Charging Policy

Statement of intent

We want parents and organisations we interact with to be reassured that we provide good value for money and that the processes we have in place for receiving and paying out money are fair, easy to understand and handled without delay.

Aim

We aim to be open, transparent and competitively priced at all times, and handle all financial transactions in a professional and responsive manner.

Fees – from 1 April 2026 until further notice

Minimum attendance is two full days per week, 51 weeks of the year. No half days.

For 3&4 year olds
All parents qualify to claim 15 hours of 'universal' funding for 38 weeks of the year = 570 hours.

If eligible, parents will also be able to claim 15 hours of 'extended' funding for 38 weeks of the year = a further 570 hours = a total of 1,140 hours.

For children aged 9 months to 3 years old
If eligible, parents will be able to claim 30 hours of funding for 38 weeks of the year = 1,140 hours.

In all cases, we stretch the funding over the number of weeks we are open each year. For the calendar year 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, we are open for 49.4 weeks of the year. This excludes all bank holidays and our Christmas closure which includes Christmas Eve 2026.

This means, for 30 hours funding we can claim 1,140 hours ÷ 49.4 weeks = 23 hours per week. For 15 hours funding we can claim 570 hours ÷ 49.4 weeks = 11.5 hours per week.

Age	Full day (no funding)	Government funded day (10 hours - full or partial)							
		Fully funded day		Partially funded day (**30 hours eligibility = 23 hrs funding per week = day 3 only**)			Partially funded day (**15 hours eligibility = 11.5 hrs funding per week = day 2 only**)		
		10 hrs funded	Food consumables*	3 hrs funded	7 hrs not funded	Food consumables*	1.5 hrs funded	8.5 hrs not funded	Food consumables*
3&4	£80.00	No charge	£16.00	No charge	£56.00	£4.80	No charge	£68.00	£2.40
2	£88.00	No charge	£12.00	No charge	£61.60	£3.60	Not applicable		
Under 2	£88.00	No charge	£8.00	No charge	£61.60	£2.40	Not applicable		

*** Food consumables (this means 'meals and snacks')**

OPT IN: Includes breakfast, mid-morning snack, hot lunch freshly prepared each day by our in-house cook, mid-afternoon snack and afternoon tea. All allergies/intolerances catered for.

OPT OUT: Parents would be provided with full details of what can and cannot be brought into nursery each day. Allergies and intolerances of other children and staff must be considered.

Other consumables	**Cost**
Parents are required to bring in their child's nappies, wipes and cream, and sunscreen when the weather demands.	**Not applicable**
Optional activities/Services	**Cost**
Parents would be advised of the cost of each activity or service, but they do not have to participate. For example, offsite beach trips are optional.	**Typically, £5 - £20 per trip/activity**
Late collection fee	**Cost**
Should a child not be collected by 6pm, a fee may be charged to cover the costs for the two members of staff who need to stay behind.	**£15 for up to 15 minutes late, £30 for 15 to 30 minutes late etc.**
Late payment fee	**Cost**
Fees are expected to be paid by the due date shown on each invoice. A charge of **£10** may be made for frequent late payments.	**£10 for frequent late payments**
Tax Free Childcare	
Parents who are eligible to claim 30 hours funding for 38 weeks of the year for their child, will also be eligible to set up a Tax Free Childcare account with HMRC. This will provide a 20% saving on the above costs, subject to a limit of £2,000 per annum per child. Some parents may be able to claim some of the above costs via Universal Credit.	
Monthly invoices	
Invoices will be sent to parents via the Famly app. Weekly charges and, if applicable, funded hours and food consumables (i.e. meals and snacks) fees will be shown.	

