



# **New Leaf Triangle**

## **Booking and Cancellation Policy**

*Written by Lorraine Squires Shaw, Executive Director.*

*V5 – Reviewed May23 by Carly Steel, Head of Education and Kathryn Carter, Business Coordinator*

*V5.1 – updates made by Kath Carter June 24*

*Next Full Review Due June 25*

This policy outlines the terms and conditions of booking and cancelling sessions with New Leaf Triangle (NLT), whether for education or holiday sessions. It outlines the rights and responsibilities of both NLT and customers with regards to the commitments made to secure bookings and the impact of any cancelled or withdrawn bookings.

The 'customer' is defined as anyone who uses NLT services, including education placements, social care placements, leisure sessions (such as archery and horse riding), family camps, team building days and play schemes. They may be an individual, parent, school, college, social care service, another charity, an outreach service, a private company, or the local authority.

It should be noted that our policy takes account of our status as a not-for-profit, community interest company (CIC) with small margins and considerable overheads that apply even when students are not in attendance – eg the cost of maintaining the site, the medical, feeding and housing needs of our animals, legal and insurance commitments and our staffing. We depend on continued income to remain viable.

A copy of this booking and cancellation policy is made available to customers at the start of any placement or before a booked session, is available at all times on our website and can be emailed or posted on request.

### **Term-Time Education Sessions - Bookings**

Referrals for regular weekly sessions are booked for students by the customer through a referral process that involves a site visit, a referral form, a medical profile and activities permission form. (See our Education Referrals Information Sheet).

Start dates are determined by NLT once the referral process is complete and according to our availability on the requested day or days. Depending on demand on our places at the time of



making a referral, and on the customer's flexibility, start dates are usually between a week and six weeks from when the referral process is completed. At busy times, the waiting list for students to start may reach up to 20 names – and these will be worked through as fairly as possible according to limitations of preferred dates and times. NLT will do its best to keep everyone informed of the wait and progress through the waiting list. If a particular day or start time is required (eg because the customer needs to book transport arrangements which have long lead-in times) then NLT will work with the customer to support this, keeping in mind fairness to all customers who may be already on the waiting list. Where a start date has been agreed, NLT will consider this as the start of the placement (and apply charges and the cancellation policy accordingly) even if the referral process is not yet complete at the time of agreeing the start date, or if the placement then no longer goes ahead for any reason.

In fairness to all customers and to ensure vacancies are not left unfilled, it is not possible for customers to “reserve a slot” in advance of the referral process being undertaken.

For placements due to start or continue for the new academic year in September, confirmation is required four weeks before the end of the Leicestershire summer term. This allows any unconfirmed places to be released and refilled from the waiting list in time for the new term. Once a place is confirmed, a 4 week cancellation period applies as detailed below.

## **Term-Time Education Sessions – Cancellation of Placement**

Education sessions are usually booked with no end date due to the nature of the provision and the need for ongoing review. NLT requires 4 term time weeks' notice in writing to the business manager or director, of a placement coming to an end. This is to allow NLT enough time to make arrangements for a new student to start in this vacancy. Charges at the full rate will continue for 4 term time weeks from the point of being given notice. If the student leaves NLT provision within (or before) the notice period, the charges will continue to apply as normal. In rare cases, it may be possible for NLT to waive some of the cancellation charge if a new student is able to fill the vacancy quickly, but this will be at NLT's discretion.

In some cases, when the placement is first starting, a trial of one or two weeks may be offered before moving to regular sessions. There will be no notice period applicable during the trial week/s. This is to be agreed on an individual basis. If this option is taken then the space cannot be guaranteed as being available for future sessions, and the student may need to return to the waiting list before starting their place.

## **Term-Time Education Sessions – Cancellation of Individual Sessions**



If a student is unable to attend a regular, booked education session for any reason, NLT appreciate as much notice as possible in order for us to plan our scheduling. Full charges will still be applicable. This is because even with notice, we cannot cancel contracted staff hours, and we cannot refill the space when there is only one week available.

