



Early Learning and Childcare Policy

Introduction

Midlothian Sure Start is a charity and as such it has a variety of free services available to the community. Midlothian Sure Start is also in partnership with Midlothian Council to provide funded places to eligible children. These places are fully funded and do not require any further payment from parents. However we do provide the opportunity for parents to purchase top up hours and to fully fund their childcare if they are not eligible for the funded places. As Midlothian Sure Start is a charity, any profit is reinvested in the Organisation and its services. If you would like additional support, please contact the Centre Manager who will be pleased to advise how Midlothian Sure Start or our partners can support you and your family.

When enquiring about our early learning and childcare service, you will be provided with this policy in addition to a registration pack. You will be informed within 5 business days whether there are currently spaces within the setting, and if not you may be added to a waiting list. The waiting list will be kept, and spaces will be offered on a 'first come first served' basis. Please note, not all centres will be in a position to operate a waiting list or able to offer top up hours.

Please read through this information. All of the Organisations policies are available for parents to read upon request.

If you have any queries please contact either the centre you are interested in attending, or our Head Office, on 0131 654 0489 or admin@midlothiansurestart.org.uk

Fee Structure:

Age of child	Per hour	AM Session	PM Session	Per week (up to 10 hours)
Under 2 years	£9.00	£33	£30	£63
2 years old	£8.00	£31	£27	£58
3 to 5 year old	£6.50	£29	£26	£55

Our Sessions

Half day (AM) morning sessions:	08.00-13.00 hrs
Half day (PM) afternoon sessions:	13:00-17.30 hrs
Full day places:	08.00-17.30 hrs

Full day sessions normally run from 8am to 5.30 pm. However, hours are flexible based on parent's requirements and capacity in the setting.

Funded hours are generally offered over a part-time basis (6.25 hours for 4 days or 7.20 minutes on 3 days and 3 hours on a Friday) Funded hours are calculated as 25 hours per week for 45.6 weeks (school terms are 38 weeks)

Midlothian Sure Start closes for 2 weeks at Christmas and New Year and for in-service days through the year. These dates are available in advance from your local centre.

Extra sessions/hours may be available on request if numbers allow. Rates per above.

Discounts

A 10% discount for full-time children or when you have two or more children attending (the discount will apply to the eldest child's fees)

10% discount for families where parents work for the NHS, Local Authority or armed forces

10% discount is the maximum discount any one child can receive.

All our Family Learning Centres (nurseries) offer children between 3-5 years the government funded 1140 hours per year as placements of 25 hours per week.

Free (fully funded for eligible children) placements for 2-year old's (A Good time to be 2, Midlothian Council) receive funded 1140 hours per year as a 25 hours per week.

Childcare vouchers/Student childcare support

Our family learning centres accept childcare vouchers and will be more than happy to assist in completing the required forms.

Included in the provision of childcare:

Healthy snacks and drinks are included for all children as well as fresh milk every day.

Nappies, wipes and cream are provided for babies and under 2's.

All meals are in accordance with the Scottish Government nutritional guidance.

The management reserves the right to change fees from time to time. At least one month's notice will be given. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, we work in partnership with Penicuik CABx and can refer you to our partnership income maximisation worker. Please ask for more details from the Centre Manager.

Childcare bookings:

All sessions must be agreed four weeks in advance. We are unable to guarantee availability of sessions across the week but will do our best to accommodate your request.

Any short notice absences (self-funded places) will be charged in full, with the exception of Midlothian Sure Start's agreed closure dates which you will be notified of in advance.

Four weeks' notice is required for children leaving the setting permanently.

Settling In:

We require parents to stay with their child for a minimum of five sessions (of shorter duration) as part of our Settling-in Procedure. You will not be charged for these sessions. In addition, part of your settling-in may include a Home Visit. You will not be charged for this visit.

Payment of Fees for self-funded places:

Invoices for childcare will be generated on the 1st working day of the month or soon after and sent to your registered email address. Payment is required within 14 days of the issue of the invoice, following which a reminder will be sent. Should payment not be received within 30 days of the invoice being issued, the placement will be suspended, and you may lose your space in the setting.

Should you at any time anticipate having difficulty paying your invoice you should contact the Centre Manager immediately.

Payment of Fees can be made via bank transfer, details will be provided with each invoice.

Lateness:

If you are late collecting your child on more than 3 occasions you will be charged the hourly rate in addition to any other normal fees that you may be required to pay. The minimum late charge is for 1 hour.

Extreme Weather:

In the case of extreme weather, or emergency closure of the centre, we will endeavour to provide an alternate service on the same day. If this is unsuitable, or not available, parents who are self-financing will have the option of having the session cancelled with no charge, or taking the session up within another period.

Outings and Trips

The Centre runs, from time to time, trips for children and their families. You will be consulted on any trips that are undertaken. If you wish for your child to participate, you will be invoiced for the cost of the trip.

If the trip is at a time you do not attend the centre, you will still have the opportunity to attend. You can attend with your child, in which case you will not be charged the childcare rate. You could also ask the Manager if your child can attend without you, in which case you will be charged for this session if you are self-funding. In either instance you will be invoiced for the cost of the trip. If you are having financial difficulty do speak to the Centre Manager as we will do all we can to ensure that all children benefit from all activities.

Nappies and other products

Nappies and wipes are included in the cost for children under the age of 2 years old unless your child has special products in which case we ask that you supply them. The parent/carer of All children including self-funded & Midlothian Council funded children aged 2 and upwards must provide their own nappies and wipes, these will be stored in named individual boxes. We have spare clothes in a

range of sizes in each centre, however we ask that you bring with you to each session a change of clothes as we have water, sand, paint and other 'messy' resources out at all times. Whilst we endeavour to keep children clean inevitably this doesn't always happen!