

# PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY

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).

Out of School Hours Care provides quality education and care for primary school-age children outside school hours and during school holidays. Our OSHC Service supports children to engage in play and leisure activities, develop new skills and build relationships with other children and educators whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our OSHC Service is committed to providing quality education and care to all children at an affordable fee for families.

As an approved childcare service, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to reduce fees to eligible families. Our fee structure is based on our ability to provide the requirements of the Education and Care National Law and National Regulations, Family Assistance Law, the Australian Taxation Office and guidelines contained in the Child Care Provider Handbook.

## 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
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

## RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017 A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999	Family Law Act 1975 Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix G <a href="https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook">https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook</a>
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## PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Outside School Hours Care Service fee structure, payment requirements and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains process of fee payment and the necessity of ensuring children's fees are paid on time and consequences for failure to pay fees on time.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor and visitors of the OSHC Service.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Our OSHC Service aims to ensure families understand the fee schedule and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. 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. Our OSHC Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

## GENERAL FEES

- Fees are charged for each session for before and after school care and per day for vacation care programs
- 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 must be kept in advance of a child's attendance
- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment [via email]
- Fees are to be paid weekly through a pay to bank account invoice. If families wish to pay fees on a weekly or monthly basis, it is a requirement that the family pay in advance and are not in arrears.
- Fees are charged for full sessions only (regardless of the actual attendance hours any day)
- Families are requested to contact the Service if their child is unable to attend a particular session

### NON – NOTIFICATION FEE

- A non-notification fee is added to families account when no one has contacted the service to let someone know their child/ren are absent.
- The non-notification fee is **\$10.00**.
- Parents will be given a reminder for first offences. After this reminder, the fee will be added to the families account.

### CANCELLATION FEE

- **One Weeks notice** for an After School Care / Before School Care Session. If parents have given notice within time frame there will be no charge.
- **One weeks' notice** for a Vacation Care Excursion for In Centre days. If parents have given notice within time frame there will be no charge.

### CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (CCS)

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their [myGOV](#) account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment
- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy.

The child must:

- be a 'Family Tax Benefit child' or 'regular care child' and
- be 13 or under and not attending secondary school and
- meet immunisation requirements

The person claiming the Child Care Subsidy, or their partner must:

- meet residency requirements and
- be liable to pay for care provided under a Complying Written Arrangement (their written agreement) with their childcare provider
- childcare must be provided by an approved provider
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
  - Combined family income
  - Activity test of parents
  - 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
- Discounts will only be offered as outlined in the CCS Handbook.

### PAYMENT OF FEES

- Fees are set up using “Pay to bank account” via invoice. The invoice will have the details for the account to be paid into.

### ABSENCES FROM OSHC SERVICE

- Families are requested to contact the Service if their child is unable to attend a particular session.
- Families will be charged if they have not contacted the service 48 hours prior.
- 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)
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law
- Records and evidence will be kept by the Service for each additional absence, where required
- 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

### FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the approved provider
- Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink if they are experiencing temporary financial hardship.
- There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:
  - **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

- **Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent)**—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
- **Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship)**—to help families experiencing financial hardship. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
- **Additional Child Care Subsidy (transition to work)**—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment

### DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURE

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder letter will be issued after **one week** and then again after **two weeks** if the fees are still outstanding
- At any time of the debt recovery process the family will be encouraged to enter a debt agreement with the service to repay outstanding fees.
- If families continue to dishonour payments a Third-Party Debt Recovery will be contacted. Third Party (E-Collect) will do the following:

They will Issue a formal demand by email, letter, SMS and phone call with instructions to pay the debt in full immediately.

Their fee schedule is the following:

Debts between \$1 - \$299 we deduct 27.50%  
 Debts between \$300 - \$999 we deduct 24.20%  
 Debts \$1000 and above we deduct 22.00%

Will commence 17/07/2023.

- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after **three weeks**, for which the family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time the OSHC Service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements.

### LATE FEES

- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the OSHC Service. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time
- Currently, a fee of **\$15.00** 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 **two weeks** written notice is given to all families
- CCS hourly rate caps may be increased by the CPI at the commencement of each financial year
- Any CCS hourly rate increases are governed by CCS and are automatically adjusted through our CCS Software.

### TERMINATION OF ENROLMENT

- Parents are to provide **two weeks** written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the centre
- If termination from the OSHC Service is required without notification, families can lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged
- 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

### RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor are responsible for:

- ensuring all families are aware of our *Payment of Fees Policy*
- ensuring enrolments are submitted correctly with the appropriate enrolment information
- providing families with regular statement of fees payable
- notifying families of any overdue fees
- providing families with reminder letters as required
- terminating enrolment of children should fees not be paid
- discussing fee payment with families if required
- providing at least **2 weeks written notice** to families of any fee increases or changes to the way fees are collected

### RESPONSIBILITY OF FAMILIES

- Provide the Service with the correct enrolment details to facilitate the CCS claim, if required, including:
  - Centrelink Reference Numbers for child and CCS claimant
  - Date of Birth for child and CCS claimant
- Ensure payment of fees as per policy
- Notify Centrelink of any changes that may affect their CCS entitlement

- Confirm their child's enrolment through the parents myGov account.

### THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS

Parents are generally liable to pay the co-contribution for childcare fees. Only state and territory governments (and their agencies) can contribute to the cost, in part or full, of child care fees for families. Where an agreement has been made between an employer or charity to assist in the contribution of fees the fees must be reduced accordingly before CCS has been applied.

Our Service will record all documentation regarding any third party payments.

### STAFF DISCOUNTS

Our OSHC Service offers educators and cooks a staff discount for children that attend our service, after CCS has been applied. The staff discount applies to employees who are employed, contracted or engaged to work with our services as an educator or cook.

OSHC coordinators are eligible to receive the staff discount if they hold an early childhood education and care qualification and are working at a service. The Staff discount is calculated at **50%** of full service fees after CCS has been applied and does not affect CCS eligibility. (Department of Education – [Childcare discount for early childhood workforce](#)).

### COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.

Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone or email:

Phone: 1800 664 231

Email: [tipoffline@education.gov.au](mailto:tipoffline@education.gov.au)

### Resources and information for families

[Child Care Subsidy](#)

[Centrelink Customer Reference Number](#)

[Absences from childcare- Australian Government](#)

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Payment of Fees Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually in consultation with families, staff, educators and management.

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Charmayne Nathan	Director	29/06/2023
POLICY REVIEWED	June 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	June 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Fee Policy Introduced</li> </ul>		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	