



Funded Childcare Policy

1. Policy Purpose

Purple Willows is committed to ensuring that all eligible children can access high-quality early education in line with government guidance. This policy explains how funded childcare is delivered across our nurseries, the funding entitlements available, how families can apply, and how additional charges are managed transparently and fairly.

This policy should be read alongside our Fee Information and Parent Contract.

2. What Parents Can Expect

Parents can expect that Purple Willows will:

- Provide clear, accurate, and accessible information about funded childcare
- Deliver funded hours fairly and transparently
- Ensure that access to funded childcare is not conditional on purchasing additional items or services
- Apply funding consistently in line with Department for Education and local authority guidance
- Support families to understand their entitlements and discuss individual circumstances where needed

3. Funded Childcare Entitlements

Purple Willows offers funded childcare places in accordance with Department for Education statutory guidance and the requirements of the relevant local authority.

The funded childcare entitlements available depend on a child's age and family circumstances and are outlined below.

4. Disadvantaged 2-Year-Old Funding

Some 2-year-old children may be eligible for up to 15 hours of funded early education per week for 38 weeks per year, subject to eligibility criteria set by the local authority.

Where delivered on a stretched basis across 51 weeks, this entitlement equates to approximately 11.2 hours per week, totalling 570 hours per year.

Eligibility is determined by the local authority. Parents must provide confirmation of eligibility to the nursery before funded hours can be accessed.

5. Working Parents Entitlement

(Children Aged 9 Months to 2 Years)

Eligible working parents may access up to 15 hours of funded childcare per week for children aged from 9 months, starting from the term after the child becomes eligible.

This entitlement is provided for 38 weeks per year and may be stretched across 51 weeks, equating to approximately 11.2 hours per week or 570 hours per year.

Eligibility must be confirmed through HMRC, and parents are responsible for maintaining and reconfirming their eligibility.

6. Universal 15 Hours for 3- and 4-Year-Olds

All 3- and 4-year-old children are entitled to 15 hours of funded early education per week for 38 weeks per year, totalling 570 hours annually.

When delivered on a stretched basis across 51 weeks, this equates to approximately 11.2 hours per week. The entitlement begins from the term following the child's third birthday and continues until statutory school age.

7. Extended Entitlement (30 Hours) for 3- and 4-Year-Olds

Eligible working families may access up to 30 hours of funded childcare per week for 38 weeks per year, totalling 1,140 hours annually.

Where stretched across 51 weeks, this equates to approximately 22.3 hours per week. This entitlement is available from the term after the child's third birthday, subject to eligibility.

Parents must reconfirm eligibility with HMRC every three months. Failure to reconfirm may result in the loss of the extended entitlement.

If a child becomes eligible part-way through the academic year, funded hours may be adjusted to reflect term lengths.

8. Applying for Funded Childcare

Parents must apply for funded childcare through www.childcarechoices.gov.uk, where eligibility is assessed by HMRC.

Once approved, parents will receive an 11-digit eligibility code, which must be provided to the nursery before funded hours can be accessed.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that eligibility is kept up to date and reconfirmed at the required intervals.

9. Information Required by the Nursery

To process funded childcare, Purple Willows requires the following information:

- A valid eligibility code (where applicable)

- A completed and signed Parent Contract
- Parent National Insurance or NASS number
- Parent date of birth
- Child's full name and date of birth
- A copy of the child's birth certificate

Eligibility will be verified through the relevant local authority system.

10. Delivery of Funded Childcare at Purple Willows

Purple Willows operates for 51 weeks of the year, closing during the Christmas period and for one additional week annually to support staff training and professional development.

Funded hours are delivered on a stretched basis across the nursery's operational weeks to support families who require year-round childcare.

11. Session Availability

Funded childcare sessions are allocated in line with staffing ratios, occupancy levels, and operational capacity. Session availability applies equally across all booking types and will be confirmed at the point of registration.

Half-day attendance options under the 30-hour entitlement are limited and offered subject to availability.

12. Essentials & Extras

Government funding contributes towards the early education element of childcare only. It does not include:

- Meals and refreshments
- Nappies, wipes, sun protection, and other consumables
- Learning resources and enrichment activities

- Childcare provided beyond a child's funded entitlement

13. Essentials & Extras Contribution

Where government funding is accessed, Purple Willows offers an Essentials & Extras contribution in relation to items not covered by funding, including meals, consumables, learning resources, and enrichment activities.

This contribution is offered on a voluntary basis and is not a condition of accessing funded childcare hours. Charges are itemised transparently within the nursery's Fee Information.

Families who wish to discuss individual arrangements are encouraged to speak with a member of the management team in confidence.

14. Food Provision

For health, safety, and allergen-management reasons, Purple Willows provides all meals and refreshments consumed during the nursery day.

Outside food is not permitted unless agreed in advance to meet specific medical or dietary needs.

15. Inclusivity

Purple Willows is committed to inclusivity and equal access. No child will be excluded from nursery activities, trips, or enrichment opportunities due to funding arrangements.

Families may access funded childcare without purchasing additional items. Individual circumstances can be discussed in line with this policy and our Funding Terms & Conditions.

16. Registration Fees and Deposits

- Registration fees are not applied to funded-only places unless additional private hours are booked.
- A deposit of up to one week's fees may be required to secure a place and is refundable in line with nursery terms.
- Children accessing disadvantaged 2-year-old funding are exempt from registration fees and deposits.

17. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed regularly and may be updated in line with changes to government guidance or local authority requirements. Families will be notified of any material changes in writing, at least one term in advance where applicable.