extended Entitlement (Working Families Funding)

Eligible working parents may access up to an additional 15 funded hours (commonly known as “30 hours funding”) from the term after their child turns 9 months old, subject to government rollout dates and a valid Working Family Code issued by HMRC.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- Applying for and maintaining their HMRC code before the published deadline.
- Reconfirming their eligibility every three months.
- Providing Wise Owls Nursery School with the valid code, parent’s National Insurance number, and child’s date of birth for validation.

Failure to provide a valid or reconfirmed code before the funding deadline will result in full fees being charged until eligibility is verified.

For children aged 9 months to 3 years accessing extended entitlement:

- Funded hours are available between 08:15am and 4:00pm, subject to availability.
- Any hours outside of the funded allocation agreed on the attendance pattern will be charged at Wise Owls Nursery School’s full hourly or sessional rate as set out in the current Fee Sheet.

From the term after a child turns 3 years old, the funded hours structure changes to:

- 9:00am – 3:00pm, or
- 8:15am – 12:15pm.

Any hours used outside of these funded times will be charged at Wise Owls Nursery School’s full hourly or sessional rate.

Extended entitlement can only be claimed once the HMRC code has been successfully validated by the Local Authority.

Funded hours are offered over 47.5 weeks per year in line with our stretched funding model.

- For children aged 9 months to 3 years, meals and snacks are included as part of the nursery’s standard offer.
- From the term after your child turns 3 years old, the funding we receive does not cover the full cost of meals, snacks, and consumables.  
To help bridge this gap, we ask for a voluntary parental contribution.  
Choosing not to contribute will not affect your child’s access to their funded hours.

Invoices will show a clear breakdown of funded and unfunded hours, food charges and any additional services.

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### 4. Funding Code Submission, Deadlines, Audit and Mid-Term Code Expiry

Parents/Guardians must ensure that all required information to validate EYFE or Extended Entitlement funding is submitted accurately and on time, including:



- Valid Working Family Code (for eligible children aged 9 months and over)
- A valid E-number issued by Family Information Service (for disadvantaged 2-year-old funding)
- Parent/guardian's National Insurance number
- Child's date of birth
- A signed Parent Declaration Form each academic year

Wise Owls Nursery School uses Funding Loop, an online platform that securely holds parental declaration forms, digital copies of a child's birth certificate or passport, and all information required by the Local Authority to validate and claim EYFE funding.

Each child must have their own unique funding code.

- Siblings cannot share a funding code under any circumstances.
- A valid code must be in place for each individual child accessing EYFE.

#### *Termly Deadlines*

Funding eligibility is based on national and local authority termly deadlines. To receive funding for the upcoming term:

- Parents/guardians must apply for and receive their valid Working Family Code or E-number before the published deadline.
- If a code is applied for after the deadline or is not validated by HMRC or the Local Authority in time, Wise Owls Nursery School will be unable to claim funding for that term.
- In these cases, full nursery fees will apply until a valid code is confirmed.

Application deadlines for funding:

- Apply by 31 August to start funding from 1 September (Autumn term)
- Apply by 31 December to start funding from 1 January (Spring term)
- Apply by 31 March to start funding from 1 April (Summer term)

#### *Changes to Attendance*

Any changes to a child's attendance pattern that affect EYFE funded hours must be recorded on a paper 'Change of Attendance' form, which must be completed and signed by a parent or carer. This ensures that the Local Authority has an accurate record of funding claims.

Wise Owls Nursery School will validate all information via the Local Authority's funding portal before submitting termly headcount and adjustment claims.

Where codes are not valid or reconfirmed by the published deadline, funding cannot be claimed, and full fees will be invoiced.

If a code expires mid-term, Brighton & Hove City Council will determine whether funding may continue under the grace period rules. If the grace period lapses and the parent have not renewed or replaced the code, the parent will be liable for the full fees until a valid code is provided.

Wise Owls Nursery School reserves the right to recover from parents/guardians any funding withdrawn or reclaimed by the Local Authority due to inaccurate, incomplete, or expired code information.



## 5. Audit, Overpayments and Recovery of Funding

Brighton & Hove City Council may audit EYFE and Extended Entitlement claims. Funding is provided directly by the Local Authority and is subject to post-submission checks.

If an audit or review results in a reduction, withdrawal or recovery of funding, Wise Owls Nursery School will adjust the parent's account accordingly.

Where funding is reclaimed due to inaccurate or late information from parents, changes in attendance patterns, eligibility, or code validity, the parent/guardian will be liable for any shortfall.

Wise Owls Nursery School will retain attendance records, Parent Declaration Forms and supporting documentation in line with Local Authority requirements.

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## 6. Voluntary Parental Contributions, Opt-Outs and Funded Hour Structure

Voluntary parental contributions are only requested from the term after your child turns 3 years old, when the government funding rate reduces and no longer covers the cost of meals, snacks, and consumables.

This contribution is entirely voluntary, and your child's funded place will not be affected if you choose not to contribute.

We will:

- Clearly explain what the voluntary contribution covers.
- Share the suggested contribution amount in advance.
- Ensure there is no obligation to pay.
- Offer all families the option to opt out by completing a short Opt-Out Declaration Form.

