



Welcome

Welcome to all our new families joining us this month. We look forward to building strong partnerships with you whilst caring for your child(ren). We will share their day with you via the Family App. If you need any support logging on, please have a chat with either Chloe or Shaney.

If you have any queries regarding your invoice, please contact Gail directly on: manager@smithfieldnursery.co.uk
This will ensure you receive a faster response regarding any financial matters.

Dear Parents/Carers

The Christmas season seems to be in full swing now. The children have already started to create their Christmas craft with glitter and paint everywhere! They have all enjoyed helping the team decorate the tree and hang the Christmas decorations.

Fee increase:

We are always very careful with our budget and are constantly looking at ways to keep cost down, however, due to the current financial climate, it is with a heavy heart that we have had to review our fees and make an increase from January 2024. This is something that we always try to avoid and since opening our doors 12 years ago, have only increased our fees four times, and will endeavour to keep this as low as possible. We work tirelessly with the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) and the Early Years Alliance in lobbying government regarding the lack of support given to the Early Years Sector and the poor funding rate we are given for the free entitlement. Although we welcome the forthcoming support for parents and younger children, the government really need to address the shortfall that childcare providers must find for every eligible child. Increasing the adult:child ratio for two-year-olds is not the answer!
Apologies for being on my soapbox!!

Winter Sickness Bug:

We are entering the time of year when the winter sickness bugs make their appearance. If your child is either sick or has loose nappies, please DO NOT make your way to the nursery for their session. Instead, please call ahead, or if it's over the weekend, contact us via the Family App and we will advise you on whether your child can attend for their session. We have a very strict policy on children attending the nursery when they have vomiting or loose nappies. This policy is in place to safeguard the environment, the children, and our staff. If your child develops any of these symptoms whilst in our care, you will be contacted and asked to collect your child and to keep them home until 48 hours after the last episode of sickness or loose nappy. The winter sickness bug is highly contagious and can quickly spread throughout the nursery. With your support, we can maintain an infection free environment for everyone. We have hand sanitisers throughout the nursery, please make sure that you use them before entering the nursery and your child's room.

Thank you for your continued support.

Please log on to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk for more information on the new funding available from April 2024. I have added some information below.

*Also, please be mindful, (and what the government doesn't advertise) if your child's birthday is after the 31st of March 2024, they will not qualify for the funding until September 2024. Funding is only given the term **after** your child's 2nd or 3rd birthday.*

For babies, they will need to be 9 months old before the 1st of September.

Remember to make your application sooner rather than later so you don't miss out on any available funding.

This information has been taken from childcarechoices.gov.uk

From Apr 2024 - Up to 15 hours for eligible working families in England with a 2-year-old.

From Sept 2024 - Up to 15 hours for eligible working families in England with a child between 9 and 23 months old.

From Sept 2025 - Up to 30 hours for eligible working families in England with a child from 9 months old up to school age.

Partnerships with local businesses:

We are always looking to form partnerships with our local businesses. Working together can potentially mean that not only would there be good quality childcare near the workplace but may also allow colleagues who need emergency care (Ad-hoc days) avoid taking unnecessary time off work. Please speak to your colleagues and HR departments about the benefits of having a childcare facility on their doorstep. This also extends to the local universities and their students. Encourage them to contact us and visit the nursery to see what we have to offer.

Paediatric First Aid Course:

We have not had a lot of interest in the course this time around. We need a minimum of 12 candidates to run the course. However, I will approach you all again after the New Year holiday. Maybe we can organise the course in the spring term. If you would like to be added to the list, please let Chloe or Shaney know.

Babysitting:

Some of our staff are happy to provide a babysitting service in the evening and on weekends. This maybe useful during the Christmas party season or to allow parents to have a much-needed evening out together. What better than to have someone who knows your child, care for them while you are out. If this is something that may be of interest to you, please speak with Chloe or Shaney. Due to GDPR, we do require both you, and the staff member to complete some paperwork, and to remind you that this is a contract that you are entering into with the staff member, not the nursery. The nursery does not benefit financially from this, nor does our insurance cover any agreement made between parents and staff members.

Have a wonderful festive break and Happy New Year from all the Team at Smithfield House Nursery!!