



## Payment of Fees/Child Care Subsidy Policy

### Policy Statement

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021).

Our service aims to ensure families understand the fee schedule and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child/ren. We are committed to meet our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Child Care Subsidy legislative requirements. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately. We will ensure the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the service about the enrolled child and family.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood and effective decision making and operation of the service

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

### RELATED POLICIES

Management of Grievances Policy Enrolment and Orientation Policy	Management Committee Policy Confidentiality Agreement Record Retention Policy
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### Establishing Fees

- Fees will be reviewed at least twice a year by the management committee based on the annual budget.
- Families will be given at least 2 weeks' notice of any changes in the fees structure.
- It is the families' responsibility to ensure bank details are up to date.
- It is the families' responsibility to provide the correct email address, recipient of the statement and ensure a statement is being received.
- A non-refundable one-off membership fee of \$25.00 per child or \$40.00 per family is required upon enrolment

### **Collection of fees**

- Direct debit is the only means of payment at this service
- Fees are charged for each session for before and after school care
- Fees are set up using the service's direct debit system. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account on enrolment
- Fees and charges associated with direct debit system are outlined upon enrolment.
- iPay Fee Schedule:
  - Bank account - \$0.75 per transaction.
  - Visa/MasterCard – 1.56% + \$0.75 calculated on transacted value.
  - Failed transaction - \$2.75 per failed or returned transaction attempt.
- Families will be issued with a *Statement of Entitlement* on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements
- The *Statement of Entitlement* will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts
- The *Statement of Entitlement* is generated using our CCS Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation
- Fees payable by families vary depending on the amount of Child Care Subsidy (CCS) rebate each family receives
- CCS is paid directly to the service and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's statement).
- Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount- the 'gap' amount
- Fees are to be paid fortnightly through a direct debit system.
- Please see the Centre Manager to make any alternative arrangements prior to the fees being due.
- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment.
- All records will be kept confidential and stored appropriately. Families may access details of their fees on request and at a suitable time for both parties.
- Fees are to be paid for the days the child is booked into the service, including times when the child is absent due to illness or holidays and for those public holidays falling in the school term.
- Fees are not payable for staff development days when the service is not operating.

- The service may be closed due to periods of local emergency such as bushfire, flood or pandemic.

### **Non-payment of fees**

- The Management Committee reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the centre
- Where a family owes any overdue fees, the child's place may be suspended until all outstanding fees are paid, or both parties agree to a payment plan.
- Fees not paid by the due date will be followed up as below:
  - An initial email and SMS stating that fees are overdue will be sent within a week of the iPay rejections report. The Nominated Supervisor will advise the family of the rejection description.
  - Full payment is required by the end of the next week (now 5 weeks overdue) which will be the week after the family has been advised.
  - Payment must be made by direct transfer and a copy of the receipt emailed to the service.
- Families are encouraged to discuss payment of fees and a payment plan may be entered into, if fees remain outstanding the child will be unable to attend until the account is finalised or the family will receive a letter terminating the child's position
- Samuel Gilbert OOSH reserves the right to employ the services of a debt collection agency and the family will be responsible for all fees associated with recovering their debt.
- A child/ren can only be re enrolled if fees are paid in full and the enrolment form is signed agreeing to ensure that fees are paid up to date and there is an understanding that the child/ren's position at the service will be in jeopardy.

### **Casual/emergency care fees**

Casual/emergency care availability is dependent on the daily child care numbers and with accompanying relevant information, e.g. medical, dietary information, contacts' address and phone details.

### **Child Care Subsidy (CCS)**

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their [myGOV](#) account linked to Centrelink and provide supporting documentation. If they wish to claim Child Care Subsidy.
- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy.
- Parents/guardians must:
  - care for their child at least 2 nights per fortnight or have 14% share of care
  - be liable for child care fees at an approved early childhood education care service
  - meet residency requirements
- The child must:
  - be 13 or under
  - not attending secondary school (unless an exemption applies)
  - meet immunisation requirements
- Childcare must be provided by an approved provider
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:

- family income estimate
- activity level
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- number of children in care
- type of early learning and childcare service
- Child Care Subsidy will be provided directly to the service and this amount deducted from the parent/family account
- Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstance to Centrelink- (family income, activity levels, relationship changes or any other changes to their circumstances)
- Any disputes with CCS payments are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments

All families must sign a written agreement and ensure it is kept up to date i.e., with fee increases for compliance.

