



Enrichment Fee Paying Policy

Context:

Sunshine Preschool has always endeavoured to provide the highest quality service to families regardless of background, culture or economic circumstance; ensuring that children and families receive the best education and care we can offer whilst also ensuring that Sunshines remains sustainable. In recent years, increases in many costs, including increases in the national minimum wage and employer National Insurance contributions, coupled with a meager increase in the grant revenue we receive, have forced us to implement an “Enrichment fee” to ensure we remain sustainable. As Government policies come and go, Sunshines has always remained steadfast to our core values of the highest quality of education and we will never compromise on the quality we offer.

The enrichment fee covers a multitude of experiences, resources and equipment that children need in order to learn and thrive in a highly stimulating and nurturing environment. The curriculum at Sunshines is collaborative: the senior leadership team, every member of staff and the children themselves contribute to and enhance the activities on offer every session. To maintain this flexibility, the enrichment fee is a flat fee per session; we believe that this is the fairest approach to allow for maximum adaptability and spontaneity in spending in response to the children’s needs, interests and wishes. A breakdown of what the enrichment fee covers is available upon request, with a sample example provided below.

In light of the above, any parent wishing to opt out of the enrichment fee will be required to provide their child with a wide range of materials and resources to ensure they too can be part of this exciting and varied curriculum. Staff will endeavour to allow ample time for resources to be gathered, bought and supplied to preschool but parents must also expect that, on occasion, there may be times when a resource must be provided with 16 hours notice (e.g. the group decides that the following day they will be partaking in a special fruit taste test, based on the children’s interest in the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and there has not been sufficient variety in the fruit the parent has been asked to provide for the week. In this instance, the staff will contact the parent via email to request the items and the parent will need to bring them in at drop-off the next morning).

Aim: The policy outlines the procedure for families who wish to opt out of the enrichment fee, yet still receive the high quality care and education that their child deserves.

Enrichment Fee:

The minimal fee that Sunshines charges on top of the government grant covers a multitude of educational perks and experiences not stipulated in the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage guidance, including: baking, sowing and harvesting opportunities, enhanced craft experiences, cultural experiences (e.g present for Christmas and birthday; sampling foods from other cultures during different cultural festivals etc.), off-site learning opportunities, amongst other things. A full list can be requested, but a sample list is provided below. Annual trips are not covered by the enrichment fee, and families will be given at least 4 weeks' notice of any payments that need to be made for trips. All trips are optional, and there will be an opportunity to make up the missed session.

Sunshine Preschool appreciates that families may be struggling financially, and advises families to contact the finance officer via email or text as soon as possible and ideally before enrolling, to discuss payment plans and various options to reduce their payments such as using Childcare Vouchers.

When parents enroll their child at Sunshines, they are agreeing to our core values and beliefs and acknowledging that we provide important enhancements for their child's education which will have a positive impact on their learning and development. Therefore, when opting out of paying the enrichment fee, parents are agreeing to physically provide everything that their child needs to access the same enriched and enhanced education that the child's peers will be receiving who are paying the enrichment fee. This includes weekly food items and items needed for the enhanced activities during the term.

Currently, Sunshine Preschool offers funded hours (15 and 30 hours) to all families, however if 20% of the families choose to opt out of the enrichment fee, Sunshine Preschool will be forced to cap the number of funded places and parents will be informed in writing if their space is now a funded place or not. Parents will be informed five weeks before the beginning of term.

Opting Out of the Enrichment Fee - The Process

Parents need to inform the office, via email, 6 weeks before the enrichment fee is due to be paid. Failure to allow 6 weeks' notice, will result in being charged for the following term.

“Opting out” refers to opting out of everything that is covered by the enrichment fee, it is an “all or nothing” system, and not a menu for parents to pick and choose what they pay for.

Upon informing the office of the wish to opt out, a meeting will be held between the family and a member of the Sunshine Senior Leadership Team to ensure both parties are aware of the implications of opting out, the responsibilities held by the family, and the consequences of not providing the items requested within the time frame needed.

If the family still wishes to opt out of that term's enrichment fee, the minutes of the meeting will be emailed to the family, and a hard copy will be made available for them to sign, showing that they understand their commitment to providing everything their child needs to access the full and varied curriculum for that term.

Parents are acknowledging their understanding that there will be items that are required for the term, the week and possibly each day that they will need to bring, and parents are agreeing to check for emails each evening to ensure that they provide any requested items for the following day.

If parents do not provide the items requested, as a last resort the child will not be able to attend that session, as it is against our inclusive ethos to exclude a child from an activity. Parents will be given the opportunity to make up the session missed, but the timing of this will be at the discretion of the managers/ senior leadership team to ensure our high ratios are maintained.

Parents will have the opportunity to opt back in to the enrichment fee payment for the following term, unless, again, they state in writing that they do not wish to opt in to the enrichment fee.

Enrichment Fee Opting Out Contract

- ☐ I am signing this document six weeks prior to 1st September/ 1st January/ 1st April (delete as appropriate)
- ☐ I have held a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and I am signing to say that I have fully understood the implications of my decision to opt out

- ☐ I understand that I will not have access to Tapestry , the online learning journal and instead will receive feedback on my child's progress three times a year at key meetings
- ☐ I understand that I will provide the items specified on the Enrichment List at the beginning of term
- ☐ I understand I am expected to provide the weekly food for my child in accordance with what Sunshine Preschool stipulates, to ensure they have the same opportunities as their peers
- ☐ I understand that it is my responsibility to check for emails for last minute requests needed for the next day. These will be sent before 6pm
- ☐ I understand that if I fail to provide the termly, weekly or daily requirements, that my child will not be able to attend that session and a make up session will be offered at a time decided by the setting manager with agreement from the senior leadership team
- ☐ I understand that any trips out that I have not financially contributed to will result in my child not being able to attend that session and a make up session will be offered at a time decided by the setting manager with agreement from the senior leadership team
- ☐ I understand that I will need to provide my own refreshments for any parent/grandparent events
- ☐ I understand that my decision to opt out of the enrichment fee has an implication for the rest of the cohort at Sunshines, and that if 20% of parents or more opt out of the enrichment fee, then Sunshines will be forced to cap the funded hours offered and therefore I may lose my funded place

Example (not exhaustive) list for six week term (Term 4), based on our 2025 planning:

Enrichment activities

- Ingredients to make a variety of different sensory doughs (including, spices, essential oils, corn flour, shaving foam, flour, glycerine etc.)
- Baking ingredients (including ingredients for: gingerbread men; pancakes and toppings; cakes; Easter biscuits)
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (tin foil, fresh herbs, compost, plant pots, seeds)
- Clay

- Spaghetti (dried)
- Breakfast hoops

Enhanced craft experiences

- Paper plates
- Feathers
- Buttons
- Cotton wool
- Cotton buds

Enrichment cultural activities

- Hollow chocolate Easter egg
- Hot cross bun
- Usbourne book, wrapped with card for your child's birthday

Snacks

- 5 boxes of cereal (Weetabix (24 pack); Hoops; Squares; Rice pops; shredded wheat)
- Fruit
- Salad vegetables
- Bread
- Spread
- Crackers

Miscellaneous

- Baby wipes
- Nappy sacks
- Suncream