Our scheduling follows the term dates of Leicestershire County Council. Where term time dates for a particular school are different (eg if it is in a different county), missed sessions will still be charged, due to the reasons above, even if that student is on their half term break, unless a specific agreement has been made in advance with one of the NLT directors or the business manager.

Short-notice, or on the day cancellations and absences should be reported directly to our onsite operations manager (Lydia Gibson or Laura Jackson) either face to face or by calling or texting on the number below (see also our attendance policy).

- *Onsite Operations Manager: 07444 793717*

## **Holiday Sessions – Bookings and Cancellations**

Holiday Sessions are booked on an as-needed basis, usually as single sessions or a defined group of sessions (eg 5 sessions of 5 hours as part of Summer Scheme). At the point of booking, customers are advised of the terms and conditions of the booking, including the implications of cancelled sessions.

If a session needs to be cancelled with seven or more days' notice, no charges will be applicable. If the session is already paid for, the cost will be refunded or carried over to a rescheduled or future booking.

If a session is cancelled with less than seven days' notice, or the customer does not give notice at all for a missed booking, full charges will still be applicable, and no refund will be due. NLT will attempt to refill the space to another customer – in which case NLT may waive some or all of the charge accordingly. This cannot be guaranteed though and will be at NLT's discretion. (Please remember that NLT must still pay their staff, once they have been scheduled into the rota, and as a not-for-profit organisation, we can only do this if we have the corresponding income from the booked sessions).

Cancellations for holiday bookings should be made to the business manager, Kath Carter by email to [kath@newleaftriangle.org.uk](mailto:kath@newleaftriangle.org.uk) or, if short notice or on the day – by text or phone to 07597 296826; or by contacting the operations managers using the number above.



## **Cancellations by New Leaf Triangle**

Occasionally New Leaf Triangle may need to cancel a booked session at short notice for severe weather or other *force majeure*. In such cases, the full charge for the session will still be applicable.

At New Leaf's discretion, the charge may be partially or fully waived – eg for a parent who self-funds, particularly if the session is a family or respite session that can be rescheduled.

On rare occasions New Leaf Triangle may need to cancel a student's session due to staff sickness, in which case the charge will not be applicable.

Very occasionally New Leaf Triangle may need to reduce the number of hours provided to an individual or bring a placement to a close. Reasons for this may include severely challenging behaviour that endangers the individual or others or a lack of engagement in the provision. Referring bodies and parents/carers will be consulted and kept informed of any such difficulties and an agreement between all parties reached before any action is taken. More information can be found in the positive behaviour support policy about how we support behaviour and engagement.

We have an exceptionally high level of positive outcomes for individuals and there will come a time when they need to transition away from New Leaf Triangle. This may be to make the transition to school, college, employment, independent living or a different setting. We will always plan transitions with the individual and all stakeholders, including the family, through regular communication and person-centred reviews.

## **Cancellations due to health epidemics or other government restrictions**

New Leaf Triangle will always try to remain open in support of its vulnerable students, but on occasion, in accordance with government guidelines, we may need to close or partially close for a period of time, sometimes at short notice. We will do our best to inform and explain to our customers what we are doing with as much notice as we can, to minimise the disruption caused.

Where one or multiple sessions have been cancelled, (either by New Leaf or the customer) because of government restrictions being put in place, then the customer will be asked to pay in full for the first 28 days of the missed sessions. This charge will apply regardless of whether New Leaf is open, partially open or is closed, and whether New Leaf has had to ask for students



to not attend, or whether the parent/school/authority has made the decision about the student's absence.

If restrictions remain in place for over 28 days, New Leaf may need to ask providers to continue paying for any places they wish to keep reserved for their student. If not, places can be relinquished and then reapplied for when the student is ready to return. It is hoped that providers who continue to receive education funding will continue to pay throughout all government-enforced closure or restriction periods to help keep our business viable.

There are exceptions to the ongoing charging during absences, for example a parent who self-funds regular sessions may not be asked to pay the whole cancellation charge. Such cases will be agreed on an individual basis.