BLACK HORSE HILL
INFANT SCHOOL

FOUNDATION 1

ADMISSION FEES POLICY

8th November 2018

Approved by Committee _____

29th November 2018

Approved by Full Governing Body _____

J Horner

Signed _____**(Chair)**

J Morris

Signed _____**(Headteacher)**

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Fees
3. Eligibility for 15 hours free childcare for three and four year olds
4. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare extended entitlement
5. Eligibility for extended entitlement for children in foster care
6. Payment information
7. Late collection
8. Difficulty with payments
9. Debt collection
10. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection
11. The process for pursuing debts
12. Monitoring and review

Appendices

Appendix 1: Letter to Parents: 30 Hours Free Childcare

Appendix 2: Letter to foster parents: 30 hours free childcare

Statement of intent

Black Horse Hill Infant School aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high quality and geared towards a smooth transition to primary school.

We will work with parents to claim benefit entitlement related to nursery fees such as Working Tax Credits and free childcare entitlement.

This Nursery Fees Policy has been established to provide transparent fee information, set procedures for the payment of fees and create a framework for dealing with non-payment in a swift and fair manner.

Parents should be aware of and given access to this policy and the school's procedures. It will be included on the school's website and made available to view at the school on request.

1 Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- The General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- The Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) Regulations 2016 (as amended)
- DfE (2018) 'Early years entitlements: operational guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'

2 Fees

2.1. Black Horse Hill Infant School will charge a £30.00 deposit for all parents accessing the free entitlements, for both the universal entitlement and the extended entitlement, which will be refunded if the place is taken up. If a parent fails to take up their place, Black Horse Hill Infant School is not obliged to refund the deposit. Parents experiencing problems funding a deposit can speak to the Headteacher to discuss the possibility of waiving the deposit.

2.2. Black Horse Hill Infant School charges parents for care provided outside of the following provision:

- Universal 15 hours free provision a week for all three to four year olds.
- Extended 30 hours free provision a week for three to four year olds, where eligible.
- Extended 30 hours free provision a week for children in foster care.

2.3. The charges are as follows:

- £ 15.00 per additional 3 hour session (£5.00 per hour)
- £ 3.00 for lunch time supervision

Parents will book the required sessions half termly in advance.

2.4. The 30 hours free childcare offer cannot be used to pay for meals, other consumables (such as nappies or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). The school may charge a fee for these additions. If parents choose to pay for these, it is an arrangement between the parent and the school.

2.5. Parents will not be required to pay any fee as a condition of taking up a '30 hours' place.

3 Eligibility for 15 hours free childcare for three and four year olds

3.1. All children in England receive 570 hours free childcare per year.

3.2. These hours are usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year, but parents may choose to take fewer hours over more weeks.

3.3. '15 hours' free childcare is available from the term following a child's third birthday.

3.4. The school may ask parents to complete a form to help us ensure they receive their free childcare hours.

4 Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare extended entitlement

4.1. Parents of three and four year olds must meet the eligibility criteria below to be eligible for the extended 30 hours free childcare:

- The parent of the child (and their partner where applicable) is seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage – this funding limit does not apply if a parent is self-employed and started their business less than 12 months ago.

4.2. Where one or both parents are in receipt of benefits in connection with sickness or parenting, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

4.3. Where one parent (in a couple household) is in receipt or could be entitled to be in receipt of specific benefits related to caring, incapacity for work or limited capability for work, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

4.4. Parents are not eligible if:

- The child does not live with them.
- The parent or their partner has a taxable income over £100,000.
- The parent is from outside the EEA and their UK residence card says they cannot access public funds.

4.5. Parents will check their eligibility for the scheme by using the government's Childcare Choices website or the Childcare Calculator. If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

4.6. Eligible parents will provide the school with their unique eligibility code, National Insurance number and child's date of birth, along with their written consent, to enable the school to verify eligibility and receive future notifications from the LA on the continued validity of the code – parents are

encouraged to do this as soon as possible, as they can only start their 30-hours free childcare the term after receiving a decision from HMRC.

4.7. The school will retain paper copies of documentation to enable the LA to undertake audits and fraud investigations; however, as per the Data Protection Act 2018, it will be stored securely and deleted when there is no longer any good reason to keep the data.

4.8. If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' of four weeks – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a period of four weeks.

4.9. A child who becomes ineligible during the first half of a funding block will be funded until the end of that following funding block or for as long as they remain under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.

4.10. Consideration to extend the grace period will be taken in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if a parent has been forced to leave their home and paid employment.

4.11. A child will not be able to take up their 30 hours free childcare place if their parents fall into their grace period before the child has started at the school.

4.12. 30 hours free childcare can be claimed at the same time as claiming Universal Credit, tax credits, childcare vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare.

5 Eligibility for extended entitlement for children in foster care

5.1 A child in foster care is entitled to an additional 15 hours childcare per week (30 hours free childcare per week total) provided that the child is aged three, but below the compulsory school age, and the criteria below are met:

- Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision making; and
- In single foster parent families, the foster parent holds additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.
- In two foster parent families, both partners hold additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.

5.2 To receive their free childcare allowance, foster parents must apply directly to the LA by completing the LA's eligibility form. The school can provide this form on request.

5.3 Foster parents are required by the LA to reconfirm their eligibility every three months.

6 Payment information

6.1 Payments should be made half termly in advance for all non-statutory sessions and lunchtime supervision, which parents have booked for their child.

