



STYLES STREET
Children's Community Long Day Care

FEES POLICY

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

To enable our Centre to provide high quality early education and care for children we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times. Prompt payment of fees allows us to plan with certainty. We have 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.

Our Centre's financial health and access to our Centre 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 are notified as far ahead as possible and no less than 14 days of any changes to fees or the way fees will be collected; and
- ensuring we issue receipts of fees on a regular basis.

2. STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. Fees

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure all families are made aware of the fees and available subsidies on enrolment;
- Ensure all families are aware on enrolment that fees are payable for all enrolled days of education and care regardless of whether the child is in attendance;
- Ensure the same fee will be charged to all families for equivalent care arrangements;
- Collect a wait list fee along with completed Application for Waiting List form. The fee is set at \$20 per child for new enrollments and \$15 for sibling enrollments;
- Collect a bond from families once a position for education and care has been accepted. The bond is set at 2 weeks of full fee payment and is required to secure the position. The bond is non-refundable unless the parent/guardian:
 - Follows the Centre's withdrawal procedures; or



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- Has indicated in the Re-Enrollment form that their child will not be returning in the following year.
- Annually review fees together with the Committee of Management (COM). Families will be given adequate notification of any increase;
- Reserve the right to increase fees at any time should it become necessary to ensure the continuing viability of the Centre;
- Families will be provided no less than 14 days' notice in the event of any fee increase;
- In the event a fee increase is advised a notice outlining the changes to fees will be prominently displayed in the main entrance to the facility; and
- Ensure the Fees Policy is readily accessible to all families;

Families will:

- Obtain a Customer Reference Number (CRN) from the Family Assistance Office as soon as practical before or after enrolment at the Centre; and
- Pay the balance of the bond on commencement.

2.2. Fee Payment Procedures

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure families are aware of fee payment options: Direct Deposit or payment by cheque for existing families. It is compulsory for all new families in the Centre from January 2016 to pay by direct debit through our iPay system in Hubworks. Fees will not be accepted in cash to ensure the safety of our staff;
- Ensure families are aware that they are required to pay fees 2 weeks in advance. Ensure all families are provided with a fortnightly receipt for payment of fees;
- Ensure all families are provided with a monthly statement of account;
- Implement an overdue fee process with any families whose fees are more than 2 weeks in arrears. This process includes:
 - Issue a 'Friendly Reminder' letter notifying the family of their outstanding fees. Families will be required to pay the outstanding fees (bringing them to 2 weeks in advance) within 1 week of the date of the letter.
 - Issue a 'Following Up Notice' letter if fees remain outstanding after 2 weeks of the 'Friendly Reminder' letter. Families will be required to pay at least half of the outstanding fees by the Friday of the week the letter is dated.
 - Issue a 'Final Notice of Outstanding Fees' letter if fees continue to be outstanding following the first and second letter. Total outstanding fees are to be paid within 7 days of the date of the letter. If payment arrangements are not made within 7 days and the outstanding fees are not paid in full the COM has the right to forfeit their child's position at the Centre and withhold the bond paid on enrollment.
 - Failure to maintain regular payment of fees will result in the COM reviewing the Centre's ability to provide education and care for their child/ren.
- Notify families within no less than 14 days of any proposed changes to the method in which fees are collected.
- Enter into a Complying Written Authority (CWA) with a parent or guardian, to provide childcare in exchange for fees. A CWA is an agreement between the Early Learning Childcare Centre service provider and a parent or guardian, to provide childcare in exchange for fees.
 - The provider and parents contact names and details
 - The date the arrangement is effective from
 - The child or children's full name and date of birth



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- Session days and start/end times
- Details of the fees to be charged
- Update any changes to the CWA as required.

Families will:

- Ensure fees are paid from the agreed commencement date and kept 2 weeks in advance at all times;
- Reimburse any bank charges relating to dishonored cheques incurred by the entre; and
- Notify the Nominated Supervisor if experiencing difficulties with payment fees.