Methods

1. We provide details of our charges when parents are offered a place for their child at **Once upon a time**, or earlier if requested. They are also shown on our website.
2. Receipt of a Registration Form and/or Registration Fee is not a guarantee or confirmation that a place will be available. Parents/carers will receive an email when we are able to offer a place. On payment of the requested Registration Fee a further email will be sent confirming receipt. When registering a child with us, the following terms and conditions apply:
    a) Payment of the £200 Registration Fee guarantees your child's place in accordance with our Offer email.
    b) If we do not receive payment of the Registration Fee by the due date, the Offer will be withdrawn, and the place(s) offered to the next child on our waiting list. Note: we would contact you before doing this.
    c) Taster sessions and completion of paperwork will not be arranged until the Registration Fee has been paid in full.

d) 50% of your Registration Fee will be deducted from your first full month's invoice, and the remaining 50% will be deducted from your final invoice subject to one month's written notice being received and any outstanding fees paid in full.
e) If you change your mind, for whatever reason and with more than four months before your child's start date, and you decide you do not wish for your child to attend this nursery, a full refund of the Registration Fee will be made. However, if you were to cancel within four months of the start date, then no refund will be made.
f) Once the Registration Fee has been paid and you wish to either delay your child's start date or reduce the number of sessions being attended, charges will be incurred. Therefore:
    a. If you delay your child starting, you will be charged from the date we had agreed until your delayed start date.
    b. If you reduce the number of sessions, you will be charged for those sessions for four weeks.
    c. In both of the above situations, we would use 50% of your Registration Fee towards the charge. If this was insufficient to cover the whole charge, an invoice for the remaining amount will be raised. We make these charges to compensate us for lost and irretrievable revenue.
    d. If a sibling joins, a Registration Fee of £100 applies. When the eldest child leaves, their remaining £100 will be transferred to the sibling.
    e. By accepting our Offer, you agree to pay our monthly fees by the due date shown on monthly invoices. This date is usually between the 7th and 9th of each month.
    f. The above Registration Fee does not apply for children attending fully funded places only.

3. Payment of fees guarantees a child's place at the nursery.
4. **Once upon a time** is signed up to receive payments from the Tax-Free Childcare (TFC) scheme via HMRC. TFC payments can be paid via the Famly app to settle invoices. We also accept Childcare Vouchers from several voucher providers – details available on request. We also accept Bacs payments via online banking, or you can pay by cash. If paying by cash, please make sure you receive a receipt as proof of payment. We do not accept cheques.
5. Monthly fees are due by the 10th of each month. If fees are not paid by the last working day of the month in which they are due, a child may be excluded from attending the nursery until those fees are paid in full.
6. Where no government funding applies, meals and snacks are included in our fees. This is not optional.
7. We do not charge for the week we are closed between Christmas and New Year or for Christmas Eve if this falls on a weekday. Nor do we charge for all other standard bank holidays that fall outside of the Christmas closure period.
8. Extra sessions are charged separately to monthly invoices.
9. Four weeks' written notice is required if you wish to change your child's sessions or leave the nursery.
10. If you wish to remove your child from nursery, you must give a minimum of four weeks' written notice.
11. Our fees are reviewed annually, and any changes are made on 1 April. We aim to communicate any changes to our fees to parents at least six weeks in advance. In exceptional circumstances, we may increase fees at other times. Again, we aim to give six weeks' notice.
12. Our insurance and Ofsted registration agreement means that we open at 8am and close at 6pm.
13. No Childcare Voucher or Tax-Free Childcare payments must be made to **Once upon a time** before an invoice has been raised, other than paying for the Registration Fee. If any such payments are made, they will be returned to the Voucher provider/HMRC.
14. No refunds will be given for absence due to illness or holiday as staff levels must be maintained and the child's place kept open.

