



## Fees policy and procedure

### Policy

Fees are a key source of funding for Deganwy Playgroup, and are essential for us to fulfil purpose. Our policy is:

- to charge and collect fees in a fair way across all families, following a consistent procedure;
- where families fail to pay fees on time, to notify them and offer to discuss a schedule of payments to cover all outstanding fees;
- where a family fails to pay fees on time and does not agree a schedule with us as above or fails to follow the agreed schedule, to withdraw our services from that family until all debts are settled;
- where a family is struggling to pay our fees, to support that family in finding other sources of funding; and
- failing the above, where a family can demonstrate financial hardship, to offer discounted fees, subject to sufficient funding being available, as determined by Deganwy Playgroup's board of trustees at the time.

### Procedure

#### Payment of fees

Fees must be paid electronically, before the start of each week (or earlier).

Families must give us two weeks' notice when terminating a child's place. The fees for this notice period will be due as usual, whether or not the child continues to take the place.

To secure a future place (or additional or longer sessions), a family must pay a deposit of two weeks' fees. This deposit is non-returnable and will be offset against the family's fees once the child has taken up the place.

## Unpaid fees

We will check that fees have been paid each week. Where they haven't been paid, we will notify the family by email if possible, or another way if necessary. Where a family is notified of unpaid fees, we expect the balance to be settled before the next week of playgroup begins, along with the payment in advance for that week.

Where a family either:

1. has two weeks' worth of outstanding fees; or
2. has any amount of fees still outstanding at the end of a term or half term,

we will notify that family that their place(s) at Deganwy Playgroup will be withdrawn unless all outstanding fees are settled within the next seven days, or a suitable alternative schedule of payments is agreed with Deganwy Playgroup.

If the outstanding fees are not settled within seven days, and no alternative schedule is agreed, that family's place(s) will be withdrawn from the start of the first Monday following the end of the seven-day period.

In cases where a family persistently falls behind with fee payments, the board of trustees may decide that that family's place(s) should be withdrawn. In this case, the family will be notified that their place(s) will be withdrawn unless:

1. all outstanding fees are settled within the next seven days; and
2. fees for all future weeks are paid in advance.

## Families in financial hardship

Where the family of a child at Playgroup tells us that they are struggling to pay our fees, we will follow the steps below.

1. Initially, offer a meeting to discuss sources of funding and support for the family.
2. Where a family can show that they have made reasonable efforts to get alternative funding, but those sources are insufficient, we will offer a further meeting to discuss how we can support the family directly.
3. Where the family can evidence financial hardship, we will use this meeting to discuss an application for reduced Playgroup fees.
4. The application will be put to the board of trustees, who will make a decision according to whether we have enough funding at the time. If the board is satisfied by the application and enough funding is available, we will offer a 50% discount on our fees (we may offer more in exceptional circumstances). Since our funding is limited, we will offer this discount on a first come first served basis.
5. We will aim to notify the family of the board's decision within two weeks of the application.

If the family can't afford our fees whilst we work through these steps, we will hold their place(s) at Playgroup.

Where we grant a discount on our fees, a new application will need to be made by the family for each half term.

### Children with additional needs

We aim to support all children according to their needs. Where a child has additional needs that mean we need a higher staff ratio, we may need to charge higher fees to cover the cost of the additional staffing. Where we think this is the case, we will give reasonable notice to the family, and we will make clear how the higher fees relate to our additional costs.

We will support the family in finding funding that may be available to cover the additional costs. For families who are in financial hardship, in line with the previous section of this procedure, we may offer to waive or reduce the additional fees for a fixed period, to give the family a chance to put other funding in place. This period will usually be a half term.

### Fee reviews

We will review our fees (at least) once a year. We will always avoid changing fees within an academic year wherever possible. We aim to give at least three months' notice to families before any changes come into force.

This **fees** policy and procedure was passed for use in Deganwy Playgroup

By: The Deganwy Playgroup Board of Trustees, at the meeting held on 30/1/23

Date of planned review: Annually