6.2 Payments will be made by cheque or cash at the school office. Cheques will be made payable to Wirral Borough Council.

6.3 If a parent issues a cheque that cannot be cashed, a £10 fine will be issued and all future payments must be made in cash.

6.4 Online payment direct into the school's bank account is also permissible. To obtain the details and discuss the procedure, contact Mrs Harris in the school office.

6.5 Payment is required when a child is on holiday or absent due to illness as the nursery must hold the child's place during this period.

6.6 If a child is absent for a long period due to illness, the nursery will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. The nursery's decision is final.

6.7 Late payments will incur a £10 fine for each week payments are overdue. Parents can avoid this by ensuring the timely payment of fees.

6.8 One month's notice and payment will be required to withdraw your child from the nursery.

7 Late collection

7.1 Staffing ratios must be maintained at all times. If a child is collected late, this can lead to staff needing to stay beyond the end of their shift. This incurs a cost which will be passed on to the parents at £5.00 for the first 15 minutes and a further £1 for each subsequent 5-minute period.

8 Difficulty with payments

8.1 Black Horse Hill Infant School will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored.

8.2 Parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care and education as possible. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties should contact Mrs Morris, the Headteacher, as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

9 Debt collection

9.1 The governing board has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled, including nursery fees.

9.2 The governing board will not write off any debt which exceeds £500.00.

9.3 A full record will be kept of debts owed to the school for seven years. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices.

9.4 The school will not initiate legal action to recover debts. However, we will refer uncollected debts to the LA to consider such action.

10 Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

10.1 The Headteacher and Secretary will ensure that:

- Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and those records maintained.
- Evidence of the steps taken by the school in pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both letters and phone calls.
- A final reminder is sent by recorded delivery to the debtor.
- The privacy of the family involved will be respected and only made known to those who need to know.
- The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time.

10.2 The governing board:

- Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery.
- At its discretion, will refer uncollected debts to the LA for consideration for legal action.
- Will record all approved action in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
- Will adhere to the privacy arrangements.
- May delegate its responsibilities under this policy to Mrs Morris, the Headteacher.

11 The process for pursuing debts

11.1 Informal reminder – Within two days of late payment, the debtor will be informally reminded in person or by telephone that they owe money to the school.

11.2 First reminder letter – If the debt is yet to be paid one week after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor.

11.3 Second reminder letter - If the debt is yet to be paid one week after a first formal reminder, a second formal letter will be sent to the debtor. These letters allow the debtor every opportunity to settle their debt and ensure the school can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further.

11.4 Final reminder letter - If no response is received following the second reminder, the school will send a letter to the debtor advising them that they will be referring the matter to the LA to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to respond.

11.5 Possible legal action – If no payment is made, and the governing board decides to escalate the matter to the LA, the LA will decide whether to take legal action against the debtor.

12 Monitoring and review

12.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Headteacher and in conjunction with the governing board.

12.2 The next scheduled review date is September 2019.

Appendix 1

Letter to Parents: 30 Hours Free Childcare

Address line one
Address line two
City/town
Postcode
Date

30 hours extended early years entitlement for eligible three- and four-year-olds

Dear parents,

I'm writing to inform you that you may be eligible for 30 hours free childcare per week, extended from the extended from the universal 15 hours available to all parents.

To be eligible, parents need to meet one or more of the eligibility criteria listed below:

1. They (and their partner where applicable) are seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.

2. Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at the National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage – this funding limit does not apply if a parent is self-employed and started their business less than 12 months ago.

Where one or both parents are in receipt of benefits in connection with sickness or parenting, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

Where one parent (in a couple household) is in receipt or could be entitled to be in receipt of specific benefits related to caring, incapacity for work or limited capability for work, they are treated as though they are in paid work.

Parents are not eligible if:

1.The child does not live with them.

2.They or their partner has a taxable income over £100,000.

3.They are from outside the EEA and their UK residence card says they cannot access public funds.

Claiming your 30 hours free childcare

You can check your eligibility by using the government's Childcare Choices website or the Childcare Calculator. If you are eligible, you will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply and receive your unique eligibility code.

We will need this code, together with your National Insurance Number and child's date of birth, to enable us to verify your eligibility with the DfE's Eligibility Checking System.

Please complete and return the below cut-off slip to the school office by the end of the Summer term, indicating whether you consent to your data being used in this way and, if consent is given, providing the requisite information.

Yours faithfully,

✂……

Full name:	
I consent to my personal data being used for the DfE's Eligibility Checking Service.	Yes ☐ No ☐

If you indicated 'Yes' above, please provide us with the below information.

Unique eligibility code:	
National Insurance Number:	
Child's date of birth	

Appendix 2

Letter to foster parents: 30 hours free childcare

Address line one
Address line two
City/town
Postcode

Date

30 hours extended early years entitlement for children in foster care,

Dear parents and carers,

From September 2018, a child in foster care is entitled to an additional 15 hours free childcare per week (30 hours free childcare peer week total) provided that the child is aged three, but below the compulsory school age, and the criteria below are met:

- Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision making; and
- In single foster parent families, the foster parent holds additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster carer.
- In two foster parent families, both partners hold additional paid employment outside of their role as a foster parent.

To receive their free childcare allowance, foster parents must apply directly to the LA by completing the LA's eligibility form. The school can provide this form on request.

If you believe you are entitled to 30 hours free childcare for a child in your care, please get in touch with the **Secretary** via **email** or by calling **625 5238** to discuss the matter further and receive your form.

Yours faithfully,