

FEES & CANCELLATION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Our service sets fees in accordance with its annual budget in order to meet the income required to develop and maintain a quality service for children and families. We strive to ensure that our service is affordable and accessible to families in our community. The Approved Provider ratifies the budget annually, or as necessary, and monitors it carefully throughout the year.

PROCEDURES

(a) Membership

- The service is an Incorporated Association and as such, families enrolling their child in the service are bound by the rules of the Association as per the constitution for the period of the child's enrolment.
- As a member of the Incorporated Association, one representative of the child's family is entitled to voting rights at any General Meeting held by the service and may be nominated (with consent) for a position on the Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

(b) Setting Fees

- Fees are to be set on an annual basis by management, based on the annual budget and ensuring that the required income will be received to run the service efficiently.
- Fees will be reviewed each year based on attendance and the centre's ability to meet the running costs. Parents will be given at least 2 weeks notice of any changes in the fees.

(c) Fee Payment

- Enrolment fee must be paid prior to a child/ren commencing care.
- Fees can be paid weekly, fortnightly, monthly or by the term but must be kept up to date and paid in advance for the following week.
- Casual and emergency care must be paid for on the day of care or by 6pm of the following Thursday.
- Fees are to be paid for the days the child is booked into the centre, including times when the child is absent due to illness. Exception given for family holidays of 2 weeks notice in writing otherwise fees will be due. CCS is paid for absent days of up to 42 days per financial year known as allowable absences, after 42 has been reached full fees are applied unless approved absences with evidence are used.
- Fees are not due for designated public holidays, teacher strike days, annual shut down, vacation care or pupil free days unless bookings have been made.
- Receipts will be provided for payments through the invoicing system.

(d) Child Care Subsidy

- Child Care Subsidy is the payment made by Government to assist families with the costs of childcare. It is paid directly to the service and passed on to families as a fee reduction.
- Families are required to make a co-contribution to their child care fees and pay the service the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.
- The service is not directly involved in the calculation of a family's entitlements this is a matter between the family and Centrelink. The family is responsible for ensuring that Centrelink has processed their information and they have logged on through My Gov to confirm their enrolment at the service.
- Families should ensure they provide true and complete information to Centrelink for the purposes of claiming Child Care Subsidy. This is a legal requirement of families, and the provision of incorrect information may result in families incurring debts that need to be recovered at a later date by Centrelink and/or the service.
- In the event of a dispute between Centrelink and the family or the failure of Centrelink to make a payment of subsidy to the family full fees are payable until such time as the subsidy is reinstated.

(e) Bookings and Permanent Cancellations

- Each family is expected to make bookings in advance, for the care sessions required. Bookings will only be accepted when families have completed the service's Enrolment Form in full. Where there is no availability for permanent bookings, families will be placed on a waiting list and notified as positions become available.
- Families wishing to cancel their child's place at the service are required to provide two (2) weeks written notice to the Nominated Supervisor, or they are liable to pay the equivalent of two weeks childcare fees to the service. A relinquishment form will also be completed.

(f) Absences & Cancellation of Daily Care

- Fees are payable for any cancellations including sports, music, appointments etc throughout the year and sick days if those days fall on a day that a child is booked into the service. Also applies to Vacation Care for any cancellation made after a booking.
- The service will provide families with information about approved and allowable absences and will adhere to the Child Care Management System (CCMS) in relation to absences.

(g) Service Closure

- No fee is charged while the service is closed over the Christmas / New Year period.

(h) Family Holidays

- No fee is charged if 2 weeks written notice is given for any family holidays.

(i) Payment of Fees

- Fees must be paid once Invoiced, within the stated due date. A statement of fees charged by the service will be provided to all families (Regulation 168).
- Failure to pay unpaid fees may result in debt recovery action being taken and discontinuation of care for the child unless the family has initiated a repayment schedule for the unpaid fees with the Nominated Supervisor.

(j) Debt Recovery / Overdue Fees

- The Approved Provider reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the service. This can include the engagement of debt collectors to recover the monies owed.
- Where a family owes any overdue fees to the service, the child's place maybe suspended, until all outstanding monies are paid, or both parties agree to a payment plan. Fees not paid by the due date will be followed up as below:
 1. Contact will be made after 7 days including an initial letter of warning stating that fees are overdue, and need to be paid immediately.
 2. If payment is not received within 14 days, a second letter will be sent notifying parents/guardians that their child's place at the service will be withdrawn.
 3. Your child will be excluded from the centre after 21 days and the account will be handed on to our debt recovery agency where legal action may be taken to recover all monies owing.
 4. The Approved Provider will reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector and the family will be responsible for all fees associated with recovering the debt.
 5. Any account in debit will be refused Vacation Care bookings unless settled prior to commencement. Same applies to Before and After School care bookings including casual.
 6. If no arrangements or agreements made, the child's place maybe cancelled and parents/guardians notified in writing due to in cooperation.
- If a payment plan is drawn up and the contract signed by both parties is not adhered to, your child will be excluded from the centre immediately and the account sent to the debt recovery agency.
- Where the debt is carried over from a family who has since left the service and no current mailing information is available a phone call from the service to recover debt maybe necessary. When payments for a debt have ceased for a period of time a follow up email or phone call may also be necessary.

(k) Late pickup fee

- The service operates from 2pm to 6pm after school care and 7.30am to 5.30pm for vacation care and pupil free days. The Staff are unable to accept children in the service outside of these hours. Should children be present after the closing time, a late fee per current fee structure will apply.
- The hours and days of operation of the service will be displayed prominently within the service (Regulation 173).
- In circumstances that are beyond the control of families, for example, weather and traffic accidents, which may result in them arriving late to collect their child, the Nominated Supervisor will have discretion to decide if families will be charged the late fee.
- Families who are continually late collecting their children, without a valid reason, may jeopardise their child's place at the service. Should this be the case, the Nominated Supervisor will meet with the family to discuss this.

(l) Methods of Payment

- Fees can be paid by:
 1. Direct Deposit - from your bank account to the service's bank account. Details of the service's bank account and instruction are included in the Parent Handbook and fact sheet.
 2. Cheque – made out to Belair OOSH.
 3. Cash
- Families will be given a minimum of fourteen days notice of any changes to the way in which fees are collected (Regulation 172).

(m) Confidentiality

- All information in relation to fees will be kept in strict confidence. Members of staff, management or the Approved Provider will not discuss individual names and details openly. Information will only be available to the nominated persons required to take action, for example, to initiate debt recovery.
- Families may access their own account records at any time, or particulars of fees will be available in writing to families, upon request.

(n) Increase of Fees

- The fees are set by the Approved Provider in order to meet the budget for each financial year. There will be ongoing monitoring of the budget and, should it be necessary to amend fees, families will be given a minimum of fourteen days notice of any fee increase (Regulation 172).

(o) Acknowledgement of responsibility to pay fees

- Families are required to read and sign the *Disclaimer* of the service's Enrolment Form stated 'Costs of Debt Recovery Clause'

CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
168, 172, 173	7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrolment Form• Enrolment & Orientation Policy• Delivery & Collection of Children Policy• Confidentiality Policy• Governance & Management Policy• Parent Handbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Care Management System

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval Date: April 2019

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