- A family must agree to up-front arrangements for care of their child.
- There are four types of arrangement for the care of a child.
- 1. (CWA) Complying Written Arrangement
- 2. (RA) Relevant Arrangement
- 3. (ACCS) Additional Child Care Subsidy and
- 4. Arrangement with an organisation
- this must be recorded in either hardcopy or electronic form and can cover more than one child
- If the service does not receive the required information (as stated above) for Child Care Subsidy on commencement at the service full fees will be payable. It is the families' responsibility to investigate their individual eligibility for child care subsidy.

## **Absences**

- Families are requested to contact the service if their child is unable to attend a particular session this can be done by email, verbal or text (prior to 2.50pm)
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the service if their child is unable to attend.  
Under the Child Care Subsidy families are allowed 42 absence days per child, per financial year and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances. (See Child Care Subsidy Handbook).
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason, including public holidays and when children are sick.
- Records will be kept by the service for each absence.
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via [myGov](#).
- In a period of local emergency, such as bushfire or pandemic, and our Service is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families may be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

Once the initial 42 absence days have been exhausted, additional absences may be claimed in certain circumstances.

- An illness (with a medical certificate).
- Non immunisation
- Any other absences due to sickness of the child, a parent or sibling, supported by medical certificates.
- A guardian on a rotating shift or rostered day off.
- A temporary closure of a school or pupil free day.
- Shared custody arrangements due to a court order, consent order or parenting order.
- Exceptional circumstances.
- Periods of local emergency

All outstanding accounts are discussed with the management committee. Your child/ren's position at the service will be suspended if fees are overdue.

When families have left the service with outstanding accounts the management committee will attempt to recover the outstanding debt through the small claims process.

#### Additional Child Care Subsidy

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) provides extra help with the cost of early education and care
- There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:
  - Child wellbeing to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect. The approved provider is involved in determining children who may require additional support who are at risk of harm
  - Grandparents—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
  - Temporary financial hardship—to help families experiencing financial hardship. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
  - Transition to work—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the approved provider

#### **Late Pickup Fees**

The service closes at 6pm. Staff are at times required to lock the school gates at this time. Our service is not licensed or insured to have children on the premises after hours. This is a breach in the Education and Care Regulations.

#### **Penalty fees will be charged to the members account as follows**

These penalty fees are charged for every ¼ hour or part thereof after 6pm.

1<sup>st</sup> occasion: \$10.00 per ¼ hour; 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion \$20.00 per ¼ hour; 3<sup>rd</sup> occasion \$40.00 per ¼ hour; 4<sup>th</sup>

occasion membership will be terminated, and the child/children's place/s will be considered vacant. Wherever possible, parents shall advise the service when they are running late. This ensures that the staff do not commence contacting emergency contacts and they are able to provide reassurance to the child. The parent member will also advise the service if they have organised their emergency contact to collect their child/ren as documented on their enrolment form.

Parents/Guardians and the Responsible Person on duty will be required to sign a "late form" to acknowledge the departure time from the service. This will be issued to at the time of pick up which clearly outlines fee penalties and consequences.

The late pick up fee is calculated up to the time the parent leaves the service with the child.

If a parent continues to collect their child after 6pm, the management committee will discuss other options with them, and suitable arrangements made or the child's place in the centre may be cancelled.

### **Non-notification of absence fee**

A \$10.00 non-notification fee will be charged to the account of parents/guardians who fail to inform the service of their child/ren's absence from After School Care prior to 2.50pm.

### **Termination of Enrolment**

- Parents/Guardians are to provide two weeks written notice by completing the Change of Day/Exit questionnaire form.
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care.
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law.

### **Source**

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2021). [Policy and procedure guidelines. Payment of Service Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Service](#).

Australian Government Department of Education [Child care discount for early childhood workforce](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. Child Care Provider Handbook

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>

Australian Government Department of Education *Early Childhood and Care* <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood>

Australian Government Department of Education (2024). [Help in an emergency](#)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

Child Care Desktop - Payment of Fees Policy