

PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021).

Out of School Hours Care provides quality education and care for primary school-age children outside school hours and during school holidays. Our OSHC Service supports children to engage in play and leisure activities, develop new skills and build relationships with other children and educators whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our OSHC Service is committed to providing quality education and care to all children at an affordable fee for families.

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.

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
Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related
legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix G
<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>

PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Outside School Hours Care 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.

SCOPE

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

IMPLEMENTATION

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

FEE STRUCTURE

Please note our fees may change from time to time and are reviewed twice yearly.

Annual Registration Fee

- An annual family registration fee of \$15.00 is charged upon confirmation of enrolment. This fee will be invoiced to families.

General Fees

Full fees before Child Care Subsidy (CCS) entitlement:-

Before School Care	\$12.25
After School Care	\$24.50
Student Free Day/Holiday Care Day	\$63.00
Excursion Day/Special Activity Day	\$TBA depending on additional costs per day
Early Finish (last day of term and other recognised days)	\$8.00 (2:15pm to 3:15pm)
Not Notified Fee (After School Care)	\$5.00 per family

- Fees are charged for each session for before and after school care and per day for holiday care and student free day programs.
- CCS is paid directly to the Service and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's statement).
- Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount - the 'gap' amount
- 'Gap Fees' must be paid via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) (effective 02 July 2023)
- Receipt payments will appear on tax invoices.
- Fees must be paid weekly. Arrangements must be made with Director for fortnightly payments.
- Fees are charged for full sessions only (regardless of the actual attendance hours any day)
- Fees are processed a week in arrears and tax invoice will be emailed to families.
- Families are required to contact the Service via email if their child is unable to attend a particular session

Late Pickup Fee

- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the OSHC Service. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time (6:15pm).
- Currently, a fee of \$10.00 per 5-minute block or part thereof will be incurred by the family.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late with fee payment.

Not Notified Fee

An additional fee of \$5.00 will apply for instances when a child is booked into an After School Care session and fails to arrive without OSHC being notified of the absence. This fee is in addition to the session fee and is not subject to Child Care Subsidy.

ABSENCES FROM OSHC SERVICE

- Parents are required to email the OSHC Service if their child is unable to attend a particular session.
- Notification of cancellations must be made by:-

Before School Care and After School Care 7 or more days prior to scheduled booking – no charge.

Student Free Days and Holiday Care Bookings are final and non-cancellable.

- Cancellations received within 7 days' notice will be charged full fee, minus your Child Care Subsidy entitlement. Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the Service if their child is unable to attend.
- Under the Child Care Subsidy families are allowed 42 absence days per child, per financial year and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances. (See Child Care Subsidy Handbook)
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason. Families do not have to provide evidence.
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law
- Records and evidence will be kept by the Service for each additional absence, where required
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via [myGov](https://mygov.au).
- In a period of local emergency, such as bushfire or pandemic, and our Service is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families may be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (CCS)

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their [myGOV](https://mygov.au) account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment
- 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 Service 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 are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments
- Discounts will only be offered as outlined in the CCS Handbook.

PAYMENT OF FEES

- Tax invoices are generated a week in arrears and will be emailed to families on a Wednesday.
- Fee payments must be made WEEKLY.
- Families will be issued with a *Statement of Entitlement* on a weekly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements
- The *Statement of Entitlement* will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts
- The *Statement of Entitlement* is generated using our CCS Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the approved provider
- Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink if they are experiencing temporary financial hardship
- There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:
 - **Additional Child Care Subsidy** (child wellbeing)—to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect. The approved provider is involved in determining children who may require additional support who are at risk of harm
 - **Additional Child Care Subsidy** (grandparent)—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment

- **Additional Child Care Subsidy** (temporary financial hardship)—to help families experiencing financial hardship. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
- **Additional Child Care Subsidy** (transition to work)—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment

OUTSTANDING FEES/DEBT MANAGEMENT

We understand that customers occasionally experience temporary financial difficulties, therefore we urge you to contact the Director regarding any arrears on your account. Our experience in these matters indicates that such difficulties, addressed early, are much easier to resolve than if they are left unattended. Families will be deemed as having outstanding fees when they are 14 days+ behind in a payment.

