



# Fees Policy

## Introduction

To enable our service to provide high quality early childhood education and care for children we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times. We have 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. Our service will advocate with governments for all children's right to access early education and care regardless of their family's financial situation.

The Fee Policy is subject to regular review and may be adjusted by the Board of Management. Families will be given fourteen (14) days notice of any change/s to fees and charges.

## **Our Preschool's financial viability and access to our service will be maximised by:**

- ✓ Ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment;
- ✓ Keeping fee increases to a minimum;
- ✓ Ensuring the cost of administering fee collection is minimised;
- ✓ Following the appropriate priority of access requirements;
- ✓ Following all legal requirements and service agreements required by our funding bodies;
- ✓ Managing fee collection to avoid bad debts;
- ✓ Families are notified at least 14 days in advance of any changes to fees or the ways fees will be collected;
- ✓ Ensuring we issue statements of account indicating fees charged and owing fortnightly.

## Priority of Access

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- ✓ Ensure vacant places are filled under the appropriate priority of access policy for the service type. (NB – For CCB approved places:
  - ✓ **Priority 1** – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect;
  - ✓ **Priority 2** – a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work, training, study test;
  - ✓ **Priority 3:** other child.

### **Priority should also be given to the following children:**

- ✓ Children who are at risk of harm, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children,
- ✓ Children from low income families,
- ✓ Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,
- ✓ Children with disabilities,
- ✓ Children in their year before school (with highest priority given to children closest to school entry).



### Fees

- Ensure adequate records of attendance are kept for each child as required;
- Ensure fee reductions are administered to eligible families who are on low income with the following deemed as proof of low income:
  - ✓ health care card;
  - ✓ pension card;
- Ensure fee reductions are administered to families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background;
- Ensure the service remains financially viable and can meet its debts and other obligations as they fall due;
- Review fees at least twice annually in line with CPI and market forces;
- Only collect and disclose personal information about children and families to DEEWR/the Family Assistance Office (FAO) / the Department of Education and Communities where disclosure is legally required.

### Fees

**Our service's financial viability and access to our service will be maximised by ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment.**

The following fees and charges must be paid by the family enrolling a child or children prior to children attending the service for the first time and /or prior to commencing the school term:

**Membership – \$2.20** payable annually, a requirement of the Nambucca Heads Preschool's Constitution. This fee must be paid for any child to attend the Preschool.

**Bond** – two weeks' fees in advance is held as 'bond' on the client's account. This is allocated to fees or refunded to 'billing master' (paying parent) as per HubHello, upon the cessation of enrolment. The bond will automatically roll over for children who attend the centre in consecutive year/s.

**Administration Fee – \$20** payable per family per term. In case, a child enrolls at Preschool two weeks prior to the end of term, this fee will be waived.

**Insurance Fee – \$5.50** must be paid per child per term and will be added to family's the account.

### The Nominated Supervisor will:

- ✓ Ensure all families are made aware of service fees, other charges and available subsidies on enrolment;
- ✓ Ensure statements of fees are given to all families no less than fortnightly;
- ✓ Submit attendance records to NSW Department of Education & Communities *Children's Services Data Collection* on regular basis and as required;

### Families will:

- ✓ Accurately record the arrival and departure times of their child or children attending the service; and
- ✓ Retain their Receipt/s for fees paid. Copies will be supplied to families at the cost of \$0.10 per sheet upon request. Notice of one week should be given at all times.



## Fees

### Fee payment procedure

#### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- ✓ Ensure families are aware of fee payment options:

**Direct Deposit** into Preschool's account at BCU (account type S11) – child's name to be used as a reference

**Internet banking** – transfer of fees between family's bank account and the Preschool's account at BCU. The child's name is to be used as reference

**Cheque** – either at the office or placed in an envelope clearly marked with date and family name including Child's name and placed in the red fees box located in the Green Room;

**Cash** – Families should make all cash payments at the office. Some families prefer to place cash payments in an envelope clearly marked with date and family name including child's name and deposit it in the red fees box located in the Green Room. This is done at the payee's own risk (Preschool staff or management does not take responsibility for any monies deposited in such manner).

**N.B. The Preschool staff or management are not responsible for any monies or cheques deposited into the Fees Box.**

- ✓ Ensure parents who supply their Pension Card or Health Care Card as proof of low income are charged subsidised fees.
- ✓ Implement an overdue fee process with any families whose fees are not two (2) weeks in advance at all times.

