

Pumpkin Patch Funding Information Pack

How has funding changed?

From April 2025 government guidance requires nurseries offering funded places to clearly break down charges for consumables and additional services. At Pumpkin Patch we have always been transparent with our funding and charging. Nurseries can still offer extras - but they must be clearly optional, not mandatory.

Funding Reality

The funding provided by the government unfortunately does not cover the true cost of delivering high-quality early years education. That includes staffing, hygiene supplies, enrichment, rent, training, and systems. Previously, we balanced this by offering funded hours as part of a broader full-day package. Now, we are required to offer the funded portion separately — which creates significant funding gaps unless families choose to contribute. At Pumpkin Patch we want to continue to offer funded places, but this is only possible if parents understand why we charge for meals and consumables and continue to 'opt in' as they have always done for us to continue to provide the high level of care and learning experiences we provide

What is covered by government funding

Government Funding covers basic provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- ⇒ Staffing levels that meet the minimum government ratios
- ⇒ Sand and water play
- ⇒ Loose parts and construction toys
- ⇒ Small world play, role play, books and basic craft supplies

What is NOT covered by government funding

- ⇒ Home cooked meals and snacks
- ⇒ Nappies, wipes and suncream
- ⇒ Extra activities such as cooking, music, gardening or special events
- ⇒ Additional high quality resources

Parents Choice

Opt in

Parents who Opt in will continue to receive:

- All meals and snacks including breakfast, lunch, tea, morning and afternoon snacks and fresh fruit
- Consumables including nappies, wipes and sun cream
- Access to Famly online

- Preferential booking of preferred days
- Enhanced staff ratios
- Higher qualified staff than minimum EYFS requirements
- Special events and stay and play sessions
- Additional resources and learning experiences over the basic EYFS provision

Opt Out

Parents who opt out will receive

- Access to the basic provision as funded by the government
- Their funded hours free of charge

However, opting out means:

- Parents will need to send a fruit snack with their child in accordance to our food policies and procedures
- Parents will need to ensure their children receive breakfast at home before they arrive with us
- Parents must provide a packed lunch for their child. This MUST comply with our food policies and procedures (and not contain any of the 14 allergens). This needs to be packed with an ice pack and clearly labelled with the child's name and ingredients for each item. Packed lunches will be stored securely but will not be refrigerated.
- We claim funded hours for settling in sessions for funded only places
- Parents must supply their own consumables including nappies, wipes and sun cream in line with our policies
- All nappy waste will be bagged and sent home
- No access to Family online
- Funded hours for parents who opt out will be arranged based on availability

Your choice

By opting in parents will pay:

£6 for each meal, breakfast, lunch and tea

£8 per session for activities and snack

£3.70 daily charge for consumables

This fee helps us continue delivering the quality and consistency that families value. It supports both everyday care consumables and inspiring enrichment activities. Without family support through parents opting in, Pumpkin Patch (like many nurseries) would struggle to remain financially viable. Our model ensures we stay sustainable while maintaining the highest care standards. It's fair, transparent, and designed to protect everyone's experience

If you opt in, nothing changes — your child receives everything they always have. If you opt out, the experience will be more limited and you'll need to take on more responsibility as a parent. For example, you'll need to bring everything from snacks and suncream to a toothbrush and spare flannel. It's a legal requirement that this be an option, but it's not how we believe high-quality care should feel.

Is this allowed under DfE and Local Authority guidance?

Yes. All charges are voluntary, clearly explained, and fully compliant with funding rules. We will not prevent access to funded hours for families who opt out - but we are also entitled to offer enriched, optional services at an additional cost.

Invoices will reflect the following items, which we are required to set out clearly:

- Free entitlement hours
- Private paid hours (if any)
- Meals, breakfast, lunch and tea
- Activities and snack
- Daily charge for consumables

We understand that childcare is a significant commitment, and we're mindful of the cost for families. Whilst our fees are fixed, we understand that families might sometimes need some support and assistance and so if you feel like you might need added flexibility in making payment, please discuss this with your nursery manager

Written in September 2026 using current government guidance if you would like anything explained further please speak to the manager.