



Cygnets' Childcare

Fees and Funding Policy

Cygnets operates a service which is fair and competitively priced. We offer a high-quality service, in a safe and stimulating environment where the needs of individual children are met.

Fees are payable at the rates set by the committee, and these are reviewed at least annually. We aim to set fees at a level which make Cygnets' services accessible to all whilst providing quality childcare services and early years education. Any change in fees payable will be notified in writing to parents/carers (members) at least two weeks before that change takes effect. Notice shall be by letter or newsletter and on Cygnets' noticeboard.

Rates - effective 1st April 2024

Rates for School Age Children (YR - Y6)

- Before School Club - £6.50 per session
- After School Club pick up by 17:00 - £10.50 per session
- A surcharge of £1 per wraparound session is added for 'one-off' bookings
- Registration fee: £10 (applies when child first enters Cygnets)
- Consumables charge (mandatory) - £2.50 per week

Charges and Funding Information for 2-4-year-olds

Government Funding (childcare support) for 2-year-olds:

Eligible working parents of 2-year-olds can access 15 hours of childcare support for 38 weeks of the year. Some parents of 2-year-old children may also be entitled to 15 hours childcare support, if they receive some additional forms of government support. If you are eligible for both the working entitlement and the 15 hours for families receiving support, you cannot take up both offers, and should apply for the 15 hours for families receiving support.

Government Funding (childcare support) for 3- and 4-year-olds:

All 3- and 4-year-olds are entitled to receive the universal offer of 15 hours government funded early education per week, for 38 weeks of the year. Eligible working parents/carers of children aged 3 - 4 can get an additional 15 hours of funding, bringing the total number of hours up to 30 hours a week for 38 weeks per year.

When can I use funded hours?

Cygnets offer funded hours during school term time, between the hours of 09:10 - 15:10 - a maximum of 6 hours per day.

When will I receive funding?

Eligible 2-year-olds receive funding from the beginning of the term after their second birthday and all 3- & 4-year-olds are entitled to receive funding from the beginning of the term after their third birthday - please refer to the table below:

A child whose birthday is between:	Is eligible for a funded place from:
1 January to 31 March	April (Summer Term)
1 April to 31 August	September (Autumn Term)
1 September - 31 December	January (Spring Term)

A child who already has an eligibility code (funded from 9 months) but has missed that term's headcount when they start at Cygnets, will only be able to access their funding from the first full term after they start. There is an exception to this, if a child starts mid-term and has not previously claimed at another setting in Suffolk, then providing we are within Suffolk's submission timeframe, Cygnets can claim for the number of weeks actually attended.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

If you are in receipt of certain benefits, Cygnets could be eligible for a small amount of extra funding to help support your child. Eligibility is determined when your funding claim is submitted to Suffolk County Council and Cygnets are notified of any additional entitlement which is directly related to the number of hours you claim each term. We will discuss with you, the best way to use this funding to enhance your child's education and care.

Disability Access Fund

An annual claim for Disability Access funding is available for **children** (not the parents/carers) in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. This helps Cygnets provide additional support and specialist resources for children with Special Educational Needs & Disability. We will discuss the best way of using this funding to support your child with parents/carers.

Rates for Pre-school Children where hours/sessions are not Government Funded

- Before School Club - £6.50 per session
- Pre-school sessions £17.40 per session (3 hours from 09:10 or 12:10)
£34.80 daily session (6 hours from 09:10 - 15:10)
- After School Club pick up by 17:00 - £10.50 per session
- A surcharge of £1 per wraparound session is added for a 'one-off' booking
- Registration fee: £10 (charged when child first enters Cygnets if not eligible for government funding)
- Consumables charge (mandatory) - £2.50 per week

Where a child's hours of attendance at Cygnets exceeds their number of claimed funded hours, the additional hours between 09:10 and 15:10 will be invoiced at £5.80 per hour. Any wraparound care will also be invoiced directly to you at the rates shown above.

Useful Information:

- For further information about the funding offers available, please visit [Homepage | Childcare Choices](#)
- You can check your eligibility for funding by using the link: [Check what help you could get with childcare costs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- To find out how and when you must apply, follow this link: [Childcare entitlements- frequently asked questions for parents \(1\).docx - Google Docs \(childcarechoices.gov.uk\)](#)

Eligibility Codes

You will receive an eligibility code for funding entitlements other than the universal offer (a code has 11 digits beginning with 5), which must be presented to Cygnets by the end of the term before that in which you wish to start claiming those funded hours. You must consent to Cygnets validating the code through Suffolk County Council's portal. If we cannot validate a code before the funding submission deadline, we will be unable to provide those hours. If you still want your child to access those hours, they will be charged as non-funded hours and invoiced directly to the parent/carer. 3- and 4-year-olds will continue to be able to access the universal 15 hours. Parents/carers are required by HMRC to reconfirm their eligibility every three months, and it is their responsibility to do so. Failure to reconfirm your eligibility may result in you losing your funded entitlement and/or having to pay for those hours.

What happens if I am no longer eligible?

If your circumstances change and your child is no longer entitled to receive their funding, then a short 'Grace Period' will apply. A child will enter the 'Grace Period' when the child's parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria or fail to reconfirm their eligibility code. In this case, 3- and 4-year-olds may only access the universal 15 hours. You can retain your funded 15 hours (in addition to universal hours if applicable); however, these sessions will be charged for at Cygnets' normal rates and fees are payable direct to Cygnets.

