



Fees Policy

Introduction

Our service has a commitment to ensuring our fees are as affordable as possible and that all families have access to any subsidies that are available to reduce these fees. The setting and payment of fees takes into account all requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Australian Tax Office and Privacy Act. All records held at the service will be maintained in accordance with the service Confidentiality and Privacy Policy. Families will be provided with accurate fees statements and clear information regarding fee payment processes.

Aim:

To enable our service to provide high quality early education and care for children we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times. Our service's financial health and access to our service will be maximised by ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment.

Our service's financial health and access to our service will be maximised by:

- ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment;
- keeping fee increases to a minimum;
- ensuring the cost of administering fee collection is minimised;
- following the appropriate priority of access requirements;
- following all legal requirements required by our access to government funding;
- managing fee collection to avoid bad debts;
- families being notified as far ahead as possible and no less than 14 days of any changes to fees or the ways fees will be collected.

Strategies:

Fee Payable/Accounts

- ◁ The Approved Provider will determine the required fee level to meet budget prediction for the year.
- ◁ The fee schedule and fees payment policy will be fully explained to families during the enrolment process.
- ◁ Fees payable will be based on a daily amount and paid during the week of attendance.
- ◁ Families will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any fee increase.
- ◁ A statement of fees will be sent to parents/guardians at least twice a term.
- ◁ Families are required to pay fees on a regular schedule. A dated receipt, in accordance with Australian Government guidelines, will be provided for each payment.
- ◁ Toukley Preschool is closed on all National and NSW Public Holidays and NSW School Holidays. In addition, we are closed for 2 Pupil Free Days each year (on the first day and last day of each school year). No fees are charged on these days.
- ◁ Fee payment will be recorded according to Australian Government Guidelines. Families may also view details about their child care usage and total fees charged.
- ◁ Families should contact the service to advise of their child's inability to attend as soon as this is known. Fees will still be required on days the child would normally attend.

Payment of Fees

- ◁ Fees are payable from the agreed commencement date and two weeks bond must be paid in advance.
- ◁ Fees may be paid by electronic funds transfer, by direct deposit (internet banking) cash or cheque.

Overdue Fees

◁ Parents/guardians with overdue fees will be encouraged by the Nominated Supervisor to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay, including the option of a payment plan. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the matter may be referred to a debt collector and/or cancellation of the child's booking may occur.

Late Collection Charge

◁ Our service reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/ guardians regularly have not collected their child/ren from the service before closing time. This charge is set at a level determined by the Committee of Management. This fee is set at \$20 for first 10 minutes and an additional \$1 per every additional late minute. A letter informing the family of the implementation of the fee will be given to the family before a late fee is charged.

◁ The Nominated Supervisor will ensure families are made aware of the late fee if they are regularly late and organise for separate invoicing of late fees as needed.

Withdrawal from Centre

◁ The Nominated Supervisor will provide all families with a statement of outstanding fees on receipt of notification of withdrawal of a child from the service.

◁ Families will provide 2 weeks' notice of withdrawal from the service. If a child does not attend during this 2 week notice period full fees will be charged.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider will be responsible for:-

◁ Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011.

◁ Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements.

◁ Developing a fee policy that balances the parent's/guardian's capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability.

◁ Considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at the service and removing those barriers wherever possible.

◁ Providing parents/guardians with a regular statement of fees and charges.

◁ Ensuring that the Fees Policy is readily accessible at the service

◁ Notifying parents/guardians within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected.

◁ Ensuring a notice outlining the fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to the service.

Nominated Supervisor will be responsible for:-

◁ Providing parents/guardians with a regular statement of fees and charges.

◁ Collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documents regarding those with entitlement to concessions, where applicable.

◁ Notifying parents/guardians within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected.

◁ Ensuring a notice outlining the fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to the service.

Early Childhood Educators will be responsible for:-

◁ Referring parents'/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisors.

Families will be responsible for:-

◁ Reading this policy and referring any questions, queries or concerns to the nominated supervisor.

- ◁ Record the arrival and departure times of their child or children attending care.
- ◁ Ensure all fees are kept up to date.
- ◁ Provide 2 weeks notice of withdrawal from service. If child does not attend during this 2 week notice period full fees will be chargeable.
- ◁ Notifying the Approved Provider if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees.

Evaluation

- ◁ Families pay fees on time, and collect children on time.
- ◁ Fees are kept as low as possible whilst ensuring the service's financial health.
- ◁ Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.
- ◁ In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Legislative Requirements:

- ◁ Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- ◁ Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- ◁ Family Law Act 1975

Links to National Quality Standard:

- ◁ National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1

Sources:

- ◁ Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – www.acecqa.gov.au
- ◁ CCS Information – www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy
- ◁ Community Early Learning Australia (CELA)

Reviewed: July 2022