#### **Families will:**

- ✓ Ensure all fees are kept two weeks in advance at all times.
- ✓ Supply Preschool with a copy of Pension Card or Health Care Card as proof of low income if they want to be assessed for subsidised fees.
- ✓ Finalise their accounts by the end of the week prior to the end of each term at minimum. Failure to do so will result in the termination of the child's or children's enrolment at the Preschool. Fees, charges and commissions incurred by the Preschool for collection of any debt will be added to the outstanding account and payable by the family.

### Late Fees

#### **The Approved Provider will:**

- ✓ Levy a fee for families who collect their child/children after 4.00pm will be set at \$50.00 as this is the official closing time for the centre.
- ✓ Fridays children are to be collected by 3.00pm. A \$10 late fee will apply for each 15minutes or part there of.

#### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- ✓ Ensure families are made aware of late fee on enrolment; and
- ✓ Ensure late fees are invoiced on families' statements of account.



## Public Holidays

### **Families will:**

Not be charged for any booked day of education and care which falls on a public holiday.

## Absences

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- ✓ Ensure families are charged fees for absences which fall on any booked day of education and care.
- ✓ Contact the parents/carers, on the contact number/s provided to Preschool, of any child who is absent on their booked days for 2 weeks without notification. In case/s when the parents/carers cannot be contacted due to invalid contact details and/or an explanation is not supplied, the child's enrolment at the Preschool will be cancelled. A letter will be forwarded to the parents/carers informing them of the cancellation and a balance of fees owed and payable.
- ✓ Ensure that the absence/s due to the non-vaccination of a child of a vaccine preventable disease is charged at the child's normal daily fee.

*In exceptional circumstances when extended periods of absences are necessary and unpredictable, primarily in the event of illness or health related emergency, charges may be waived. This is subject to application and approval by the Board of Management and requires supporting evidence, such as doctor's certificate.*

### **Families will:**

- ✓ Notify the Preschool as early as possible if their child is going to be away for any reason on the day/s they are booked in to attend.

## Withdrawal from Centre

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- ✓ Provide all families with a statement of outstanding fees on receipt of notification of withdrawal of a child from the service.

### **Families will:**

- ✓ Provide two (2) week's notice of withdrawal from service. If child does not attend during this 2 week notice period full fees will be charged and payable by the family.

## Outstanding Accounts

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- ✓ Enforce the suspension of enrolment of children whose account is three weeks or in excess of three weeks overdue in fees and charges as informed by the administration officer responsible for the Preschool accounts.
- ✓ Negotiate, in writing, a repayment with the family that will see the outstanding amount repaid within maximum of three months.



**Fees**

*N.B. Preschool reserves the right to withdraw any such agreement and proceed with debt collection should the agreement be breached by the person undertaking the responsibility of the payments on the outstanding account.*

- ✓ Ensure families receive the following notices for overdue accounts:

**1 week overdue** – statement of account shall be marked with a reminder of an ‘overdue account’

**2 weeks overdue** – a letter of request of payment of outstanding account by a set date, giving seven days (7) to make payment in full, will be issued to family. It will be stipulated in letter that the child’s or children’s placement at the Preschool is at risk. If necessary, a re-payment arrangement can be made as per conditions above.

**3 weeks overdue** – a ‘Final Notice’ letter of demand of payment of the outstanding account, giving seven days (7) to make payment in full, will be issued to family. The letter will clearly state that the placement at Preschool has been cancelled due to unpaid account, the date the child cannot attend the centre from, and the due date for payment. Child does not attend the service while payments are being made.

**The enrolment of a child will be cancelled if that child is absent for two consecutive weeks without notification or explanation by family member/s and the parents/carers cannot be contacted.**

**Educators and staff will:**

- ✓ Familiarise themselves with the fee policy;
- ✓ Refer families to the office as requested by Nominated Supervisor or Administration personnel;
- ✓ Support and assist the Nominated Supervisor and/or Administration personnel in the collection of outstanding accounts.

**Statutory Legislation & Considerations**

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) ACT 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

**Sources**

Child Care Services Handbook 2011 – 2012 DEEWR

Community Child Care Co-operative Ltd (NSW)

Reviewed	
Date	By whom
15/03/2013	Written by Alice Marquardt
18/03/2013	Committee, Staff, Families
18/11/2014	Alice Marquardt
02/02/2016	Debbie Rix
30/01/2017	Debbie Rix
30/10/2018	Alice Cermak