

Fees Policy

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QA7	7.1.2	Management systems - Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
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Aim

Parents fully understand fee payment procedures and requirements and pay their childcare fees on time.

Related Policies

Orientation for Children Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Implementation

Enrolment

- No booking fee is required when lodging an enrolment form.

Fees

Our childcare fees are outlined in our fee schedule which is available from our office/administration area. Fees must be paid on time and:

- **one week in advance**
- weekly or fortnightly in advance by cheque, direct deposit of EZI-Debit
- in advance for every day that your child is enrolled at the service. This includes pupil free days, sick days, family holidays and public holidays but excludes periods when the service is closed including over the Christmas and New Year break period.

Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidised care to which families are entitled.

<i>Hours of activity per fortnight</i>	<i>Maximum number of hours of subsidy per fortnight</i>
8 hours to 16 hours	36 hours
More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours

More than 48 hours	100 hours
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A broad range of activities meet the activity test requirements, including paid work, self-employment, unpaid work in a family business, active job hunting, volunteering or studying. You can also include reasonable travel time to and from a place of activity to the centre. In two parent families, both parents must meet the activity test, and subsidy hours are calculated on the lower number where parents have different levels of activity.

There are exemptions for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity test requirements.

Exemptions	Number of hours of subsidy per fortnight
<i>Families do not meet activity test and have low income eg combined annual income less than \$66,958 2108/2019 year</i>	24 hours
<i>Families do not meet activity test, child attends centre-based service with appropriate preschool program, and will attend school following year</i>	36 hours

The percentage of subsidy a family receives is based on their estimated combined annual income. All families wishing to access Child Care Subsidy need to complete an online Child Care Subsidy assessment through their myGov account. Assessment asks families to provide information about their expected combined family income, activity level of parents and types of child care service being used.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy may be available to help support:

- families needing help to support their children’s safety and wellbeing
- grandparents on income support who are primary child-carers
- families in temporary financial hardship
- families moving to work from income support

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a Child Care Subsidy claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the service on families’ behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our service enters families’ enrolment information online, and families confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees. Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is absent, for example due to illness, public holidays and parental leave. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlined in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

Statements of Entitlement

We will issue fortnightly Statements which include child/children’s full name/s, date of care, date of payment, daily and weekly hours of care, absences, hourly fees and hourly and daily fee totals and the number of hours fees were reduced (eg by Child Care Subsidy) and total reduction amount.

(Parents' My Gov accounts will also have how much care families have received and how much Child Care Subsidy has been paid.)

Invoices

Invoices for the amount of fees payable in a period will be issued every two weeks.

Receipts

Families will be provided with receipts once invoices have been paid.

Late Fees

Families who do not collect their child before we normally close for the day may be charged a late fee of \$15 for every 15 minutes or part thereof, they arrive past our closing time. This fee covers the cost of employing the staff required to supervise a child outside our operating hours. It may be waived at the discretion of the management.

Termination

Should you wish to end your child's place at our service, or should management make the decision to terminate your child's place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending/terminating party. If you do not provide this notice, you will be charged 2 weeks fees. Children must also be signed in and out by parents/guardians on the last scheduled day of their attendance for the Child Care Subsidy to apply. If this does not occur families are required to pay full fees.

Overdue Fees

The Nominated Supervisor will issue a **Friendly Fee Reminder** letter to any family who is one week late paying their fees. **If families are having difficulty making fee payments they should immediately speak with the** approved provider or nominated supervisor to discuss fee payment arrangements. Information provided by families will be treated as strictly private and confidential.

In cases of non-payment of fees, where the service is unable to contact families about the debt, or families do not meet agreed arrangements for repayment of the debt and ongoing payment of fees:

- bond payments will be applied to outstanding debt amounts and
- the Nominated Supervisor may immediately suspend or terminate the child's place at the service. Families will be advised of this action in writing.

Where families do not meet agreed payment plans, and an outstanding debt remains, management may use their discretion to engage a third-party agency to recover the outstanding amount. The cost of this action may be added to the debt owed.

Sources

Bryant, L. (2009). *Managing a Child Care Service : A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers*. Sydney: Community Child Care Co-Operative.

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Family Assistance Law

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Management
- Employees
- Family Members
- Interested parties

Reviewed: 30/01/2020

Date for next review: 30/01/2021