2.3. Child Care Subsidy System (CCS)

- Our service will comply with the Australian Government requirements to be an approved education and care service for the purposes of Child Care Subsidy (CCS), reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering CCS will be maintained by the service.
- It is the enrolling parent/guardian's responsibility to register for CCS through their myGov account, provide their projected annual income, activity levels and the name of our service.
- All fees are charged at the full rate. Each family's eligibility for CCS is then calculated and the service is then forwarded these funds. Deductions may then be made to each individual family's accounts.
- Any changes in a family's financial circumstances may result in changes or cancellation of CCS. It is the family's responsibility to keep their details on myGov current and contact the Centrelink office if they wish to dispute assessments or discuss it further.
- Families will only be eligible for CCS if childcare attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult, and other eligibility requirements are met.
- Families are entitled to 42 absence days for each registered child in each financial year. CCS is paid for these days provided that the child would normally have attended on that day, and fees have been charged.
- Additional absences can be claimed when the first 42 days have been used. Supporting documentation may be required for approval of additional absences.
- All documentation pertaining to CCS will be kept for the specified period of time and made available to Australian Government Officers on request.

2.4. Late Fees

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Implement a late fee charge when families have not collected their child/ren from the Centre before closing time. This means they must have exited the premises by 6pm. Arriving at 6pm, yet leaving after 6pm, will still incur a late fee as this will require staff to stay back. This charge will be set at a level determined by the COM and based on the Centre's need to recoup expenses incurred in employee overtime wages. The late fee is as follows:
 - \$40 per 15 minutes (or part thereof) for each block of 15 minutes (or part thereof) that parents/carers are late (i.e. 6.01pm – 6.15pm)
- Ensure families are made aware of the late fee and their obligations for Late and Non Collection of Children within the Safety Policy on enrolment; and
- Ensure processes are in place for separate invoicing of late fees.
- In the case of extenuating circumstances, this may be waived. The final decision remains with the director.



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2.5. Public Holidays

Families will:

- Pay fees on public holidays if the holiday falls on their regular booked day (excluding the Centre's closure dates over the Christmas and New Year period).

2.6. Absences

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure families are aware that fees are payable for all days absent including illness and family holidays.
- Notify families of the Centre's closure dates over the Christmas and New Year period. No fees are payable at this time.

Families will:

- Contact the Centre to advise of their child's inability to attend as soon as this is known.
- Pay for all enrolled day(s) of education and care for which their child is absent due to illness or family holidays.

2.7. Withdrawal from the Centre

If a child leaves the centre for any reason, at least 4 weeks written notice must be given to the director or the Re-Enrollment form must indicate that their child will not be returning the following year and returned by the due date.

Fees will continue to be charged for any withdrawal notice period.

If a child does not attend on their last day of their enrolment CCS payments will not be applied to their fees from their last day of attendance at the service to their last day of enrolment. i.e., full fees will be payable for this time.

If a parent wishes to decrease their child's days, 4 weeks' notice must also be given to the director.

From February 2022 an 8 week notice withdrawal policy for the beginning and end of the year will come into effect. From February 2022, during the last 8 weeks before Christmas break, and the first eight weeks back after Christmas break, eight weeks' notice must be given for withdrawal from the Centre or changes to booked days. If a parent pays the holding deposit, then decides to withdraw their child within the first or last 8 weeks of the year, the holding deposit will not be refunded, and they will still have to pay for those 8 weeks of fees. This is for new and existing families. At all other times during the year, the minimum of 4 weeks' notice applies.

Notice periods may be reduced or varied at the director's discretion if the created vacancy can be filled by an existing enrollment or by a child on the Centre's waitlist.

Nominated Supervisor will:

- Provide all families with a statement of outstanding fees on receipt of notification of withdrawal of a child/ren from the Centre.

Families will:

- Provide 4 weeks written notice of withdrawal from the Centre or changes to booked days if the withdrawal/change of days is not within the first or last 8 weeks of the year.



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- Provide 8 weeks written notice of withdrawal or change of days when in the first or last 8 weeks of the year.

3. LEGISLATION AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – Regulation 168(2)(n)
- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care 2011 – Standard 7.1
- Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), as amended 2011

4. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

- Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) – www.cela.org.au
- Australian Government Department of Human Services - www.humanservices.gov.au
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au
- Safety Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Wait List Policy

Policy adopted: 14 September 2022

For review: September 2023