Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) Policy for Pre-School

Introduction:

This policy outlines how Springfield Bees Pre-School provides the Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) for eligible 2, 3, and 4-year-olds, in accordance with Essex County Council guidelines. The FEEE offers families the opportunity to access high-quality early education and childcare.

Eligibility:

- **2-year-old Funding**: Some 2-year-olds may be eligible for up to **15 hours** of funded early education starting from the term after a child turns 2**,** if their families meet certain income-related criteria or other specific conditions (such as the child having special educational needs or being looked after by the local authority).

- **3- and 4-year-old Universal Entitlement**: All children are entitled to **15 hours** per week of free early education starting from the term after their third birthday. This provides up to **570 hours** per year of funded education over a minimum of 38 weeks.

- **2, 3- and 4-year-old Working Parent Extended Entitlement (30 hours) (expanding to 2-year-olds from September 2025)**: Families who meet the eligibility criteria (working parents earning the equivalent of at least 16 hours per week at the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage and less than £100,000 per year) may be entitled to up to **30 hours** per week of funded early education. This provides up to **1,140 hours** per year. Parents can check their eligibility using the government's website following the link - https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/Better Choices and obtain a 30-hour code, which must be validated with us before the child starts accessing the extended hours. This will require the applying parent or guardian's National Insurance number to be provided to the setting.

Sessions and Hours Available:

At Springfield Bees Pre-School, we offer flexible options to accommodate both the Universal and Extended Entitlement. Parents can use their funded hours during these sessions. Our session times are:

- **Morning sessions**: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- **Afternoon sessions**: 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- **Full day sessions:** 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Claiming Working Parent Entitlement for 2, 3 & 4 year-olds:

Parents eligible for the working parent entitlement must:

- Apply via the HMRC childcare service to obtain their working parent code. This must be obtained the term **before** a parent wishes to access funded hours.
- Provide their code, National Insurance number, and child's date of birth for validation.
- Renew their working parent code every three months to continue accessing the working parent funded hours.

Failure to renew the code before its expiry will result in the loss of working parent entitlement, and the child will revert to either the Universal 15-hour entitlement (3 & 4 year-olds) or paid for sessions (2 year-olds).

Attendance Patterns:

The setting operates term-time over 38 weeks per year and we offer flexibility in how parents use their funded hours during this time.

The pattern of attendance will be discussed and agreed upon during the enrolment process. Once set, we will need parents to notify us if there are any changes to attendance patterns during the term by giving one month's notice. The setting applies for funding once per term which cannot be increased mid-term. If

parents request additional sessions mid-term these will be charged at the current rate, if sessions are available.

Charging for Additional Services:

The FEEE covers the cost of early education hours only and the setting requests a voluntary contribution for snack each session of 75p. Any additional extra hours beyond the funded entitlement, will be charged separately. Parents are under no obligation to purchase additional services to access their funded hours.

Documentation and Registration:

To claim the FEEE, parents must:

- Complete and sign a parent declaration form each term.
- Provide proof of their child's date of birth (e.g., a birth certificate or passport).
- Submit their valid working parent code (if applicable), along with their National Insurance number for working parent entitlement claims.

It is the parent's responsibility to renew their working parent eligibility code before the expiration date. Without a valid code, the pre-school cannot claim working parent entitlement funding.

Absence and Holiday Policy:

Regular attendance is important for children's development, and prolonged unexplained absences may result in the withdrawal of a child's place at the setting. If a child is absent due to illness or other valid reasons, their place will be maintained in line with Essex County Council guidelines. Parents must inform the pre-school of any planned absences.

Grace Period for Working Parent Entitlement:

If a family becomes ineligible for the working parent entitlement, a grace period will be applied. During this time, the same number of hours will continue to be funded. Once the grace period ends, if eligibility is not regained, the child's hours will revert to either the Universal 15-hour entitlement (3 & 4 year-olds) or paid for sessions (2 year-olds).

Notice Period and Termination of FEEE:

Parents are required to give one month's notice if they intend to withdraw their child from Springfield Bees Pre-School. FEEE cannot be transferred to another provider mid-term unless under exceptional circumstances. The funding for that term will remain with the pre-school.

Review and Updates:

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains in line with Essex County Council's rules and national regulations regarding the Funded Early Education Entitlement.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions about your child's eligibility or how to claim FEEE hours, please contact the pre-school Manager.

Date of Policy: 15/12/2025
Review Date: 15/12/2026

This FEEE policy ensures that all eligible children at Springfield Bees Pre-School can access their funded hours, in accordance with Essex County Council rules.