

# Innsworth Preschool Fees, Funding, and Charges Policy

## Last Updated: 1st January 2026

### 1. Purpose and Scope

**1.1 Overview:** This policy sets out Innsworth Preschool's transparent terms and procedures for all fees, government funding, meal services, optional enhancements, and invoicing.

**1.2 Compliance Statement:** We are committed to full compliance with the Department for Education's funding rules.

- **Funded Hours:** Government-funded early education hours are provided **free of charge** at the point of delivery.
- **Optional Extras:** Meals, consumables, and additional services are entirely optional for funded hours.
- **Safety Standards:** While purchasing optional services is voluntary, adherence to our safety and safeguarding rules (including allergen controls and required equipment) applies to everyone. Parents who opt out of setting-provided services must meet these safety standards to ensure the welfare of their child and the setting.

### 2. Legal and Statutory Framework

**2.1 Compliance:** This policy is guided by our duties under:

- Childcare Act 2006: Sections 6–7 on funded provision.
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Free Early Education and Childcare: DfE Statutory Guidance.
- Equality Act 2010: Preventing discrimination and ensuring equal treatment.
- Consumer Rights Act 2015: Ensuring terms are fair and transparent.

### 3. Fee Structure and Categories

To ensure clarity, we distinguish between three separate categories of charge:

1. **Funded Entitlement Hours:** Zero charge for education and care.
2. **Private Hours:** Paid hours (all-inclusive of standard consumables).
3. **Optional Services:** Meals and Enhancements during funded hours (voluntary).

### 4. Annual Places and Trial Period

**4.1 Annual Basis:** Places are offered for one academic year only (September to August).

**4.2 Probationary Period:** Every place is subject to a **4-Week Probationary Trial Period** (aligned with the Parent-Provider Agreement).

- **Notice:** During this time, either party may terminate with **one week's written notice**.
- **Funding Interaction:** Funding is claimed only for attendance actually delivered. If a child leaves mid-term and the Local Authority reclaims funding, the parent is liable for any attendance not covered by the funding claim, charged at the standard hourly rate.

## 5. Standard Fees (Private Hours)

### 5.1 Rates (from September 2025):

- **Hourly rate:** £6.00
- **Morning or afternoon session (5 hours):** £30.00
- **Full day (10 hours):** £60.00

**5.2 All-Inclusive (Private Hours Only):** For privately paid hours, the rate is **all-inclusive**. It covers all meals, snacks, and daily consumables (including reasonable use of nappies/wipes).

- **Excessive Use:** If usage of consumables is significantly above age-expected norms, a surcharge may apply to cover these specific costs (unless linked to a documented disability/IHCP).

**5.3 Deposits:** A deposit of £100 (new families) or £50 (returning) is payable to secure a place.

- **Funded-Only Places:** The deposit is not a barrier to accessing free entitlement. For families accessing **only** government-funded hours, the deposit will be fully refunded or credited by the **end of the first half-term** of attendance.
- **Private Places:** For private places, the deposit is held as security against notice periods and final balances and is non-refundable if the place is not taken up.

## 6. Government Funding Entitlements

**6.1 Free at Point of Delivery:** Government funding covers the cost of care and education only. It does not cover meals, consumables, or additional services. We deliver the funded entitlement completely free of charge.

### 6.2 Entitlements:

- **Eligibility:** Parents must provide valid eligibility codes/confirmations before the Local Authority headcount deadline.
- **Deadlines:** Codes presented after the deadline cannot be processed for that term, and standard fees will apply.
- **Invoicing:** Invoices will clearly show funded hours with a charge of £0.00.

## 7. Meal Service (Funded Hours)

**7.1 Optional Service:** During funded hours, the "Full Nourishment Plan" (meals and snacks) is optional.

- **Charge: £4.00 per meal.** This is a service charge for the provision of food and the associated costs of preparation and service.
- **Booking:** Charges are non-refundable as food is ordered in advance, except for certified illness lasting more than 5 days.

**7.2 Opting Out (Safety Requirements):** Parents who opt out must provide their own food. To manage safety risks (allergies, choking, hygiene), strict standards apply:

- **Storage:** We do not have refrigeration or storage space for bags. Food must be provided in a **named insulated bag with a frozen ice pack**.
- **Allergens:** We operate a restricted list (currently: **No Nuts, Peanuts, or Sesame**). "May contain" products regarding these allergens are treated as unsafe.

- **Inspection:** All packed lunches are subject to a physical inspection at drop-off.

**7.3 Emergency Meal Provision (Welfare Measure):** If a packed lunch is unsafe (e.g., contains allergens, poses a choking risk, or is at an unsafe temperature due to missing ice packs), we will act to protect the child.

- **Provision:** If the parent cannot provide a compliant replacement immediately, we will provide a safe meal from our kitchen.
- **Charge:** This is a welfare intervention. The parent will be charged **£4.00 per occurrence** (the standard meal rate) to cover the cost of the replacement meal.

## 8. Enhancements (Funded Hours)

**8.1 Optional Service:** The "Educational Enhancement Package" (Farm School, consumables, kit service) is optional.

- **Charge: £3.00 per day.**

**8.2 Opting Out (Parental Supply):** Parents who opt out must provide all necessary items to ensure their child's safety, hygiene, and access to the curriculum. You must provide:

- **Daily:** Nappies, wipes, barrier cream, tissues.
- **Farm Access:** Heavy-duty waterproof dungarees and rigger gloves (every session).
- **Seasonal:** Sun cream (sealed/in-date), sun hat, waterproofs, wellies.

**8.3 Escalation for Missing Items:** To ensure safety and operational stability, if essential items are missing:

- **Step 1 (Emergency Hire):** If a child arrives without the required safety PPE (dungarees/gloves) for a Farm Session, we may provide emergency kit if available. A hire charge of **£5.00 per session** will be applied to cover laundering and wear.
- **Step 2 (Non-Admission to Activity):** If no kit is available or the parent refuses the charge, the child will be unable to access the Farm activity for that session.
- **Step 3 (Welfare Supplies):** If essential care items (e.g., nappies/sun cream) are missing, we will use setting stock to safeguard the child. A surcharge will be applied to the invoice to cover these costs.

## 9. Late Collection and Non-Payment

**9.1 Late Collection Charge:** If a child is not collected by the session end time, a charge is applied to cover the specific costs of two staff members remaining on site.

- **Charge: £15.00 per 15-minute block** (or part thereof).
- **Discretion:** The Manager may waive this charge for exceptional, documented emergencies (e.g., severe road closures).

## 9.2 Late Payment & Debt Recovery:

- **Due Date:** Fees are payable by the 7th of the month.
- **Late Fee:** A **£30.00 administrative charge** is added to invoices unpaid after 7 days to cover credit control costs.

- **Debt Recovery:** If fees remain outstanding and are passed to a third-party debt collection agency, the parent agrees to be liable for **all associated collection agency fees and legal costs** incurred.

### 9.3 "No Pay, No Stay" (Suspension):

- **Process:** If fees remain unpaid **7 days** after the due date, we will contact you.
- **Suspension:** If no plan is agreed, the place (specifically private hours and optional services) may be suspended.
- **Termination:** If the balance remains uncleared after **14 days** of suspension, the place will be formally terminated.

## 10. Monitoring and Review

**10.1 Review:** This policy is reviewed annually. Parents will be given **at least one full calendar month's written notice** of any fee changes.