Parent Authorisation Forms and Identification

All government funding is claimed termly and settings in Suffolk must submit their claim by the deadline set by Suffolk County Council. Parents/carers must correctly complete and sign a Parent Authorisation Form to confirm their claim for the term. When we make the first claim for a child we will require sight of their original passport, birth certificate or European ID card prior to submitting your claim. This documentation must be received no later than Headcount Week each term (usually the second week of term). You will be notified of that date when issued with your funding form. Failure to return the correct documentation and any identification by the required date, will result in the parent/carer having to pay for their required sessions or the child being withdrawn for those sessions.

Can I increase my claim mid-term?

Once you have claimed your required number of funded hours for the term, this cannot be increased. Should you wish to increase the number of hours your child attends before

the next claim date, you can do so but Cygnets will invoice you for the additional hours and payment is made direct to Cygnets.

Can I share my funding entitlement with Cygnets and another setting?

Government funded hours may be shared between two or more childcare sites in one day, providing the total number of hours between the sites does not exceed those to which you are entitled. You should ask your other setting to contact us as soon as possible.

Any additional services or sessions are chargeable at the following rates and the fees are payable direct to Cygnets.

- Before School Club - £6.50 per session
- Pre-school sessions £17.40 per session (3 hours from 09:10 or 12:10)
£34.80 daily session (6 hours from 09:10 - 15:30)
- After School Club pick up by 17:00 - £10.50 per session
- Registration fee: £10 (voluntary for children in receipt of funding)
- A surcharge of £1 per wraparound session is added for a 'one-off' booking
- **VOLUNTARY** Snack contribution - £2.50 per week

GENERAL

Invoicing

Fees will be invoiced half-termly in advance. Payment is due within 14 days of the date of the invoice. If you experience any difficulty in paying your fees, you should in the first instance speak to the Manager (Carolyn Stokes) to discuss an alternative way of paying your fees.

Consumable Charge

If your child receives government funding, a voluntary consumable charge of £2.50 per week, per child, will be requested each half-term by invoice. We urge you to pay this voluntary charge - it goes towards providing a healthy carbohydrate snack and fresh fruit/vegetables and milk/water. We purchase consumables weekly to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of your children and their interests.

The consumable charge is mandatory for non-funded children.

Payment

Payment can be made by cash or cheque, from your Tax-Free Childcare account or direct into our bank account. Childcare Vouchers (providing we have an existing account with your provider, will continue to be accepted until they are withdrawn by Government). Cheques should be made payable to Cygnets Childcare. Our bank account details for those wishing to pay online are below. Please ensure you put your child's name as a reference for the payment.

Co-operative Bank	Account No.	Sort Code	Account Name
	67219614	08-92-99	Cygnets Whelnetham

Outstanding Fees

If parents have any difficulty in paying their fees, it is essential they tell us straight away. When parents are in genuine financial difficulties, we will endeavour to be as flexible as possible and to mutually agree a payment plan to clear the outstanding fees. All such matters will be confidential.

- 7 working days after the due date, parents will receive an informal written reminder that fees are outstanding.
- If after a further 5 working days, fees remain outstanding, they will receive a formal written reminder and an additional charge of 5% of the outstanding amount will be added to the bill.
- Where the fees continue to be unpaid, we may regrettably withdraw your child's place from any sessions for which we make a charge and that child will only be able to access any claimed free sessions which are government-funded, if applicable.
- In extreme cases we may make an application to the Small Claims Court to recover our losses.

Notice

We plan our staffing levels in advance and so to operate effectively we need notice of any changes to the number of children attending each session. Therefore, we require 6 weeks written notice of a child leaving Cygnets or reducing their sessions, otherwise fees (at the full rate, regardless of whether your child attends those sessions) will be charged in lieu of notice.

Refunds

Fees are still payable if children are ill or absent, unless you have given us one week's written notice of the cancellation of a session. Where we have been advised of an absence, fees will be charged at a rate of 50%. If your child will be absent for an extended period, please speak to the Manager. In the event of closure due to circumstances beyond our control, e.g., severe weather or power failure, there is a NO refund policy.

Booking Pre-school Sessions

Parents are required to book their child's sessions termly in advance. To retain these sessions, fees are payable unless government funding has been claimed.

Booking Out of School Care Sessions

Parents are required to book their child's sessions half-termly in advance to guarantee their place and fees will be invoiced and payable half-termly in advance (see invoicing).

If for any reason, the child does not attend a session and we have not received the required one week's notice, fees will remain payable in full.

Where a session has been booked on an unsecured/'one-off' basis, the fee will be invoiced retrospectively plus a surcharge of £1 per session, and normal payment terms apply.

Availability of session places cannot be guaranteed unless booked and paid for half-termly in advance.

PLEASE NOTE: Sessions cannot be swapped. Where a different session is required to that booked, it will be viewed as an additional session being required and invoiced at the current rate, regardless of whether the child attends the session that is booked.

Late Collection Fees

A charge of £1 per minute will be made for each minute a child remains in Cygnets care after their allotted collection time. An invoice will be issued which will be subject to normal payment terms.

Persistent late collection of a child will result in the withdrawal of your child's place from chargeable sessions at the discretion of the Management Committee.

If a child has not been collected within 30 minutes of a session closing and we have been unable to make contact with the child's parents or nominated emergency contacts, our Uncollected Child Policy will be implemented, and our Safeguarding procedures followed.

Support with Childcare Costs

There is a range of childcare support available from the government including Universal Credit and Tax-free Childcare, along with the funding offers for children under 5. Information can be found at: [Homepage | Childcare Choices](#)

If you have any queries or concerns about your invoice or our charges, please speak to Carolyn. Please be assured that any conversation relating to financial matters will be treated with the strictest confidence.

This policy was adopted on 1 September 2024

Signed on behalf of Cygnets (Whelnetham):

Lizzie Ward (Chair) _____

Date of next Review: September 2025

Cygnets is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects everyone to share this commitment and responsibility.