



Fees

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Policy Statement

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, *Privacy Act* and the guidelines contained within the *Child Care Provider Handbook*. 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.

Goals / What are we going to do?

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.

Strategies / How will it be done?

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.

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- ▷ Fees payable will be based on either weekly or fortnightly amounts.
- ▷ Families will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any fee increase.
- ▷ The same fee will be charged to all families for equivalent care arrangements.
- ▷ A statement of fees will be sent to parents/guardians monthly, in advance.
- ▷ Families are required to pay fees on public holidays that fall during the school term and are on their regular booked day.
- ▷ Fee payment will be recorded according to Australian Government Guidelines. Families may also view details about their child care usage and total fees charged and the fee reductions calculated by the Centrelink office (FAO) on the View Child Care Attendance online statement available through the FAO website.
- ▷ Permanent Bookings (Preschool and OOSH) are the same days needed every week during school terms. This is a secure position held for a child during program times on those days. If a child does not attend the program on their permanent days, a full fee is still charged. Changes to permanent bookings are subject to two (2) week written notice.
- ▷ Casual Bookings (OOSH only) are made when a day or days are required on a non-permanent basis. These bookings can be made at any time but are subject to the availability of positions. Once booked, if a child does not attend the program on their casual day, a full fee will still be charged. Fees apply once the place is booked.

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 child care 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.

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- ▷ 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.

Payment of Fees

- ▷ Fees may be paid by electronic funds transfer or by direct deposit (internet banking).

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 have not collected their child/ren from the service prior to 6pm. The service may charge \$17.50 for each additional 30 minutes (or part thereof) to assist with the cost to retain staff to supervise the child/ren.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▷ 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.

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Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ 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. ▷ Enter into a 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. It will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 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 » Session days and start/end times » Details of the fees to be charged ▷ Update any changes to the CWA as required.
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Referring parents'/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisors.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Reading this policy and referring any questions, queries or concerns to the nominated supervisor. ▷ Obtain a Customer Reference Number from Centrelink as soon as practical before enrolment at the service. ▷ Record the arrival and departure times of their child or children attending care. ▷ Pay for any booked day of education and care which falls on a public holiday.

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Related Legislation

- ▷ Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- ▷ Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- ▷ Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), as amended 2011

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▷ Ensure payment of all fees is kept up to date.▷ Provide documentation for additional absence days as required.▷ 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.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 18 months.

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.

RELATED GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORKS

- ▷ 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

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- 2021, Wagga Wagga Christian College
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