OSHC Sub Committee reserves the right to terminate enrolment and the Approved Provider (Governing Council) will be informed of termination of enrolment.

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder email will be issued after **one week** and then again after **two weeks** if the fees are still outstanding.
- After three weeks outstanding, the Director will telephone the family to request payment be made immediately.
- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after four **weeks**, for which the family will receive a letter advising such action.
- At this time the OSHC Service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements. The family will be required to enter a debt agreement with the service to repay outstanding fees. A written contract will be provided for the family to sign outlining the repayment plan details. The repayment plan will provide information as to the duration and amounts of the repayments as well as steps that will be taken if the repayment plan is not adhered to.
- If the debtor defaults on a repayment plan and fails to notify the Director prior to this payment of any financial difficulty, the Approved Provider without further notice will cancel the agreement and legally pursue the debt recovery.
- The Approved Provider must approve the school undertaking legal action. The approval to pursue the debt must be minuted in the Governing Council minutes. The anonymity of the families involved must be always preserved.
- Families will be advised that pursuing through a Debt Collection Agency has the potential to affect their credit rating and to seek professional advice.

CHANGE OF FEES

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of two weeks written notice is given to all families.

- CCS hourly rate caps may be increased by the CPI at the commencement of each financial year
- Any CCS hourly rate increases are governed by CCS and are automatically adjusted through our CCS Software.

TERMINATION OF ENROLMENT

- Parents are to provide one week's written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the OSHC Service
- If termination from the OSHC Service is required without notification, families can lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law

RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor are responsible for:

- ensuring all families are aware of our *Payment of Fees Policy*
- ensuring enrolments are submitted correctly with the appropriate enrolment information
- 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
- providing at least 2 weeks written notice to families of any fee increases or changes to the way fees are collected.

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
- 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 child care 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.

STAFF DISCOUNTS

Our OSHC Service offers OSHC educators a staff discount for children that attend our service, after CCS has been applied. The staff discount applies to employees who are employed, contracted or engaged to work with our OSHC Service as educators.

The Staff discount is calculated at 50% of full service fees after CCS has been applied and does not affect CCS eligibility. (Department of Education – [Childcare discount for early childhood workforce](#)). *(Staff must continue to pay at least 5% of the gap fee).*

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@education.gov.au

Resources and information for families

[Child Care Subsidy](#)

[Centrelink Customer Reference Number](#)

[Absences from childcare- Australian Government](#)

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Payment of Fees Policy* will be reviewed twice a year in consultation with staff, educators, finance committee and management.

SOURCE

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

Authority. (2021). Policy and procedure guidelines. *Payment of Service Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Service*.

Australian Government Department of Education [Child care discount for early childhood workforce](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. Child Care Provider Handbook

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>

Australian Government Department of Education <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood>

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

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

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

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Updated 2023).

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018)

[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	CATHY MORALLEE	Director and Nominated Supervisor	JULY 2023
POLICY REVIEWED	MAY 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MAY 2024
VERSION NUMBER	V14.05.23		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved Provider ratified change to cancellation policy at Governing Council meeting on 26/6/23, effective from 24/7/23. • introduction of Not Notified Fee • change in absence from service information (update to cancellation period) • policy maintenance • minor formatting edits within text • Change in payment of Gap Fees by EFT (effective 1 July 2023) • information added regarding staff discounts • continuous improvement/reflection section added 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
SEPTEMBER 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update of Department name from Department of Education, Skills, and Employment to Department of Education • policy maintenance • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required 		MAY 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources' 	
MAY 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> policy maintenance – name change of related policy Arrival and Departure Policy no major changes to policy minor formatting edits within text hyperlinks checked and repaired as required 	MAY 2023
AUGUST 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy reviewed following updates in October 2020 as part of yearly review cycle Policy content and sources current Resource-<i>Overdue Fees Procedure</i> information added 	MAY 2022
OCTOBER 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
MAY 2019	Sources checked for currency. URLs added. Sources/references alphabetised. Minor formatting for consistency throughout policy. 'Related policies' alphabetised.	MAY 2020
MAY 2018	New policy created to comply with changes to the Child Care Subsidy	MAY 2019