15. If the nursery is open during bad weather, then no refunds will be given, even if you are unable to get your child to nursery. However, in the rare event of a 'Red' alert being issued by The Met Office, then we will close and a refund will be deducted from the next month's invoice. Details of whether we are open or not will be published on our Facebook page. Norfolk County Council will continue to pay us for funded days.
16. For children attending five full days per week, a 5% discount will apply. The 5% discount will also apply where children from the same family attend for a combined total of five full days or more per week.
17. While we try to ensure all invoicing and payments are correct, it is a parent's responsibility to check their accounts with us regularly and bring to the attention of our Finance Director any discrepancies as soon as possible. Where overpayments are made to the nursery, a refund will be made to either the parent, the child's Tax Free Childcare account or the Childcare Voucher provider.
18. Parents are requested to keep their invoices in a safe place for future reference. If copies of past invoices are required, a small charge may be made.
19. **Once upon a time** is listed with our Local Authority (Norfolk County Council) as an approved provider for government funding and has agreed to meet the conditions of the Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities – April 2024. Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of 'care and education' over 38 weeks of the year. Funding is not intended to cover the cost of meals, snacks, sunscreen, nappies, creams, wipes, trips, additional services or additional hours.
20. All eligible children attending our nursery schools qualify for government funding. We will provide full details at the appropriate time. Please note that **Once upon a time** has agreed to accept this funding on **your** behalf so that your childcare costs are significantly reduced. In doing so, we have agreed to a strict government contract (The 'Local Agreement') that potentially puts our business at financial risk. It also involves a considerable amount of time to administer the funding process – time that we are not paid for.
21. Parents will not be charged a 'top-up' fee to recoup the difference between the amount received from the Local Authority for a funded day and the full day fee. However, there is an 'Opt in' charge for food consumables (this means meals and snacks) provided during the day. Where parents wish to 'Opt out', they should contact the Nursery Manager to discuss what options exist (e.g. allowing them to supply their child's own meals and snacks within guidelines to allow for allergies and intolerances of other children and staff).
22. Parents must obtain their 'Eligibility Code' from the HMRC website: https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/par/app/applynow before the start of the claim period that they wish their child to receive government funding. **Once upon a time** will, in plenty of time, contact parents with details of how to claim any funding they are or may be entitled to. However, it is each parents' responsibility to obtain their eligibility code from HMRC and to re-confirm their eligibility **every three months** as re-confirmation dates are different for every parent. Parents must advise the nursery if they become ineligible for funding. If eligibility is not re-confirmed within the timeframe allowed by HMRC, parents will be charged for any loss of funding.
23. If your child attends a second setting, it is your responsibility to let **Once upon a time** know the details. **Once upon a time** will keep a record of all funded hours claimed so that the number of hours claimed does not exceed the maximum allowed per term/year.
24. The funding entitlement will be delivered consistently so that all children accessing any of the funding entitlements will receive the same quality and access to provision, regardless of whether they opt to pay for food consumables (meals and snacks).
25. We will work with parents to ensure that as far as possible the hours that can be taken as funded are convenient for parents' working hours.
26. Where parents/carers are not satisfied that their child is receiving the entitlement in the correct way (as set out in the 'Funding Agreement' and in Early Education and

Childcare Statutory guidance for local authorities), a complaint can be submitted directly to John Banbury, Director of Finance – see our separate Complaints Policy – or directly to Norfolk County Council Early Years Finance.

27. Each term, we claim funding on behalf of parents/carers direct from Norfolk County Council.
28. A Norfolk County Council funding 'Claim form' must be completed and signed by a parent/carer each term to enable us to claim each child's funding. The nursery will issue these forms at the beginning of each school term. Parents/carers should ensure they are not overclaiming if their child attends more than one setting.
29. Parents/carers will also be asked to confirm on the claim form whether they qualify for certain benefits that may result in the nursery receiving additional funding under the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) scheme.
30. In the event of the nursery being closed by the Government (e.g. national Pandemic), alternative arrangements would be introduced depending on the financial support provided to childcare settings at the time. As an example, during the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic, no fees were charged to parents during the lockdown period as funding continued for all funded children and the Job Retention Scheme helped to pay staff salaries.
31. **Once upon a time** agrees to meet the Operational Guidance for Local Authorities and Providers – April 2024.
32. Any queries with fees or invoicing should be emailed to: john@onceuponatime.org.uk

This policy was adopted by Once upon a time nursery school

Date: **24 April 2007**

Amended on: **1 April 2026**

Signed on behalf of the nursery

To be reviewed: **Annually or sooner if any matters arise**