

# PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY

## 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 support effective decision making and operation of the service |

| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS |   |
|--|---|
| 168  | Education and care services must have policies and procedures |

## RELATED POLICIES

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Enrolment Policy<br>Governance Policy | Privacy and Confidentiality Policy<br>Termination of Enrolment Policy |
|---------------------------------------|---|

## PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Service fee structure ensuring children’s fees are paid on time and that there are consequences for failure to pay fees on time.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to management and families of the Service.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The fee structure of the Service includes:

### Enrolment Fee & Bond Payment

- An administration fee of \$35 is charged upon application of enrolment.
- A bond fee of \$300 is to be paid to hold a child’s position at the Service.
- The Bond payment will be refunded to families when the child leaves the Service.

## General Fees

- Fees are charged weekly and vary depending on the Child Care Subsidy (which replaced the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate in 2018). The Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to the Service.
- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy for a child include:
  1. The age of the child (must be 13 years or under and not attending secondary school),
  2. The child meeting immunisation requirements,
  3. The individual, or their partners, meeting the residency requirements.
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
  1. Combined family income,
  2. Activity level of parents,
  3. Type of child care Service.
- Fees must be kept in advance of a child's attendance.
- Fees are to be paid weekly through a direct debit system. If families wish to pay fees on a fortnight or monthly basis, it is a requirement that the family pay in advance and are not in arrears.
- Fees are payable in advance for every day that a child is enrolled at the Service. This includes pupil free days, sick days, and family holidays but excludes periods when the Service is closed.
- Fees are charged at for either a standard day from 9:00am until 3:30pm or long day care from 7:30 am until 5:00pm (regardless of the actual attendance hours on any day).
- Casual days may be offered at a fixed price to families if available within the Service's license.

## Payment of fees

- Fees are set up using the Service's direct debit system. Invoices are issued a week in arrears
- Families will be issued with an invoice on a weekly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements.
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees.

### Financial Difficulties

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the approved provider. Families must contact the Director to discuss.

### Overdue Accounts

- If fees are more than 14 days overdue a reminder notice will be issued by email.
- If after 21 days, fees are not paid, a final overdue notice will be emailed and an account overdue hard copy placed in the parent pocket. The family will be contacted via email and/or phone to discuss the reasons for the unpaid fees and ways to remedy the overdue fees.
- If after 28 days, fees remain outstanding, the child's position at the centre may be suspended and the matter referred to the Magistrates Court where proceedings will be as follows:
  - A Form 1A-Final Notice will be issued to the account holder incurring a fee of \$20.30
  - A Minor Civil Action Claim will be issued to the account holder incurring an additional fee of \$140.00
  - A Request to Registrar will be filed against the account holder and the matter handed over to the courts. This final step incurs an additional cost of \$90.50

### Late Fees

- 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.
- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the Service. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time. Currently, a fee of \$20.00 per 10 minutes block or part thereof will be incurred by the family.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late with fee payment.

### Change of Fees

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of four weeks written notice is given to all families.

### Allowable Absences

- Children are entitled to 42 allowable absences per year. Childcare subsidies will still apply during the allowable absences, however under the Department of Education and Training legislation, allowable absences are not available for days after the child has ceased attending the centre and full fees will be applicable until the end of term.

### Termination of Enrolment

- Once your child is enrolled into a program and booking forms are signed by a parent/guardian for the following term’s bookings, fees for the term are payable
- Parents are to provide two weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the centre.
- If termination from the Service is required without notification, families can lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged.

### Responsibility of Management

- The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for the billing and chasing of fees.
- Should families wish to discuss fees, they will need to see the Nominated Supervisor.

### Source

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

### REVIEW

| POLICY REVIEWED | NOVEMBER 2019   | NEXT REVIEW DATE | NOVEMBER 2021 |
|-----------------|---|------------------|---------------|
| MODIFICATIONS   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sources/references alphabetised.</li> <li>- Formatting for consistency throughout policy.</li> <li>- Updated wording to reflect Long Day Care</li> </ul> |                  |               |