



Early Years Charging & Invoicing Policy

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Review September 2027

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Policy Statement

Aspire Foundation ensures that all 15 & 30 hour Early Years entitlements are completely free at the point of use. Any charges for supplementary services are voluntary, transparent, and itemised separately, as mandated in the DfE's April 2025 guidance.

Scope & Purpose

Applies to all parents/carers regarding:

- Funded and non-funded hours
- Optional extras (celebration meals, consumables, outings)
- Voluntary contributions
- Remission exceptions

Definitions

- **Funded hours:** Government-funded entitlement (15 or 30 hours).
- **Additional paid hours:** Hours beyond funded entitlement.
- **Voluntary contributions:** Optional payments (e.g. trips).
- **Consumables:** Nappies, wipes, sun cream.
- **Non-consumables:** Ensure all children receive the same provision, optional charges only.

Funded Hours & Entitlement

- Children eligible for funded hours must provide a valid eligibility code (where applicable e.g. no code is required for 3 year old 15 hrs funding).
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to obtain this code and maintain its validity. Where a current, valid code is not supplied, Aspire Foundation reserves the right to invoice parents/carers for hours booked for their child.
- Eligibility for funded hours can be checked here:
 - 2 year old (A2YO -15 hours funding) - [Citizen Portal - Sign in](#)
 - Babies, 2, 3 & 4 year old (30 hours funding) - [Childcare Eligibility Checker - Best Start in Life](#)
- Free hours are not chargeable and must be billed at £0.
- Additional hours are charged at our standard hourly rate, listed separately from funded hours.
- Parents/carers may be eligible for government support through schemes such as Tax-Free Childcare, which can help reduce the cost of early years provision. Further information and eligibility criteria are available at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

- Parents/carers who are full-time higher education students may be eligible for the government's non-repayable Childcare Grant, which can cover up to 85% of registered childcare costs, subject to eligibility criteria. Further details are available on GOV.UK.

Permitted & Permissible Charge

Permitted (optional) charges:

- Occasional nursery-provided meals or lunches may be offered, for example during celebrations of specific festivals or events. These will be invoiced separately when they occur. For all regular full-day sessions or where a child attends over the lunch period, parents/carers are expected to provide a healthy packed lunch. Parents/carers may opt out of nursery-provided meals at any time.
- Occasionally Aspire Foundation offers optional activities such as trips or special events. These are invoiced separately and wherever possible, alternative provision is supplied. This may not be at your child's usual early years setting.
- Early drop-offs or later pickups beyond allocated times are charged at our usual hourly rates and are invoiced separately. Early drop off may be available for children attending afternoon sessions, arriving at 11:30 to join full day children for lunch. Late drop off may be available for children attending the morning session, staying for lunch and leaving at 12:30, or for full days, with children departing at the later time of 15:30 when the afternoon session ends. These are subject to availability and should be discussed with the Early Years Manager.

Aspire Foundation does not charge for:

- Funded hours
- Consumables such as nappies, wipes and sun cream. We ask that parents/ carers supply these in a named bag that their child brings to each session.
- Basic learning resources or staffing/overheads
- Mandatory top-ups or non-refundable deposits
- Registration fees linked to funded entitlements.

Invoicing & Payment Terms

Invoices are issued at the start of each term.

Invoices itemise:

Funded hours

Additional paid hours – standard rate

Any additional activity charges – specified as optional

Payment to be made by BACS to: Aspire Foundation, Barclays Bank Limited.

Sort Code: 20-20-15

Account no: 63131564

If the invoice has not been paid within 7 working days of the due date, we will contact you and seek payment.

Aspire Foundation reserves the right after four weeks to review your child's place following non-payment of invoice and arrears. This could mean reducing your child to funded hours only or cancelling your child's place at our setting.

Aspire Foundation reserves the right to apply a late payment fee of £10 admin charge, then 5% daily on balance.

Deposits & Notice Period

Aspire Foundation do not charge a deposit for our early years places.

Aspire Foundation requests 4 weeks' written notice to reduce or end sessions. All existing fees will be charged during the notice period notice.

Absence, Sickness, Holidays & Closures

Fees for sessions missed due to illness or holidays remain payable.

Where a setting is closed unexpectedly, for example due to staff shortages or bad weather, we will offer you refund or credit against your next invoice.

Remissions & Hardship

Aspire Foundation recognises that families may experience financial hardship and is committed to ensuring that this does not prevent children from accessing high-quality early years education. In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents/carers may apply for a remission or reduction of fees. Each application will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the family's circumstances and supporting evidence.

Aspire Foundation reserves the right to request documentation to verify hardship and will treat all information provided with strict confidentiality. Decisions will be made fairly and transparently, with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration.

All decisions will be documented and reviewed annually.

Voluntary Contributions

Parents/carers may be asked for voluntary contributions toward non-essential activities (e.g., trips, events).

Aspire Foundation provides a small snack of fruit and / or crackers (or similar) at each morning and afternoon session. To support this we ask all parents/carers to donate towards the cost of the snack. This can be done through collection tins at the early years setting doors. As a guide, we suggest a voluntary donation of 50p per morning and per afternoon per child.

These are genuinely optional, and no child is excluded for non-payment.

Appendix A: Sample Fees Table

Item	Cost	Notes
Funded Hours (FEEE)	£0	15 or 30 hours per week (as per entitlement)
Additional Hours	£7.50 per hour (3&4 years) £8.00 per hour (2 Years) £12.00 per hour (under 2 years)	Charged for hours beyond funded entitlement
Snack	50p per session (AM and PM)	Optional; parents/carers can supply their own
Trip (optional)	TBC dependant on activity	Optional enrichment activity

Appendix B: Invoicing Checklist

- Clearly label funded hours at £0
- Itemise paid hours.
- Itemise any additional activities
- State due date, payment methods, and late fee policy
- Include instructions for voluntary contributions

1. Invoice Content

- Child's full name and reference number
- Invoice date and payment due date
- Clear breakdown of:
 - Funded hours (FEEE) – £0.00
 - Additional hours (rate per hour)
 - Voluntary charges (food, snacks, consumables, trips)
 - Late collection fees (as per additional hours rate)
- Total amount due
- Payment methods and instructions (including payment link if applicable)

2. Compliance

- No charges for funded hours or core EYFS resources
- Voluntary charges clearly marked as optional
- Opt-out options stated (e.g., packed lunch)
- No artificial session breaks to enforce paid extras

3. Transparency

- Itemised costs match published fee schedule
- Policy reference included (Early Years Charging Policy)
- Contact details for queries or hardship applications

4. Timing

- Issued at least 14 days before due date
- Aligns with agreed billing cycle (termly)

5. Record Keeping

- Copy stored securely for audit
- Payment tracked and reconciled
- Outstanding balances flagged for follow-up