

SSFU Payment of Fees Policy 2018-19

Early Education Funding

We are registered with the Department for Education and the local authority, which means we can claim the Early Education Funding for children from the term after they turn 3 up until and including the term in which they turn 5.

All 3-4 year olds, from the term after their 3rd birthday, are eligible to claim a core entitlement of up to 15 funded hours and **4-5 year olds** (reception class children, ie **the school year in which a child turns 5**) can claim for 25 hours up until the end of this financial year (March 2019). A full day at Stepping Stones, including Lunch Club, is 6.5 hours. The maximum parents can claim in one day is 10 hours. Please see below for details of the additional entitlement for working parents.

From the end of this financial year, **parents of Reception children** who do not qualify for the 30 hour entitlement as working parents will only be entitled to 15 hours free education for Reception children, and would need to pay fees for any additional hours.

The Early Education Fund finishes from the term after a child turns five. At this point parents start paying school fees (£4.90 per hour).

30 Hour Entitlement for Working Parents

Children are eligible for an additional 15 hours a week of free childcare where both parents are working (or the sole parent in a lone parent family), and each parent earns approx. £115.00 per week (a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage); and less than £100,000 per year. Parents apply for an eligibility code which must be presented to us as the provider, along with the National Insurance number of the parent applying and the child's date of birth. Please note that parents can only start claiming the additional hours **the term following the date they receive a decision from HMRC**. For further information and to check eligibility see <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>.

Parents must bring in their eligibility code as soon as it is received, as the additional hours cannot be taken up until the code has been verified. Parents will need to reconfirm their eligibility every 3 months (when prompted by HMRC). Should parents no longer be eligible for 30 hours, they will enter a 'grace' period and will be able to retain the additional hours for a short period.

The number of funded hours which parents can claim at Stepping Stones is as follows:

Children who will turn 3 during the academic year 2018-19 (N1s) will be offered the core entitlement of 15 hours from the term after their 3rd birthday (parents can claim fewer hours if they choose or build the number of hours up over the year). All nursery children are asked to attend on a Wednesday morning.

Children who turn 4 during the academic year 2018-19 (N2s) will be offered the core entitlement of 15 hours (parents can claim fewer hours if they choose or build the number of hours up over the year). All nursery children are asked to attend on a Wednesday morning, and to attend a minimum of 3 sessions once they are an N2.

Working parents of children who turn 4 in this academic year will be able to claim for up to an additional 7 hours (the equivalent of 2 extra afternoon sessions including lunch club), space permitting, making a total of 22 hours. Where additional hours are not taken up by other parents, a discretionary extra 3 ½ hours may also be available (totalling 25 ½ hrs). These extra hours will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Where working parents wish to take up the full 30 hours, the remaining allocation of funded hours can be claimed with another provider.

Where parents are not eligible for the additional 15 hours, they can still request additional hours to the core entitlement as outlined above and will be charged £4.90 per hour.

All children in Reception (who turn 5 during the academic year 2018-19) will be able to attend all day Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The minimum attendance before statutory school age in Reception is all day Monday, and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Children in Reception can claim for 25 funded hours out of the 26 we provide (parents will therefore be charged for the additional hour per week, unless this is being claimed under the new 30-hour scheme for working parents) for the remainder of this financial year (until March 2019). Thereafter parents of Reception children who do not meet the 30-hour criteria will only be entitled to 15 funded hours.

School Fees

Fees are set annually during the summer term and any changes to the hourly fee rate come into effect the following September. Parents will be informed of any fee changes by the end of the summer term. Children are registered for a set number of sessions each week at the start of each academic year (or when they join). These sessions can be reviewed in January and April. Fees are invoiced by email (or post by agreement if email is unavailable) on a termly basis. If you have other children in the school and pay their fees by direct debit, the Stepping Stones fees will split into a monthly payment and added to the direct debit. You will be informed at least 10 working days in advance how much your direct debit payment will be. Alternatively, invoices can be paid either termly or monthly as agreed with the Bursar of The King's School (Mrs Joanna Powell) and your invoice deadline will reflect your choice. Fees can be paid in cash, by cheque or by bank transfer (details are available from the Bursar).

Stepping Stones can accept Childcare Vouchers. Please speak to the Bursar if you would like to use these to pay for fees. The King's School is also registered with the government's Tax-Free Childcare service.

Fees must still be paid if children are absent, unless under exceptional circumstances where a specific arrangement has been made with the Manager and Bursar.

If you have any problems over the payment of fees, please talk to the Bursar to make alternative arrangements. There may be funding available for parents of children of statutory school age who are unable to pay full fees. Please ask the Bursar for further details if you think that you may be eligible.

If we have not received payment by the invoice date, the Bursar will write to remind you. If payment is then more than a month overdue, we will ask to meet with you to make a payment plan. If you continue not to pay or do not attend a meeting, your child will no longer be able to attend Stepping Stones or their hours will be restricted to funded hours only and we may seek legal advice.

Reviewed September 2018

Next review September 2019