



Childminding UK's advice about fees – what to charge parents??

Your local authority will continue to make payments for children already on [2 year old or 3&4 year old funding](#). If you have suffered a drop in income it may be that you are eligible for [universal credit](#). You should explore this option rather than put parents into financial difficulties – and you may be able to apply for a [grant](#) for self employed people from June 1st. These are difficult and unprecedented times and it may be that your normal contract does not cover all eventualities. While we would normally advise that if a childminder isn't available for work then it's not reasonable for parents to pay as they would have to find childcare elsewhere, the current situation isn't as simple. Bear in mind that you may be able to claim for your loss of earnings but parents won't be able to claim for childcare costs during this time.

I am open for business

Parents who are key workers. Government guidance states that many parents working in these sectors will be able to ensure that their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

- You should stay open if possible and if the children still come to you then normal fee applies
- If parents are key workers but decide to keep the children at home full fee would normally apply and should be covered in your contract (sickness and absence). However, normally sickness absence is for a short period of time; during the current situation you will have fewer running costs and parents may have extra costs while the children are at home, so you may agree to negotiate a % of fees, depending on the situation; don't forget you may be eligible for a grant.
- **Parents who aren't key workers.** The government advice is that children should stay at home wherever possible so these children will not be coming to you.
- Parents who are furloughed should be receiving 80% pay so it's reasonable for you to charge 80% fee
- Parents who are self employed or have been laid off may not be getting any income at all so in these cases you should try to negotiate a reasonable arrangement so no one is left in financial difficulties

Vulnerable Children

- The children will still come if you are open so normal fee applies
- If children are vulnerable but parents decide to keep them at home full fee normally applies but this should be covered in your contract (sickness and absence). However, you will be aware of each child's situation and may need to encourage them to attend to keep them safer. Again though, normally sickness absence is for a short period of time; during the current situation you will have fewer running costs and parents may have extra costs while the children are at home, so you may agree to negotiate a % of fees rather than full fees, depending on the situation.

I have decided to close my business (for self isolation, social isolation or social distancing reasons)

Parents who are key workers

- It's likely that they may have to find alternative care so it's not reasonable to charge full fee. However, if they are not paying for alternative care a % of normal fees may be acceptable to keep the place open

Parents who aren't key workers

- Normally our advice would be that if you are not open then it's not reasonable to charge. However, some parents may be prepared to pay a % of normal fees to keep the place open

Vulnerable children whose parents are key workers

- It's likely that they may have to find alternative care so it's not reasonable to charge full fee. However, some parents may be prepared to pay a % of normal fees to keep the place open when you reopen.
- For those with a social worker you should let the social worker know that you are no longer offering the place. Local authorities have been requested to try to find alternative provision for children who need it and can't attend their normal setting.

Vulnerable children whose parents are not key workers

- You should do all you can to ensure children's safety. For those with a social worker you should let the social worker know that you are no longer offering the place and the local authorities will try to find alternative provision.
- It may be reasonable to charge a % of normal fees to keep the place open when you reopen but it depends on the parents' financial circumstances

If Parents refuse to pay you or give you notice

- If parents give you notice, then your normal contractual agreement should still stand regarding any fees due.
- If parents give you notice but refuse to pay any fees due then it's up to you to decide if you want to pursue a claim. Your insurance company may help you with this
- If parents don't give you notice, but refuse to pay you any % of fees to keep the place open, then it is up to you to decide if the child is able to return to you afterwards