

PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY



Purpose

The Kinder Garden has a purpose to provide high quality early education and care for children and to be accountable of this we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times. Our service's financial visibility and access to our service will be ensured by having families made aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment.

Responsibilities of the Approved Provider

- Ensuring the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- Ensuring the service operates in line with any other relevant legislation regarding Child Care Subsidy.
- Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements.
- Developing a fee policy that balances family's capacity to pay, 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 families with a monthly statement of fees and charges (**Family Assistance Act 201D**).
- Ensuring that the Fees Policy is readily accessible at the service.
- Notifying families within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected (**National Regulation 172**).
- Provide the family with a statement of fees owing (**National Law 219(e)**).

Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor

- Providing families with a monthly statement of fees and charges (**National Regulation 168(n)**).
- Collecting all relevant information and maintaining appropriate documents regarding those with entitlement to concession, where applicable.
- Notifying families within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected (**National Regulations 172**).

Responsibilities of the Educators

- Referring families' questions in relation to this policy to the Approved Provider or Nominated supervisor(s).

Responsibilities of the Family

- Reading this policy and referring any questions, queries or concerns to the nominated supervisor.
- Obtain a Customer Reference Number (CRN) from Centrelink as soon as practical before or after enrolment at the service to ensure benefits are received.
- Any enrolling families from 30 March 2018 must complete a Complying Written Arrangement (CWA).
- Record the arrival and departure times.
- Complete a 3 step activity test to determine the family Child Care Subsidy (CCS) percentage.
- Provide documentation for additional absence days as required.
- Provide four (4) weeks' notice of withdrawal from service. If child does not attend during this notice period full fees will be chargeable.
- Notifying the Approved Provider if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees to see what assistance can be offered.

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 session(s) amount.
- Families will be given minimum of 14 days' notice of any fee increase or any change to the Fees Policy **(National Regulation 172)**.
- A statement of fees will be sent to the family fortnightly in accordance with Australian Government requirements.
- Families are required to pay fees on public holidays if the holiday falls on their regular booked day.
- Fee payment will be recorded according to Australian Government requirements. Families can also view details about their child care usage and total fees charged and the fee reductions calculated by the Family Assistance Office.
- 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.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and the Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS)

- Our service will comply with the Australian Government requirements to be an approved education and care service for the purposes of Child Care Subsidy. The online Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering Child Care Subsidy will be maintained by the service.
- It is the enrolling family's responsibility to complete and lodge their activity test with Centrelink to outline their benefits.
- All fees are charged and reported to the CCSS. Each family's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy 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 financial circumstance may result in cancellation or reduction of their CCS. It is the family's responsibility to contact Centrelink if they wish to dispute this or discuss it further.
- CCS will be deducted from a family's fee within 14 days of the service being notified of the amount via CCSS.
- Families will only be eligible for CCS if child care attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the family 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 attend on that day, and fees have been charged.
- Additional absence 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 the Australian Government on request.

Calculating the amount of Child Care Subsidy –

Step 1	Work out the individual's activity test result, in relation to the child, for the CCS fortnight that includes the week (see clause 11 of this Schedule).	If the activity test result is zero, the amount of child care subsidy for the individual for the week, for the sessions of care provided by the service to the child, is nil	Otherwise, go to step 2
Step 2	Work out whether the annual cap applies to the individual for the income year in which the CCS fortnight starts (see subclause (2)).	If the annual cap: (a) applies; and (b) has already been reached for the child for the income year (see subclause (3))	the amount of child care subsidy for the individual for the week, for the sessions of care provided by the service to the child, is nil. Otherwise, go to step 3.

Step 3	Identify all the sessions of care: (a) provided by the service to the child in the week; and (b) for which the individual is eligible for CCS.		
Step 4	Work out the hourly rate of CCS for the individual for each of those sessions of care (see clause 2).	If the applicable percentage is 0% for each of those sessions of care, the amount of child care subsidy for the individual for the week, for those sessions, is nil.	Otherwise, go to step 5
Step 5	Work out the activity-tested amount of CCS for those sessions of care (see clause 4).		
Step 6	The amount of CCS for the individual for the week, for the sessions of care identified in step 3, is: (a) the activity-tested amount; or (b) if the annual cap applies to the individual for the income year in which the CCS fortnight that includes the week starts, and the difference between the annual cap and the total previous CCS (see subclause (3)) is less than the activity-tested amount—that difference.		

Note: An individual who is receiving CCS by fee reduction might have a lower amount passed on than the amount worked out under this method statement, because of a withholding amount in relation to the payment. See sections 67EB and 201A of the Family Assistance Administration Act.

