



# EYFS Funding Arrangement Policy

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Workload impact       Equality impact       Trust virtues



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## 1. Introduction

At Minster Trust for Education (MITRE), our mission is to provide every child with the opportunity to flourish academically, socially, and personally within nurturing and inclusive environments. We are committed to ensuring that our youngest learners receive the very best start to their education, rooted in high-quality early years provision.

Currently, seven of MITRE's schools offer Foundation 1 (F1) provision to 3-year-olds and/or 4-year-olds. Across these schools, we ensure that families can access funded early years places in settings that reflect both local character and the Trust's shared mission.

This EYFS Funding Arrangements Policy reflects our dedication to:

- **Excellence in education** – delivering high quality early years experiences that lay strong foundations for lifelong learning.
- **Equity and inclusion** – ensuring that all children, regardless of background or circumstance, can access their funded entitlement without barriers.
- **Community and partnership** – working closely with families, local authorities, and wider stakeholders to support children's development and wellbeing.
- **Integrity and transparency** – upholding clear, fair, and consistent practices in the use of government funding, so parents/carers can make informed choices with confidence.

## 2. Aims

The aim of this policy is to set out how MITRE schools deliver government-funded early years entitlements in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance and our Provider Agreement with the local authority. Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible provision. The 15 or 30 hours should be accessed free of charge by families. There should not be any mandatory charges for families in relation to the free hours.

## 3. Funding Entitlements

For our schools with F1 provision, they can offer the following funded entitlements:

- **15-hour universal entitlement** for all 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds
- **30 hours extended entitlement** for eligible working parents/carers of 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds

## 4. Eligibility and Admissions

### 4.1 Checking Eligibility

Our schools will check original copies of documentation to confirm a child has reached the eligible age on initial registration for all funded entitlements. Schools can retain paper or digital copies of documentation to enable the local authority to carry out audits as required.

### 4.2 Working Parent/Carer Entitlements

For working parent/carer entitlements, our schools must acquire written consent from, or on behalf of, the parent/carer to be able to receive confirmation and future notifications from the local authority of the validity of the parent's/carer's eligibility code. Parents/carers must provide their 11-digit eligibility code from HMRC's Childcare Choices service if claiming the 30-hour entitlement. In addition, parents/carers must provide their National Insurance Number(s) and child's date of birth. If parents/carers are self-employed, schools will require their Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR).



### 4.3 Admissions dates for F1

Across the Trust, admissions arrangements are individual to each school, to meet the needs of our local communities. The arrangements will typically be one of the following models:

#### *3-Year-Old F1 Provision – admission from third birthday*

Children can start following their third birthday. Parents/carers will be contacted in advance of their child's third birthday to arrange a start date.

#### *3-Year -Old F1 Provision – termly admission*

Children are admitted at the beginning of the term after they turn 3. Under this arrangement:

- Children born between 1 September and 31 December start in the Spring term (January)
- Children born between 1 January and 31 March start in the Summer term (April)
- Children born between 1 April and 31 August start in the Autumn term (September)

#### *4-Year-Old F1 Provision – admission from fourth birthday*

Children can start following their fourth birthday. Parents/carers will be contacted in advance of their child's fourth birthday to arrange a start date.

#### *4-Year -Old F1 Provision – termly admission*

Child are admitted at the beginning of the term after they turn 4. Under this arrangement:

- Children born between 1 September and 31 December start in the Spring term (January)
- Children born between 1 January and 31 March start in the Summer term (April)
- Children born between 1 April and 31 August start in the Autumn term (September)

Families should contact schools directly to put their child's name down for an F1 place. For some of our schools, the number of places available will depend on the staffing structure at the time and the size of the Reception cohort, where the EYFS unit is mixed.

### 4.4 School Specific Information

Children can be admitted after their fourth birthday at Lowe's Wong Infant School. Families should email the office [office@lwi.org.uk](mailto:office@lwi.org.uk) or ring the office 01636 812207 directly to put their child's name down for an F1 place. The office will collect details- including the child's name, contact details and requests for days and sessions they would like their child to attend. Families will be informed if there is availability for the days and sessions requested. If there is no availability alternatives will be provided or the child's name added to our waiting list. Before the child's start date, families will be invited to visit Lowe's Wong Infant School and members of the Foundation Stage will visit the child in their current pre-school provision.

## 5. Flexibility and Session Patterns

### 5.1 National Parameters

Provision across MITRE is offered within the national parameters of flexibility:

- No session to be longer than 10 hours
- No minimum session length
- Not before 6.00 am or after 8.00 pm
- A maximum of two sites (e.g. childminders or private nursery setting in addition to a school setting) in a single day
- Avoidance of artificial breaks in the entitlement hours



## 5.2 School Specific Offer

At Lowe's Wong Infant School we offer:

- Sessions: Monday- Friday
- Morning sessions: 8.50am - 11.50am (15 hours)
- Afternoon sessions: 12.30pm - 3.30pm (15 hours)
- Full day sessions: 8.50am- 3.30pm (30 hours)
- We operate term-time only provision
- From January 2026- mid July 2026 children may attend the day after their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Requests for specific days, morning, afternoon, all days sessions to be made to the office.

## 6. What Funding Covers

In delivering high quality EYFS provision, our schools must have adequate staffing. This relates to staffing ratios and relevant staffing qualifications as referenced in the EYFS Statutory Guidance. Schools must have suitable premises, a safe and stimulating environment and suitable equipment, as well as the necessary administration required to run the setting and therefore these costs are covered by the funding.

