

PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY



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
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
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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, management 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.

The fee structure of the OSHC Service includes:

General Fees

- Fees are charged for each session for before and after school care and per day for vacation care programs
- Fees payable by families vary depending on the amount of Child Care Subsidy (CCS) rebate each family receives
- 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
- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment Via Service App
- Fees are to be paid fortnightly through a direct debit system, Debit Success, Via third party.
- Fees are charged for full sessions only (regardless of the actual attendance hours any day).
- Families are requested to contact the Service if their child is unable to attend a particular session.
- Casual days may be offered to families if available within the OSHC Service's license.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their [myGOV](#) 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 is the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments.

Payment of fees

- Fees are set up using the OSHC Service's direct debit system. The family is required to input banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account. This must be done at time of enrolment
- Fees and charges associated with direct debit system are outlined upon enrolment
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees.
- Families will be issued with a Statement on a fortnightly 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

Absences from OSHC Service

- Cancellations without charge – **Before School Care** To avoid charges, cancellation of Before School Care sessions must occur 2 working days prior to the commencement of the session e.g. to cancel Before School Care for Monday the cancellation must have been provided to the service by the opening time of the service on the Thursday in the week prior to the required cancellation, to cancel Before School Care for Wednesday the cancellation must have been provided to the service by the opening time of the service on the Monday in the week of the required cancellation.
- Cancellations without charge – **After School Care** To avoid charges, cancellation of After School Care sessions must occur 2 working days prior to the commencement of the session e.g. to cancel After School Care for Monday the cancellation must have been provided to the service by the opening time of the service on the Thursday in the week prior to the required cancellation, to cancel After School Care for Wednesday the cancellation must have been provided to the service by the opening time of the service on the Monday in the week of the required cancellation.
- Cancellations without charge – **Vacation Care** To avoid charges, cancellation of Vacation Care sessions must occur 7 days prior to the commencement of the session e.g. to cancel vacation care for Monday the cancellation must have been provided to the service by the Monday in the week prior to the day of attendance.
- Cancellations – **Due to illness** Where you cancel a session of care for your child due to the illness of your child, yourself or another individual with whom the child lives and this illness is verified with a medical certificate the charge for that session will be removed
- 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).
- Records and evidence will be kept by the Service for each additional absence, where required
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason, including public holidays and when children are sick.
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via myGov.
- 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.

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 in 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

Debt Recovery Procedure

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder letter will be issued after **one week** and then again after **two weeks** if the fees are still outstanding.
- At any time of the debt recovery process the family will be encouraged to enter a debt agreement with the service to repay outstanding fees. A written contract will be provided for the family to sign outlining repayment plan details. The repayment plan will provide information as to the duration and amount of the repayments as well as steps that will be taken if the repayment plan is not adhered to.
- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after three weeks, for which the family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time the OSHC Service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements.

Late Fees

- Our OSHC Service is not licensed or insured to have children on the premises after hours. This is a breach in the Education and Care Regulations.

- 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. Currently, a fee of \$15 per 15 minutes block will be incurred by the family.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late with fee payment.

Change of Fees

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of **four weeks** written notice is given to all families as per local government regulations
- 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** written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the centre.
- 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.

Responsibility of Management

The Nominated Supervisor is 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
- providing at least 4 weeks written notice to families of any fee increases
- discussing fee payment with families if required

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 childcare fees for families.

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

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](#)

Source

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

Australian Government Department of Education Child Care Provider Handbook

<https://www.dese.gov.au/resources-child-care-providers/child-care-provider-handbook>

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

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood-and-child-care-0>

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

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).

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

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	May 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	May 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor adjustments recorded• Additional information added- ACCS, absences, responsibility of families, CCS tip-off line and complaints.• Clarification of cancellations without charge		