What information is required in statements?

Service Details	Name of Service	Australian Business Number	Childcare Benefit Approval ID
Family Details	Name of person who statement is issued	Name of Child(ren) to who care was provided	Enrolment ID(s) for the children
Care Details	Weekly total number of hours of care for where the fees were reduced by fee assistance payments	Total number of hours of care provided to the child; show both as daily and weekly amounts	Number of absence days used in the period covered by the statement
Financial Details	Amount of fees charged for the session(s) before any fee assistance	Amount of fee assistance payments for the session(s) (if any)	

	payments are taken into account (the total fee)		
Statement Period Details	Start and end dates of the statement period	Date of issue of the statement	

Complying Written Arrangement

A Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) is an ongoing agreement between an ECEC service provider and a Parent/Guardian, to provide care in return for fees. The CWA must contain a minimum amount of information as defined by the Government.

Service providers are required to have a CWA in place for each child in their care, as set out in subsection 200B(3) of the Family Assistance Administration Act.

A CWA is required for both of the following:

- *Transitioning families:* For the purpose of the transition, a family deemed to be a “transitioning family” must have been enrolled at your ECEC service prior to 29th March 2018.
- *New families:* For all families who have started attending ECEC services 30 March 2018 onwards, the service provider must ensure that they have all the information as specified in the Secretary’s Rules regarding CWAs.

Names and Contact details of the parties to the arrangement

The date the arrangement was entered into

The name and date of birth of the child to whom the session of care are proposed to be provided

Whether the care will be provided on a routine basis under the arrangement

Details about days on which sessions of care will usually be provided

Usual start and end times for these sessions of care

Whether care may be provided casual basis

Details about fees proposed to be charged to the individual for the sessions of care provided under the arrangement.

Fees

Enrolment Levy and Bond

On enrolment, all new families are required to pay an enrolment levy of \$100 (per family) towards the cost of administration of the new enrolment/s.

A \$200 bond is also required and will be refunded when your child/ren leaves the service. Please note that the bond will not be refunded if your child does not commence care as organised through enrolment.

Session Fee (Daily Fee)

From Monday 2nd July 2018, session fees are:

0-2 years (Seedlings) \$107.00

2-3.5 years (Sprouts) \$107.00

3.5-5 years (Gumnuts) \$97.00

Fee Payment

To maintain our financial integrity, The Kinder Garden has a unique system of payment that is compulsory for all families.

Fees are to be paid via the Ezi-Debit (direct debit) system.

Fees are payable from the agreed commencement date and must be paid two (2) weeks in advance.

Fees are payable in advance for every day of your child’s enrolment including public holidays, sick days and parent holidays. This excludes the weeks over Christmas when the service is closed.

Overdue Fees

Families 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 families have not collected their child/ren from the service before closing time. This charge will be set at a rate determined by the Approved Provider and based on the service's need to recoup expended incurred in employee overtime wages.

The Kinder Garden Engadine closes at 18:00 (6:00pm).

A late fee of \$5.00 per minute after the centre closes is applicable. This fee will be included in your childcare fee receipt/statement.

Please advise the centre if you are going to be late. All children are to be collected by the licensed closing time. We are not licensed after this time. Parents who are continually late are to sign a late departure form; three breaches of this will result in your child's position being terminated.

Centre Closure

When the service is closed over the Christmas/New Year break, no fees will be charged.

The centre will be closed from 6:00pm 21st December 2018, re-opening 7:00am 2nd January 2019.

Definitions, Terms & Abbreviations

Term	Meaning
CCS	Child Care Subsidy
CCSS	Child Care Subsidy System
FAO	Family Assistance Office
CRN	Customer Reference Number
CWA	Complying Written Arrangement

Related Statutory Obligations & Considerations

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW) Act 2010

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/acts/2010-104.pdf>

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017 <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01463>

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653/full>

Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), as amended 2011

Human Services <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/families>

Related Telephone Numbers

- Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate 1800 619 113
- ACECQA 1300 422 327
- Department of Human Services 136 150
- CCSS Helpdesk 1300 667 276

Amendment History

Version	Amendment	Short Description
1.7.2018	Inclusion of new subsidies and regulations	Removal of previous fee prices and calculations. Addition of new Child Care Subsidy regulations. Notification of fee increase. Changes to fee payment requirements.

This policy will be updated to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements every year. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulation*, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Date: 2nd July 2018

Version: 1.7.2018

Last Amended By: Heather Sheridan

Next Review: July 2019

Position: Nominated Supervisor