If a parent or carer chooses to opt out of the voluntary contribution:

- Your child will continue to access their funded hours in line with government legislation.
- However, parents will be required to supply:
  - Nappies, wipes and nappy bags
  - Sun cream
  - All snacks and meals (in line with our healthy eating policy)
- Your child may not be able to participate in certain additional activities, events, or trips that are not covered by government funding.
- We will always provide reasonable alternatives to ensure children are included and supported appropriately.

Once a child's funded hours have been fully used, any additional hours or sessions attended will be charged at Wise Owls Nursery School's standard hourly rate or sessional fee, as set out in our current Fee Sheet.

Parents are encouraged to review the most up-to-date Fee Sheet for:

- Full session and hourly rates
- Information on voluntary parental contributions and how they are calculated



- Details of what is included within fees and what may be charged as an extra.

This ensures parents have clear and transparent information about costs and contributions.

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## 7. Key Reminders for Parents

- Funding is for childcare only; optional services and consumables may be charged separately or covered by voluntary contributions.
- Funded hours must be booked and used in line with nursery availability and the agreed attendance pattern.
- Funding can only be claimed once all required documentation is submitted and validated.
- Where funding is not in place due to late or incomplete information, full nursery fees will be charged.
- Funding codes must be applied for before the termly deadline. Late codes that cannot be validated will result in full fees being charged for that term.
- Each child must have their own unique code — siblings cannot share codes.
- Changes to attendance that affect EYFE funding must be recorded on a paper Change of Attendance form, signed by a parent or carer.
- Working Family funding may be available from 9 months old. Parents must check eligibility with HMRC and provide a valid code before the deadline.

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## 8. Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with changes to Government or Local Authority EYFE guidance. Wise Owls Nursery School complies fully with the Department for Education Statutory Guidance for Early Education and Childcare and Brighton & Hove City Council EYFE Provider Agreement.

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## 9. Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding and EYPP

Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding is a separate scheme from the Working Family (30-hour) entitlement and has different eligibility criteria.

Some children may be eligible for Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding, which provides up to 15 hours of free early education per week for eligible families from the term after their second birthday.

Eligibility is based on Government criteria, which may include:

- Families in receipt of certain benefits
- Looked after children or those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)
- Children accessing support through Early Help or social care

Parents/Guardians must apply via the Local Authority, and eligibility will be confirmed before funding can begin. A valid E-number issued by Family Information Service must be provided before a funded place can start.

Funded places for disadvantaged two-year-olds are subject to availability. Due to staffing ratios and capacity, these funded places may only be available on specific days and times. We will work closely with families to offer the most suitable sessions available at the time of allocation.



In most cases, deposits for disadvantaged 2-year-old funded places may be waived where eligibility has been confirmed.

In addition, some 3- and 4-year-olds may be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). This is additional funding paid to the setting to help close the attainment gap for children from lower-income families or those with additional needs.

EYPP is used by Wise Owls Nursery School to:

- Enhance children's learning experiences
- Fund targeted resources, interventions or staff training
- Support children's progress, development and school readiness

EYPP does not affect a child's funded hours and is not paid directly to parents. All EYPP spending is planned, recorded, and reviewed in line with Local Authority requirements.

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## 10. Notice Period for EYFE-Funded Places

Wise Owls Nursery School requires a minimum of one month's written notice if a parent or guardian intends to:

- Withdraw their child from the setting,
- Reduce their funded hours, or
- Transfer their funded place to another early years provider.

This notice period applies to all children, including those accessing funded hours through Universal EYFE, Extended Entitlement (30 hours), or Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding.

If the required notice is not given, parents or guardians may be liable for any charges or shortfall in funding that results from the early withdrawal.

Where possible, we will work with families to accommodate changes, but adequate notice is essential to support staffing, ratios, and planning across the setting.

Parents or guardians must also ensure that any attendance changes affecting EYFE are recorded on a signed Change of Attendance Form.

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## 11. Disability Access Fund (DAF) and Additional Support Funding (ASF)

Wise Owls Nursery School is committed to supporting the inclusion and participation of all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

### *Disability Access Fund (DAF)*

DAF is a one-off annual payment of £910 (amount set nationally) made to early years settings to help support access to the Early Years Foundation Stage for children with disabilities or special educational needs.

To be eligible for DAF, a child must:



- Be aged 3 or 4 years old,
- Be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), and
- Access their funded entitlement at Wise Owls Nursery School.

The funding is paid directly to the setting and is used to improve accessibility and make reasonable adjustments to support the child's inclusion.

Parents/guardians must provide proof of DLA eligibility for DAF to be claimed.

#### *Additional Support Funding (ASF)*

ASF is available to help early years settings support children with identified or emerging additional needs who may require extra staffing support or resources beyond universal provision.

This funding:

- Is allocated based on a graduated approach and evidence of the child's needs,
- Is applied for through Brighton & Hove City Council,
- Must be used to provide targeted support to enable the child's participation in early education.

If a child at Wise Owls Nursery School is eligible, the setting will work closely with parents/guardians and the Local Authority to apply for ASF and ensure the funding is used appropriately to support the child's individual needs.

Parents will be kept informed of any DAF or ASF funding claimed on behalf of their child, and how it is being used to enhance their access to early education.

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Policy effective from: January 2026

Applies to: All funded children attending Wise Owls Nursery School

Policy review date: January 2027