1. **Procedure Aim**

To ensure there is an understanding between staff and parents around fees and funding.

1. **Procedure Statements**
	1. **Payment of Fees Policy**

It is our intention to make the nursery fees understandable and fair to all parents. We are open 36 weeks of the year with the exception of Christmas and Bank Holidays. We do not charge for days we are closed.

* Parents can pay via childcare vouchers through your employer, or a combination of both. Payment by cash is also accepted within the nursery, card payments can be made in Stoke on Trent College’s finance office by staff members.
* Fees must still be paid if your child is absent for a short period of time e.g. illness or holiday. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, please talk to the Nursery Manager to discuss any fee arrangements. Any discussions will be completely confidential.
* A late collection charge of £5.00 per 15 minutes will be charged for late collection after the end of your child’s session time.
* If you have had a change in personal circumstances and are now struggling to make payments, please let the nursery management know so we can make suitable arrangements. It may be that you are now entitled to additional funding through the Childcare element of the Working Tax Credit and other benefits.
* Non Payment of Fees Policy
* First Steps value their relationship with parents/carers and will be sympathetic towards any difficulty in paying their child’s fees. However, we are unable to function effectively without these payments.
* We aim to help parents/carers to pay all fees due to us by offering an agreed flexible payment system and following a fair procedure.
* Should a parent/carer have problems paying their child’s fees on time they should speak in confidence to the Nursery Manager if an arrangement has not been made then the following procedure will apply.
* On registration fee paying parents will be asked to pay a deposit of 1 week fee to secure their child’s place at nursery. This deposit will then be off set to their last week fee as long as all payments have been made up to date and the deposit has not already been used to cover fees.
	1. **Payment of Fees Procedure**
* First Steps Nursery request that all childcare fees are paid in advance and parents will receive an invoice at the end of each month for the coming month although fees can be paid weekly in advance if this is more convenient.
* If payments are 1 week late - a reminder invoice will be issued
* If payments are 2 weeks late - a third invoice will be issued accompanied by a letter and a copy of this policy
* If payments are more than 3 weeks late - A final warning will be issued giving the parent/carer 14 days to pay the full amount due
* If the full payment is not received after this time scale, then we will hand over the non-payment issue over to Stoke on Trent College finance department and procedures will begin at the Small Claims Court.
* First Steps Nursery reserves the right to suspend/cancel a child’s place due to non-payment of fees.
* First Steps Nursery thank you for your understanding and will do all they can to avoid the above situation. However, we are not able to function effectively without all payments due.

**2.3 Funding**

**2.3.1 LSF**

* As First Steps are part of Stoke on Trent College, many of our parents are able to access LSF funding, if you are eligible for the LSF funding, the student assistance department will provide you with information of this and help with completing forms to enable the funds to be released to First Steps. The nursery requires all funding to be in place and confirmed by Student Assistance before a child will be permitted to start with the nursery. The nursery also requires you to tell us of any changes in circumstances that may affect your funding. A late collection charge of £5.00 per 15 minutes will be charged for late collection after the end of your child’s session time.

**2.3.2 Two-year Funding, National Educational Grant (NEG) 3&4 Year olds**

* Up to 15 hours of Government funded Early Years Entitlement is available to all 3 & 4 year olds from the term following the child’s 3rd birthday, a parental declaration form must be completed in order for us to process this funding
* Up to 15 hours of Government funded Early Years Entitlement is available for two year olds, there is eligibility criteria, a parental declaration form must be completed and we must see and keep a copy of the letter you receive from the council to confirm you are eligible for the two year funding before we can process this funding
* 30 hours funding is available for qualifying 3 and four-year-old, an entitlement code provided by the government to parents must be given to the nursery along with a completed declaration form before we can process this funding
* Any child who is eligible for 15 hours free funding is for education hours only, meals must be paid for, meals are £2.50 for two courses, if parents do not wish to pay for a hot meal a healthy packed lunch must be provided by the parent clearly labelled with the child’s name
* A late collection charge of £5.00 per 15 minutes will be charged for late collection after any time that you exceed your government 15 hours’ entitlement.

**2.3.3 Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) Funding**

What is the Early Years Pupil Premium? The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is additional funding given to early years’ providers to spend on enriching children’s education and improving outcomes for eligible children. EYPP funding is based on 570 hours per academic year. The EYPP funding will follow the child in the same way as the Nursery Education place.

The EYPP is only available to 3 and 4 year olds that are accessing the early education entitlement and only if they meet the set eligibility criteria.

**2.3.3.1 Using the EYPP money**

Nurseries can use the EYPP as they wish in order to make a difference to the most disadvantaged. The money does not have to go directly to the child; it can be pooled and used for universal interventions. As an Early Years setting we have the freedom to choose how we spend the money to best support disadvantaged children in our care. We will use the additional funding in the some of the following ways:

* Continue our commitment to furthering our knowledge within our Continuing Professional Development by attending relevant training.
* Creating ‘Home/Setting’ lending bags.
* Buy in any specialist services to support families and children (this includes the cost of staffing such events.
* Providing additional staff to allow us to provide more acceptable child: adult ratios. • Purchasing additional resources.
* Building on successful interventions, such as language groups for targeted children, and extending various initiatives.

As yet, there are no published examples as to what the EYPP can be spent on. Acceptable expenditure, it is suggested, could include:

* Funding on language groups for targeted children
* Play therapy
* Speech therapist
* Music specialist
* Toy library
* Parent education sessions.

It could provide additional training for staff on early language

* Investing in partnership working with colleagues in the area to further expertise
* Support staff working in specialised areas, such as speech and language.

**2.3.3.2 How we measure the impact of the EYPP**

However the money is spent, settings will need to be clear to Ofsted, with supporting guidance, on how this has resulted in a measurable quality improvement.

Key worker works closely with parents to determine how the EYPP money would be best spent; together filling in an action plan at the end of the term the impact of the expenditure is reviewed, evidence of the impact is also noted within the child’s learning journey.