



## Early Education Entitlement Funding (FEF) Policy

### Opening Hours

Lavender pre-school is open Monday to Friday 8.30am – 2.30pm. With a choice of 8.30am or 9am start time, and a choice of 12.00, or 2.30 finish time (Thursdays 12pm finish only).

The discretion of the Pre-school Leader and the availability of places, and discussions with parents, decide the number of sessions attended by each child from two per week. We try to arrange holidays to coincide with the local schools. We are open for 38 weeks per year.

### Funded Entitlement – Universal entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds

All children attending a pre-school in the London Borough of Sutton will receive funding the term after their third birthday. A form will be given to you at the start of the term by the pre-school for you to complete and return within 7 days for the funding to be claimed.

This funding currently entitles each child to any combination of 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. The pre-school claims the funding directly.

If your child attends another setting, then you can choose how you split the funded hours between the two settings.

Any hour booked over and above the 15 free hours will be charged at £6 per hour. We are open for 27.5 hours per week.

Examples of funded hours;

Every morning, Monday to Friday 9.00-12.00 or if 2.5 days booked for example Tuesday 8.30-2.30, Wednesday 8.30-2.30 and Friday 9.00-12.00 will equal fees 15 hours per week.

Parents have the choice to decide on what combination of hours they would like depending on availability.

All 3 and 4-year olds become eligible for their universal free entitlement of a total of 570 hours a year of free childcare, from the start of the term after their 3rd birthday.

If your child turns three between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 they will be funded from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024. If your child turns three between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 they will be funded from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025. If your child turns three between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 they will be funded from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

Children receive their universal free entitlement until the end of the term in which the child reaches their fifth birthday.

### Two-year old eligibility

2-year-olds can get funded early education and childcare if the parent is in receipt of one of the following:

- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

- Universal Credit
- Tax credits and you have an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

A child can also get free entitlement funding if any of the following apply:

- They're looked after by a local authority
- They have a current statement of special education needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- They get Disability Living Allowance
- They've left care under a special guardianship order; child arrangements order or adoption order

Families in receipt of the following may also be required to submit their HMRC TC602 form or additional information as proof of being in receipt of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit.
- They receive Working Tax credits and have annual gross earnings of no more than £16,190 per year.
- The child has a current Statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan and they attract Disability Living Allowance.

In the event that the family's circumstances change resulting in them no longer being eligible, whilst the child is already accessing the free entitlement, he/she child will continue to receive the two-year free entitlement funding until the he/she is eligible for 3-year-old funding.

Some eligible families will receive a letter from London Borough of Sutton informing them of their entitlement, how to apply and a copy of the Directory of Early Years Providers. This letter is confirmation that the family is eligible for two- year old free entitlement funding. All parents will need to apply for the funding via the Sutton Parent Portal and once you receive an email confirmation this is your proof that your child is entitled to 15 funded hours. When you return your application form Lavender will also need this proof email.

Any parent/carers who considers they are eligible for two-year-old free entitlement, must complete the parent declaration form (sent out with application form for a place at Lavender) to confirm eligibility. This form must be fully completed and signed by both the parent/carers and the provider.

From September 2017 parents will be able confirm their eligibility for two-year-old funding on the parent portal that will be available via [www.sutton.gov.uk/freechildcare](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/freechildcare)

### **Working Parents;**

#### **Extended free entitlement (30 hours) – 3 and 4-year olds**

From September 2017, children from working families are eligible for an additional 570 hours a year free childcare. Working families must meet the eligibility criteria below to claim the extended free entitlement:

- Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), and;

- each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or national living wage and earns less than £100,000 per year.

Parents must confirm their eligibility for the 30 hours on their childcare service account. If eligible, they will receive a 30-hour 11-digit eligibility code. Further information on all free childcare options available can be found at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk).

Alongside the 30 hours eligibility code, which is the child's unique 11-digit number, and original copies of documentation, birth certificate and proof of home address, Lavender Preschool must acquire written consent on the parent declaration form, from, or on behalf of, the parent to be able to receive confirmation and future notifications from the local authority of the validity of the parent's 30 hours eligibility code.

Once Lavender has received written consent from the parent, they should verify the 30 hours eligibility code with the local authority. The local authority will confirm the validity of 30 hours eligibility codes through the Eligibility Checking Service (ECS) to allow providers to offer 30 hours places for eligible three- and four-year-olds.

Thereafter, the local authority will complete audit checks to review the validity of eligibility codes for children who qualify for 30 hours free childcare at 6 fixed points in the year, both at half-term and at the end of term across the year. It is the local authority's responsibility to notify a provider where a parent has fallen out of eligibility and inform them of the grace period end date.

We are open 27.5 hours per week but if you wish you may split your hours between Lavender and another setting (childminder, Preschool, school nursery etc). Parents need to decide on which setting gets the universal hours and which gets the extended hours.

### **Working Parents;**

#### **Extended entitlement (15 hours) – 2-year olds**

Working parents of 2-year-olds from April 2024 are now eligible to 15 hours funded education per week term time, using the same criteria and checks as above with 3 & 4 year olds.

This is due to extended to 30 hours from September 2025.

### **Fees**

There are no fees attached to the 15- or 30-hours funded entitlement.

If you book your child in for more than their funded entitlement the fees are £6 per hour for any hour over, (3&4year olds) and £7 (2-year-olds)

All fees are payable at the end of each  $\frac{1}{2}$  term in advance, it is not normally refundable. A letter will be given approximately two weeks before it is due detailing the amount and which days and hours your child is booked in and the term dates with any exclusions (i.e. bank holidays). Half-term varies in length from 5 to 8 weeks.

The fees can be paid by cash or bank transfer, made payable to Lavender Pre-school or preferably direct to account

Account details are:

Name: Lavender Pre-school

Bank: Santander

Sort code: 09-06-66

Account Number: 41844886

Reference: Your child's name

We also accept childcare vouchers. These are available through larger companies and they pay your pre-school fees directly from your salary into the pre-school, saving you any tax. We are currently registered with 8 different voucher companies. Please check which one your employer uses and contact Helen to register your child.

This policy was accepted on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 on behalf of Lavender Pre-School – Beddington. This policy is updated every September.

