

Fees Policy

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QA7	7.1.2	Management systems - Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
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Aim

Parents fully understand fee payment procedures and requirements, and pay their child care fees on time.

Related Policies

Enrolment Policy
Orientation for Children Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Implementation

Fees

Our child care fees are outlined in our fee schedule which is available from our administration area. Please note our fees may change from time to time. Fees must be paid on time and within 7 days from the date on the statement.

Current Fee Prices:

Before School Care	\$14.00 per child, per session
After School Care	\$25.00 per child, per session
Early Finish (end of term)	\$30.00 per child, per session
Vacation Care/Pupil Free Days	\$60.50 per child, per session

We will advise eligible families if we can access any Government funding which may reduce the fees they're required to pay.

Thorndon Park Primary School OSHC is closed on all Public Holidays and for 2 weeks over the Christmas and New Year period.

Please note our fees may change from time to time. We will notify families in writing at least 14 days before we change our fees or the way in which we collect them.

Payment Options

Fees must be weekly and on time cash, credit card, direct deposit using BPpoint, through the QKR app or through the Xplor Home app.

Fees may also be payable during any period when the service closes in response to a local emergency e.g., fire, flood. Potential emergencies which may affect our service are considered in our service risk assessment for potential emergencies, and covered in our emergency response procedures (refer Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy.)

Cancellations

Families should tell the service of their child's inability to attend as soon as possible. Failure to cancel before school sessions by 9am the day before and after school sessions by 12pm the day before will result in charges being applied.

Vacation Care cancellations must be made 1 week before the school holidays begin. Please refer to the table below outlining cancellation days.

Cancellations for Vacation Care	
Term 1	Friday of week 10
Term 2	Friday of week 9
Term 3	Friday of week 9
Term 4	Friday of week 8

If families can provide the service with a medical certificate for the child's absence, non-cancellation charges will be waived. This also applies to children who are sent home sick from school during the day.

Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidised care to which families are entitled. Combined family income is used to determine the subsidy percentage. Income thresholds change each financial year. Current thresholds are available from the Department of Human Services website. See servicesaustralia.gov.au/. See 'Activity Level and Subsidised Care.'

Hours of activity per fortnight	Maximum number of hours of subsidy per fortnight
8 hours to 16 hours	36 hours
More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
More than 48 hours	100 hours

A broad range of activities meet the activity test requirements, including paid work, self-employment, unpaid work in a family business, active job hunting, volunteering or studying. You can also include reasonable travel time to and from a place of activity to the centre. In two parent families, both parents must meet the activity test, and subsidy hours are calculated on the lower number where parents have different levels of activity.

There are exemptions for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity test requirements.

Low-income families who do not meet the activity test can access 24 hours of subsidised care per fortnight under the Child Care Safety Net. Families who do not meet the activity test but have a preschool-age child attending preschool are eligible for 36 hours of subsidised care per fortnight.

People with disability or impairment, including those who receive Disability Support Pension or an invalidity service pension or who have been diagnosed by a registered medical practitioner or clinical psychologist as impaired to a significant degree may be exempt from the activity test.

Families who need more than their available hours of subsidised care per fortnight due to exceptional circumstances can also apply to Centrelink for additional hours.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy may be available to help support:

- families needing help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
- grandparents on income support who are primary child-carers
- families in temporary financial hardship
- families moving to work from income support

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the service on families' behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our service enters families' enrolment information online, and families confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees.

Child Care Subsidy may not be paid by the Government in certain situations and families will be required to pay full fees for the period involved. These include:

- non-attendance for 14 weeks in a row
- for any days before a child attends the service for the first time.
- for any days in the final attendance period after a child last physically attends the service.

Absences

Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is absent, for example due to illness, public holidays, local emergencies and parental leave. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlined in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

Statements of Entitlement

We will issue weekly Statements which include child/children's full name/s, date of care, date of payment, daily and weekly hours of care, absences, hourly fees and hourly and daily fee totals and the number of hours fees were reduced (eg by Child Care Subsidy) and total reduction amount. (Parents' My Gov accounts will also have how much care families have received and how much Child Care Subsidy has been paid.)

Invoices

Invoices for the amount of fees payable in a period will be issued every week. If families pay more than the fee amount required at the time, change will not be given but will be credited to the family's account.

Receipts

Families will be provided with receipts once invoices have been paid.

Late Fees

Families who do not collect their child/ren before 6pm may be charged a late fee of \$2 for every 1 minute they arrive past our closing time. This fee covers the cost of employing the staff required to supervise a child outside our operating hours. It may be waived at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor.

Termination/ Cancellations

Should families wish to end a permanent booking at the service, 2 weeks written notice is required. If families do not provide this notice, they will be charged 2 weeks' fees. The Nominated Supervisor may also suspend or terminate a child's enrolment after providing 2 weeks' notice, unless they believe the child's behaviour poses an unacceptable risk to the welfare and safety of other children and educators, in which case no notice period is required. Please note children must be signed in and out by parents/guardians on the last scheduled day of their attendance for the Child Care Subsidy to apply. If this does not occur families are required to pay full fees.

In relation to casual bookings, families should tell the service of their child's inability to attend as soon as possible. **Failure to cancel before school sessions by 9am the day before and after school sessions by 12pm the day before care will result in charges being applied.** There may be instances where cancellation occurs as a result of an emergency or other special circumstance. The Nominated Supervisor has the discretion to waive the termination fee in these situations.

Overdue Fees

The Nominated Supervisor will issue a **Friendly Fee Reminder** letter to any family who is one week late paying their fees. **If families are having difficulty making fee payments they should immediately speak with the** approved provider or nominated supervisor to discuss fee payment arrangements. Information provided by families will be treated as strictly private and confidential.

In cases of non-payment of fees, where the service is unable to contact families about the debt, or families do not meet agreed arrangements for repayment of the debt and ongoing payment of fees:

- bond payments will be applied to outstanding debt amounts and
- the Nominated Supervisor may immediately suspend or terminate the child's place at the service. Families will be advised of this action in writing.

Where families do not meet agreed payment plans, and an outstanding debt remains, the Nominated Supervisor may use their discretion to engage a third-party agency to recover the outstanding amount. The cost of this action may be added to the debt owed.

Sources

Bryant, L. (2009). *Managing a Child Care Service : A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers*. Sydney: Community Child Care Co-Operative.

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Family Assistance Law

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Management
- Employees
- Family Members
- Interested parties

Reviewed: November 2022

Date for next review: November 2023