The funded hours cover:

- High-quality early years education and care
- Staffing costs
- Resources and equipment necessary for delivering the EYFS
- Use of premises and facilities
- Administration

## 7. Additional Charges

### 7.1 What our schools may charge for

Allowable additional optional costs are:

- Consumables to be used by the child, such as nappies or sun cream
- Meals and snacks consumed by the child
- Extra optional activities such as events, celebrations, specialist or other activities that are not directly related or necessary for the effective delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.

Schools can also charge parents/carers for any additional, privately paid hours according to their usual terms and conditions provided taking up private paid hours is not a condition of accessing a free place.

### 7.2 Voluntary nature of charges

All additional charges are voluntary. If the parent/carer is unable or unwilling to pay that sum, our schools must make alternative arrangements and offer parents/carers a reasonable choice.

### 7.3 What we cannot charge for

Schools must not charge parents/carers for the following in connection with the entitlement hours:



- Top-up fees (any difference between our normal charge to parents and the funding we receive from the local authority)
- The supply of or use of any materials, including craft materials, crayons, paper, books, instruments, toys, or other equipment or learning resources that are necessary for the effective delivery of the EYFS curriculum
- Registration fees as a condition of taking up a child's free entitlement place
- Non-refundable deposits as a condition of taking up a child's entitlement place

## 8. School Specific Charges

### 8.1. Additional Hours

- Additional hours rate: £6 per hour
- Additional morning or afternoon session hours rate: £18 per session.
- Additional day rate: £36 per day

### 8.2. Meals and Snacks

A hot two-course school lunch is cooked on site each day, the current menu is available on our school website. The meals are available to F1 children. In order for your child to have the meals, you need to create an account with the meal provider IFG. There will be instructions in your Welcome Pack showing you how to do this. You need to order your child's meals in advance, by Saturday evening for the week ahead.

The cost of the meals for F1 children is currently £2.95 a day, meals are provided free of charge once the children are full time under the Universal Infant Free School Meals Scheme.

Children are welcome to bring a packed lunch if they prefer. If your child does bring a packed lunch, please make sure it is a "healthy" one. Sweets and crisps are not allowed, although a chocolate biscuit as pudding is acceptable! Children do not need to bring an additional drink as water is provided.

As we have several children in school who have severe nut allergies, please do not send your child with nuts or nut products as part of their lunch.

### 8.5. Uniform

The school uniform is a pale blue polo shirt, grey trousers, shorts, pinafore or skirt and a burgundy sweatshirt or cardigan. In warm weather blue and white checked or striped dresses can be worn.

Some items are available from the School Office with the school logo on:

- Polo Shirt - £9
- Sweatshirt - £11
- Cardigan - £12
- Book bag - £4.50

Parents and Carers do not have to buy branded items, and the school also has a wide selection of high quality "pre-loved" items available for 50p each.

**Note:** Wearing uniform is not a condition of accessing a funded place



## 8.6. Deposits

While schools have the option of charging parents/carers a refundable deposit to secure their child's funded place, MITRE schools have agreed that this will not be part of their funding arrangements.

## 9. Invoicing

### 9.1 Clear invoicing

Invoices will be itemised, breaking down separately into:

- Additional private paid sessions
- Additional private paid days

### 9.2 Invoicing Frequency

At Lowe's Wong Infant School we will issue termly invoices for the term ahead. Payment details will be provided on each invoice.

## 10. Parental Declaration and Consent

All families accessing funded places must complete and sign the NCC parent/carer declaration form which includes additional charges - Information regarding the patterns of hours available and confirmation that parents have opted to pay agreed fees for additional services, which will be shown on invoices.

## 11. Published Information

From January 2026, all MITRE schools with F1 provision will publish on their websites:

- The amounts charged for all chargeable extras
- The pattern of hours that parents/carers can take their entitlements
- Clear, up-to-date and easily accessible information to enable families to make an informed choice

## 12. Avoiding Artificial Breaks

As a Trust we aim to ensure that families can take up their free hours in continuous blocks, with the avoidance of artificial breaks in the entitlement hours where possible.

If a school is unable to avoid artificial breaks, for example due to current staffing structures, this will be kept under review, and the Trust will work with the school to explore ways in which they may avoid artificial breaks as part of their longer-term strategic plan for their F1 provision.

### 12.1 School Specific Arrangements in relation to Artificial Breaks

Our qualified EYFS staff remain with the children throughout the funded hours, in the morning session 8.50am-11.50am and the afternoon session 12.30pm-3.30pm. Children who stay for the lunchtime session are supervised by a Grade 3 member of staff who is qualified in Pediatric First Aid.



### 13. Sharing Places Between Providers

Parents/Carers may choose to split their child's funded entitlement between settings and another provider (such as a childminder or day nursery). We will work with parents to ensure continuity of care and effective transitional arrangements to support children's learning and wellbeing.

#### Notice Periods

When parents/carers choose to change their child's funded place, we request that they give 4 calendar weeks' notice in respect of funded hours before transferring places. However, this may be waived in exceptional circumstances including:

- A safeguarding concern
- Family moving house
- Change in child's primary carer
- Change in parental employment status
- Health and safety concerns
- Long-term sickness

### 14. Complaints Procedure

If parents/carers are not satisfied with any aspect of our funded provision, they should:

1. First raise concerns with the Class Teacher, the EYFS lead Mrs Jen Macintyre or the Headteacher Mrs Aly Speed
2. Follow our formal complaints procedure: [download.asp](#)

### 15. Policy Review

Typically, this policy will be reviewed annually or when there are changes to statutory guidance.

Due to the trialing of **admission after fourth birthday** in some of our schools this Spring and Summer term, this policy will have an early review in Summer 2026 to confirm arrangements for the academic year 2026-2027.