EARLY YEARS INVOICING – NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

The Local Authority (LA) has a duty under the Childcare Act 2006 and Statutory Guidance to ensure
parents/carers are receiving their government funding completely free.

- All eligible children must be able to access their funded entitlement place free of charge. Parents must not be charged "top-up" fees (any difference between a provider's normal charge to parents and the funding they receive from the local authority)

- Compliance checks will be undertaken by Veritau (Local Authority Internal Audit Service) on a sample of providers.

- Invoices must be clear and transparent to show parents what charges are being made according to the parental agreement.

- Invoices for funded provision must be prepared in accordance with government guidance: ***Invoicing and taking payment from customers: Invoices - what they must include - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)***

Further guidance on "***Charging***" is shown in the Statutory Guidance: Early education and childcare - GOV.UK

To ensure that parents can make informed decisions on their choice of childcare, providers should publish a statement of how they deliver the free entitlement and any additional charges for optional activities outside of the entitlement.

This should set out clearly the charges for meals, additional activities, or additional hours. Providers may wish to have a separate agreement for any additional hours, meals and/or optional activities, which clearly sets out for how long the parent has opted to pay the additional charges and the circumstances when the parent can opt out of paying the additional charges.

Parents can therefore expect to pay for any meals offered by the provider alongside their free entitlement. Parents can also expect to pay for other consumables or additional activities offered by the provider, such as nappies or trips. Where parents choose to purchase additional hours of provision, consumables, or additional activities, this is a private matter between the provider and the parent. ***However, providers must offer alternative options for parents who do not wish to pay additional charges when taking up their funded hours***. This could include, for example, allowing a parent to bring in their own consumables or a packed lunch, where the meal offered is not suitable for children with specific dietary needs or the parent prefers a lower cost option.