

# Fee Payment Policy

## Scope

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

## Statement

Quality early education and care provides the foundation for children’s development and social engagement whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our Preschool is committed to providing quality education and care to all children at an affordable fee for families. As a community based not-for-profit service, Willoughby Community Preschool relies on the prompt payment of fees to ensure its viability.

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.

## Legislative Requirements

### 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

## Related Policies

Dealing with Complaints Policy Delivery of Children to, and Collection from and Education and Care Service Premises Enrolment Policy	Governance Policy Orientation of Families Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy WCP Accounting and Administrative Procedures and Policies Work Health and Safety Policy
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## Goal

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the 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.

## Strategies

All strategies detailed below are to be endeavoured to be implemented to the extent reasonably practicable.

## Implementation

Our 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 Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

## Fees payable and responsibilities of families and the Preschool:

### **Wait List Fee:**

A Wait List fee accompanies each Wait List application for each child/family and may be paid via EFT. The Wait List fee is entered into the Preschool's Electronic Interface Provider (EIP) and a receipt is generated and emailed to the applicant. The Wait List fee is non-refundable.

### **Enrolment Acceptance Fee:**

An Acceptance Fee is payable by each family on acceptance of a Preschool placement. Payments may be paid via EFT. An Acceptance Fee is payable by successful applicants by the nominated date outlined in the letter of offer. The Acceptance Fee payment accompanies the signed Acceptance and Acknowledgement slip from parents or carers to confirm acceptance of the Preschool placement. Upon payment, a receipt will be generated and distributed via email from the Preschool. Acceptance Fees are determined by the Management Committee from time to time and the letter of offer specifies that current Acceptance Fee.

Once paid, the acceptance fee will not be refunded by the Preschool unless:

- the child completes their last year at Preschool, and all other outstanding fees have been paid to the Preschool in full; or
- if the child commences and departs the Preschool prior to the end of the year, four weeks prior written notice has been given to the Director, and all fees have been paid in full up to the exit date. (Notice of withdrawal cannot be given and will not be accepted at any time during the final four weeks of the Preschool year).

### ***Membership of the Association Fee:***

The Preschool is an association incorporated under the New South Wales Associations Incorporation Act (2009). The Act requires a member of each family to be a member of Willoughby Community Preschool Incorporated (the Association) which requires payment of an initial registration fee and an ongoing annual membership fee. A fee covering the Association Membership is invoiced to each family upon the child's commencement at the Preschool each year and a receipt is issued as soon as practicable after payment is received. The Preschool's Public Officer files the completed Membership of the Association forms, maintains the Register and provides a copy of the Register for the auditor.

### ***Preschool Fees:***

The Preschool operates under the Federal System as an extended hours Preschool and those eligible will be able to claim the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). If eligible, the CCS will be paid directly to the Preschool and the family will be liable for the balance of fees.

Preschool Fees are invoiced fortnightly for the current week and one week in advance. The method of payment is via the Debitsuccess payment gateway. Upon enrolment, families are required to complete a Debitsuccess Direct Debit Request Form with details of their nominated credit or bank account. These details are then entered into the Preschool's EIP. Changes may be made to a family's nominated payment method by advising the Director in writing. A Statement of Account is generated in the Preschool's EIP and emailed to the family in advance of Debitsuccess withdrawing funds from their nominated account. In the event of a default in payment, the Preschool is notified and an email is sent to the family and an arrangement will need to be made to clear the debt. The Statement identifies the account holder, child, hours of attendance including absences and balance owing including the CCS Summary if eligible. If fees fall 3 weeks in arrears and an alternative payment arrangement has not been made with the Director, the child may be excluded from the Preschool until payment is made.

If families wish to pay fees on a monthly or 10 week basis, it is a requirement that the family pay in advance and are not in arrears. A Preschool Fee payment is still required for any absences from Preschool including absences applicable due to the child's illness or extended holidays.

If fees fall 3 weeks in arrears and an alternative payment arrangement has not been made with the Director, the child may be excluded from the Preschool until payment is made.

A Statement of Account is received via email in advance of Debitsuccess withdrawing funds from the nominated account. In the event of a default in payment an email is sent to the family advising of such and an arrangement is made to clear the debt. The Statement identifies the account holder, child, hours of attendance including absences and balance owing including the CCS Summary if eligible.

Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink if they are in temporary financial hardship. ACCS provides extra assistance for up to 13 weeks. A Preschool Fee payment is still required for any absences from Preschool including where required due to your child's illness or extended holidays.

NSW Government Start Strong Fee Relief Funding is available to children who turn 4 years of age before the 31<sup>st</sup> July in the year they are enrolled. Please visit the website for more information [Start Strong for LDC](#)

### ***Child Care Subsidy (CCS):***

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their [myGOV](#) account linked to Centrelink and provide supporting documentation.
- 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 Preschool 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 is the responsibility of the family.
- If a session of care falls on a public holiday, families are required to pay normal fees. CCS may be paid for sessions that fall on public holidays.

