54. Charges Policy

Mini Adventures – Early Years Preschool

Applies to all private childcare fees, meals and other charges, including arrangements for children accessing funded early education.

Purpose

This policy explains the charges made by Mini Adventures, how fees are calculated and paid, and the arrangements that apply to funded early education places. Our charges are intended to be clear and transparent so that parents and carers understand what they are paying for before entering into a childcare contract.

Our current charges

Childcare: £6.50 per hour.
Two-course home-cooked meal: £3.50 per meal.
Any additional chargeable service or activity will be communicated to parents/carers in advance and will only be charged where permitted by the applicable rules.

Payment of fees

Fees are calculated according to the sessions and services agreed with the parent/carer.
Parents/carers are asked to pay each term's fees in advance, with payment due before the end of the preceding half term. This means that fees should remain paid in advance throughout the child's attendance.
Where possible, payment should be made by BACS/bank transfer.
Cash payments are also accepted.
Mini Adventures does not currently accept card payments.
Parents/carers should use the payment reference requested by the setting so that payments can be correctly allocated.
Parents/carers should contact the manager promptly if they anticipate difficulty paying an invoice. Any agreed payment arrangement will be confirmed by the setting.

Absence and holidays

Private childcare fees are based on the place and sessions reserved for a child rather than on the number of hours actually attended. Therefore, no reduction, refund or credit will normally be given for holidays, sickness, appointments, non-attendance, late arrival or early collection.
Parents/carers remain responsible for the agreed private fees during periods when their child does not attend, including family holidays, subject to any specific contractual arrangements made by Mini Adventures.
This does not override the rules governing government-funded early education. Where a child accesses a funded entitlement, attendance, absence and any funding adjustments will be managed in accordance with the applicable Department for Education and Leicestershire County Council requirements.

Funded early education

Mini Adventures offers funded early education places in accordance with the current Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, Department for Education early education and childcare guidance and Leicestershire County Council funding requirements.
Funded entitlement hours must be accessible to eligible parents/carers free of charge. Mini Adventures will not apply a compulsory top-up fee to funded hours.
Private hours outside a child's funded entitlement may be charged at the setting's published private hourly rate.
Meals and snacks may be charged separately where permitted. A meal charge is not a mandatory condition of accessing funded hours. Parents/carers must be offered an appropriate alternative arrangement if they do not wish to purchase the meal.
Any other chargeable consumables or optional activities connected with funded hours will be clearly explained and must be voluntary where the applicable funding guidance requires this.
Invoices for children receiving funded hours will clearly distinguish funded hours from private paid hours and applicable chargeable extras.
Parents/carers will be given clear information about the setting's funded offer, the hours available, any private hours and any additional charges before agreeing to the arrangement.

Meals

Mini Adventures provides a two-course home-cooked meal at a charge of £3.50. The meal charge covers the meal provided and is separate from the childcare hourly rate.
For children accessing funded early education, parents/carers will be informed that the meal is an additional charge and will have the option of declining the meal and using an appropriate alternative arrangement in accordance with the current funding requirements. A child will not be denied access to their funded hours because their parent/carer does not wish to purchase the meal.

Late payment and outstanding fees

Parents/carers are expected to keep their account up to date and paid in advance.
Where fees become overdue, the setting will contact the parent/carer and request payment.
If an account remains unpaid, Mini Adventures may follow its contractual debt-recovery procedures, which may include agreeing a payment plan or, where necessary and lawful, reviewing the child's privately funded place in accordance with the childcare contract.
Any action taken will distinguish between private contractual fees and a child's statutory funded entitlement. A funded place will not be withdrawn or made conditional on payment of an unlawful charge.

Fee changes

Mini Adventures reserves the right to review and change its fees when necessary.
Parents/carers will receive reasonable advance notice of any change before the new charges take effect. Any changes to funded provision or chargeable extras will also be communicated in accordance with the relevant funding requirements.

Transparency of charges

Our fees and chargeable extras will be communicated clearly to parents/carers through the childcare contract, fee information and invoices. Where required by the funding guidance, chargeable extras will be published and invoices will itemise funded hours, private hours, food and other applicable charges separately.

Relevant legislation and guidance

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026.
Early Education and Childcare: Statutory guidance for local authorities, valid from 1 April 2026.
Leicestershire County Council Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) guidance and charging requirements.
Equality Act 2010.
Consumer Rights Act 2015, where applicable to contractual terms and consumer rights.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, local authority funding requirements or the setting's fee structure changes.