

Jesters Free Early Educational Entitlement (FEEE) Policy

At Jesters we are committed to ensuring that all of the children in our care and our local community are aware of what free entitlement is available to them based on their personal criteria and how we can support them to capitalise on this.

The government committed to doubling the amount of free childcare from 15 to 30 hours a week for working parents of three and four year olds from September 2017. The intention was that the 30 hours extended entitlement should have ***‘a real impact on the lives of families, supporting parents who wish to work, or to work more hours, to be able to do so’***. Before September 2017 nationally, take-up was high, at 95%, with mostly all of those children taking up their places in a ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ setting. Jesters CIC intends playing its part in supporting this national policy priority now and long into the future.

Jesters Offer

Currently Jesters is registered with the local authority for the FEEE2 funding and FEEE for 3 – 4 year olds and has been for approximately 2 years now, in fact we were the first Out of School Club’s to apply for the status as we acknowledged the value and importance of providing families with the options of service. We welcomed the opportunity to integrate full day care with our existing and well respected Out of School wrap around childcare this September and are now proud to see the amount of parents taking up their Free Early Entitlement with us in a full and flexible way increase steadily over the years to come!

We fulfil all the essential criteria required of a provider who is deemed eligible to deliver the offer. This eligibility is in relation to our values, our documentation and interaction with parents and compliance with the local authority for the requests for key information.

We are entirely confident that the offer to FEEE children is no different than any other child in our care, bar the recording and then subsequent invoicing of additional charged items such as trips, and t shirts for those that choose to stretch their hours into holiday club. Lunch and tea are both part of our integrated service offer. What is important is that our administrative systems are capable of handling the processes of charging and invoicing. – we shouldn’t be adding on any costs so I don’t think we need to have this in here? I think delete paragraph.

At Jesters we realise that the FEEE for three and four year olds is free provision for every child from the term following their third birthday up until they reach compulsory school age. However, only children that are eligible under certain criteria are able to access the FEEE for two year olds. The statutory guidance focuses on this eligibility for around 40% of the most disadvantaged two- year olds.

Flexibility for 2, 3 and 4 years olds

We understand the flexibility is not about just offering longer hours, but also about offering different patterns or models of flexibility at our provision. A flexible offer must be meaningful and useful for parents, promote child development to improve the wellbeing of young children and be workable for providers.

Jesters Commitment: to work with every family's unique needs and convey the message across the board that we will work to **stretch** their free entitlement over the full year when requested. We will continue to enhance our service offer and maintain our financial recording systems to ensure this runs smoothly. An example of how the hours could be distributed is illustrated as follows

All eligible are entitled to 1,140 hours per year – equivalent to 30 hours per week over 38 weeks. Many parents previously paid for additional hours to cover a longer day or during holiday periods. Within the extended entitlement parents will still be able to do this but paying for additional hours should not be a condition of accessing their extended entitlement.

Flexibility and extended provision

The 1,140 hours per year – equivalent to 30 hours per week over 38 weeks – can be taken as part of a stretched or extended provision. This illustration show how parents can use this entitlement with us at any of our services in Jesters either our preschool, nursery or out of school services or with another provider.

No. weeks	Hrs per week	Hrs per day
39	29.2	5.9
50	22.8	4.6

Jesters commitment: we are in the strongest position to be flexible with how we meet the needs of all parents of the universal and extended entitlement for. By offering wraparound care 5 days a weeks, 51 weeks a year for the hours of 7.15 - 6.30pm rather than childcare between just the limited set hours of 9am 3pm we can easily ensure we cater for differing needs.

Note: Jesters recognise where a child is accessing the FEEE for two year olds, they may only attend one provider. The access and delivery of childcare for two year olds is offered in exactly the same way as three and four year olds with the exception of being able to split their hours between two providers.

Eligibility

Jesters commitment: we will continue to work with ECC and our partners to ensure any parent who becomes ineligible for their extended entitlement is supported promptly and sensitively in line with any guidelines set out by the Eligibility Checking Service.

Fees, Charges & Value for Money

Jesters commitment:

- With FEEE only children we supply no additional documentation on top of the termly parent agreement contract issued by ECC. In a situation where extra hours, trips or food is required a monthly invoice will be issued.
- Where extra hours are required these will be in line with or pricing schedule which is reviewed annually, these are made clear to parents when they are registered with us.
- We have costed this future provision based on these and accept that whilst in the first year or two while our integrated service is increasing, we may struggle, we are prepared to supplement this shortfall from the rest of the services reserves.
- Our focus is on ensuring we develop strong, trusted relationships based on need, not greed! It is our intention that this will offer clarity and accessibility to as many people who need the service and that we retain the children in our care throughout their later years post 5 years, into breakfast, afterschool and holiday club.

Provision Type	New rate since September 2017
Jesters Day nurseries	£4.21
Jesters Pre-schools	£4.21
Jesters Out of School	£4.21

Invoicing

Jesters commitment: to ensuring that all invoices to parents must be clear and transparent so they can clearly understand what has been charged for. This will be easy to identify using our Connect Financial Integrated Software system.