### ***Late Collection Fee:***

Our Preschool is not licensed or insured to have children on the premises after hours. This is a breach of the Education and Care Regulations. It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the Preschool.

In the event families are late to collect children, a Late Collection Fee of \$10 per 5 minutes applies and will be added to the next fortnightly Statement of Account for a late pickup after 3pm or 4pm, depending on the option chosen by the family, whichever finishing time is applicable for that child. This amount may change from time to time.

### ***Grounds and Maintenance Levy:***

Parent involvement in a Grounds Maintenance Working Bee is a requirement of enrolment at Preschool. Parents either elect to participate at a scheduled 4-hour Saturday morning working bee once per year or may elect to pay \$100 per annum in lieu of attendance at a Working Bee. The fee will also be applied to those who did not attend on their elected day (unless an alternative is agreed with the Director).

### ***Replacement Hat or Reusable Wet Bag Fee:***

In the event a lost hat or reusable wet bag, in accordance with our Sun Protection Policy and Work Health and Safety Policy, Educators will supply a replacement Preschool hat or reusable wet bag. The fee will be applied to the Statement of Account.

### ***Replacement Mediband Fee:***

The Mediband is required to be worn daily as per our Medical Conditions Policy. If children lose their Mediband, parents are required to purchase a new Mediband from the Director.

### ***Fee changes:***

Current daily rates are outlined in the Letter of Enrolment Offer. All Fees referred to in this Policy are reviewed at least annually by the Management Committee, and may be adjusted from time to time, taking into account matters such as resourcing needs and changes in the Preschool's operating costs over time. Changes will be notified in writing to the Preschool community.

Should families wish to discuss fees, they will need to speak with the Nominated Supervisor.

## **Responsibility of Management:**

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- ensuring all families are aware of our *Fee Payment Policy*
- ensuring enrolment information includes the parent/guardian's Customer Reference Number (CRN) and date of birth and the child's CRN and date of birth
- ensuring Start Strong Fee Relief Declarations are received signed by the guardian
- 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

## **Responsibility of Educators:**

### ***Wait List and Enrolment Acceptance Fees:***

Educators accept completed Wait List applications and Enrolment Forms accompanied with associated fees and place them in the Director's in-tray. Educators inform the applicant that a receipt will be generated and emailed to them.

### ***Late Collection Fee:***

Educators are required to document the time a parent/carer arrives for late collection of a child and ensure that the parent/carer signs the Late Book.

### ***Replacement Hat Fee and Reusable Wet Bag:***

In the event a lost hat or wet bag, in accordance with our Sun Protection Policy and Work Health and Safety Policy, Educators will supply a replacement Preschool hat or reusable wet bag. The fee will be applied to the Statement of Account.

### **Replacement Mediband Fee:**

The Mediband is required to be worn daily as per our Medical Conditions Policy. If children lose their Mediband, the educator will refer parents to purchase a new Mediband from the Director.

### **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
- Return Start Strong Fee Relief Declaration if applicable
- 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 childcare 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.

### **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@dese.gov.au](mailto:tipoffline@dese.gov.au)

### **Resources and information for families**

[New Child Care Package Information for Families Resources](#)

[Child Care Subsidy](#)

[Child Care Package Overview](#)

[Centrelink Customer Reference Number](#)

[Absences from childcare- Australian Government](#)

### **References**

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Education Child Care Provider Handbook  
[https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/child\\_care\\_provider\\_handbook\\_0.pdf](https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/child_care_provider_handbook_0.pdf)

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment *Early Childhood and Care*

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment *Information for child care providers when a period of local emergency occurs*

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020)

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018)

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	MARCH 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MARCH 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy maintenance – related policy name change- Arrival and Departure Policy</li> <li>Start Strong Fee Relief Funding added</li> <li>no major changes to policy</li> <li>minor formatting edits within text</li> <li>hyperlinks checked and repaired as required</li> </ul>		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
AUGUST 2021	Update of Related Legislation Policy revised to align with recommendations with ACECQA’s policy guide (August 2021) Updated Related Policies Check of links used within policy	MAY 2022	
MAY 2021	Policy reviewed following updates in October 2020 as part of yearly review cycle Policy content and sources current Resource-Overdue Fees Procedure information added	MAY 2022	
OCTOBER 2020	Minor adjustments recorded Additional information added- ACCS, absences, responsibility of families, CCS tip-off line and complaints.	MAY 2021	
MARCH 2020	Policy statement added Implementation information added CCS section included Absences section added Responsibility for Management expanded Resources and information section added	MAY 2021	
March 2019	Sources/references alphabetised. Minor formatting for consistency throughout policy. ‘Related policies’ alphabetised.	MARCH 2020	

MAY 2018	Changes made to comply with Regulations and changes to Child Care Subsidy	MAY 2019
OCTOBER 2017	Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard	MARCH 2018
MARCH 2017	Minor changes made to ensure compliance with regulations and government requirements.	MARCH 2018