The invoice we send to a parent should include the following:

- The relevant date and the provision details.
- Details of the parent/child.
- The period of time the invoice is for i.e. one week, two weeks, or a month.
- Charges for any additional hours and or services will be clearly recorded separately on the invoice.
- Additional activities such as trips or items such as t shirts should also be clearly itemised on the invoice.

- An indication of the time scale in which we expect payment to be made in our terms and conditions.

Where a parent of a 3-4 year old child is only accessing the 15 hours of FEEE or the 30 hours if entitled, it isn't necessary to provide them with an invoice. However, we will inform parents that an application for funding has been made on their behalf and ensure they complete the Parent/Carer Agreement Form. This will be the case for our new target group of eligible 2 year olds.

Additional FEEE funding for three and four year olds:

From April 2015 providers have also been able to claim the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), additional funding for early years settings to improve the provision that disadvantaged 3 and 4 years receive. This means that for low income families providers are entitled to receive additional funding of 53p per hour for children accessing funding.

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit.
- Child Tax Credit (provided they're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on, which is paid for 4 weeks after they stop qualifying for working credit.

Jesters commitment if any parents declares that they are eligible for one or more of the benefits listed above we will support them to enter their details in the EYPP form. These details will then be entered on the 'Parent/Carer tab of the child record on the Early Years web portal at headcount

Quality

- All children are able to take up their entitlement to funded early education in a high quality setting. Evidence shows that higher quality provision has greater developmental benefits for children, particularly for the most disadvantaged children.
- The evidence also shows that high quality early education at age two brings benefits to children's development.
- ECC recognises that the provision of care and education for the youngest children is offered in a wide range of schools/provisions across the maintained, private, voluntary, independent sectors and childminders. ECC

welcomes this diversity and will work in partnership with all providers to ensure that high quality inclusive provision is maintained and offered to all children and their families whichever provision they attend.

- **Jesters commitment:** Where national best practical examples are shared we will endeavour to take on board and implement any whole or part lessons. The principle of Continuous Quality Improvement should be interpreted literally on an everyday basis rather than a theoretical aspiration.
- **Jesters commitment;** to purchase any toolkits and integrate their use as part of our ongoing continuing Professional Development - by citing the use of relevant and available toolkits in our annual training and development plan we can ensure we are always current and relevant with our practices.

Supporting children with SEND in Early Years

Jesters commitment: in line with our Equalities Policy, we will

- actively promote equality of opportunity for children with special educational needs or disabilities,
- remove barriers to participation,
- make reasonable adjustments to prevent disadvantage and
- ensure than any children that we have with medical conditions, receive the support they need.

In our role as an Early Years provider, Jesters will be proactive and take part in the regular review of the Local Offer in order to identify gaps in provision and ensure that the Local Offer is responsive to the needs of its local children, young people and their families.

Reform of the local delivery model.

Amend statutory guidance to set a clear expectation that by September 2018 all providers should be paid monthly unless they request an alternative payment model.

Jesters commitment: we will continue to manage our finances and financial procedures responsibly and prudently to ensure that our cash flow is sustained at healthy levels for continuity of service to all. All paperwork and correspondence will be promptly returned to ensure all monthly payment of the government funding is received.

Childcare Information for Parents

Local authorities to publish the information by electronic means via their websites, and also to continue to provide the information in other formats where it is needed and make clearer in guidance where local authorities could publish other helpful information for parents such as where childcare providers work in partnerships to offer more wraparound

services for parents, and stating the outreach activity they undertake to publicise the childcare offer, especially to under-represented groups that are not accessing their entitlements.

Jesters commitment: we will

- ensure verbal and on line links to all departments including the integrated prebirth to 19 Health and Well being and Family Support Service are maintained and developed.
- ensure that we continue to use a range of creative communication methods in line with our marketing plans.
- work with our web site partners to post new guideline information as newly produced pieces become available for public distribution.
- diary in regular updates and reviews with our newly formed parental steering group to ensure they act as natural disseminators of information making the most of informal networks.

Jesters commitment: to be tapped into and assume where possible membership of any expert working groups so that we are able to exercise our influence over discussions that have a direct impact to the delivery of the universal and extended entitlements.

Workforce Planning

To support providers like ourselves to attract, retain and promote good quality staff to deliver the offer the government will publish a workforce strategy by March 2017 that sets out their response to the level 3 consultation and wider plans.

Jesters commitment: to work proactively with the newly published workforce strategy from March 2017 to ensure we have the right people in place to deliver this extended entitlement offer smoothly and ultimately to ensure the needs of each unique family are placed at the centre of service offer.

We will continue to build links with other partners such as Anglia Ruskin University to help source the very best Early Years Professionals to complement our existing team of highly motivated, experienced and qualified early years and play worker teams. By encouraging a highly trained, mature team across all parts of our service Jesters will offer a holistic model of delivery for local families to address preschool, full day care and out of school childcare needs.

In line with our Staff Development Policy Jesters staff will continue to take responsibility for their CPD to ensure existing members build on skills, behaviours and knowledge bringing rich, innovative and a professional presence to everything we do or say.