

Avoca Beach Preschool

Background

Early childhood education and care services must comply with the Early Education and Care National Regulations 2011 and the National Quality Standard 2011 in the way they manage the collection of fees, and inform parents about this process including any pending changes to the fees.

Policy statement

This Policy details the Service's procedures in relation to fees, methods of payment and associated provisions.

Strategies and practices

- The Service's *Fee Policy* is explained to parents at enrolment, and the necessary paperwork relating to fees is discussed and completed.
- The Service notifies (in writing) parents of children enrolled at the Service, at least 14 days in advance, of any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected.
- Prior to enrolling your child at the Service, you need to contact the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) on 136 150 to arrange your Child Care Subsidy (CCS). You can also submit your CCS claim online at:
<<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy/how-claim>>
- You will need to register a parent (only one parent needs to apply) and child with Centrelink in order to obtain a Customer Reference Number ('CRN') specific to the Parent and also to the Child (the CRN numbers will be 2 different numbers NOT the same numbers).
- Before your child commences at the Service, parents are required to pay a bond of \$180.00. A yearly administration fee of \$55.00 is also required on enrolment.
- Two (2) weeks' written notice of intention to withdraw the child is required via the Child Ceasing Care Administration Form. The two weeks' notice begins from the close of business on the day the Service receives the written advice. Any monies owed to the parent, including the bond paid at enrolment, will be refunded on the child's final day of attendance at the Service.
- Fees are to be paid on or before the child's first day of attendance and kept 2 weeks in advance.
- Normal fees apply to public holidays, sick days, family holidays and any other absence. Fees are not charged for days when the Service is closed outside of Public Holidays. Child Care Subsidy is paid for a child's absences up to 42 days per child each financial year, including Public Holidays. The Service does not exchange days of care and does not arrange make up days.

- Once every fortnight, parents eligible for Child Care Subsidy are provided with a Statement of Entitlement. This statement includes details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts, and is based on information about entitlements and payments for each child received in their payment advice generated through the Services CCMS software program (Refer Child Care Provider Handbook, pages 71-73).
- Receipts are issued for all fee payments. The system-generated receipt will show the child's name, the period for which the receipt is issued, the amount paid, and all other details required by regulations (Refer Child Care Provider Handbook, pages 71-73). If an overpayment is made, no refund will be given but the excess will be credited to the family's account.
- Fee reminders are sent to any family one or more weeks' late in the payment of fees. If the fees are not paid within the following week or no arrangement for payment entered into, the child's place at the Service will be at risk.
- The Service requires a full two (2) weeks' written notice of an intention to change the days of attendance or the number of days required using the Child Request for Altered Days of Attendance Form.
- A late fee (as per the Fee Schedule) is charged for any child collected later than the Service's closing time (by the Service's clock). Parents are asked to complete and sign a Late Fee Notice when they collect their child/children.

Additional safe practices for babies

- N/A

Responsibilities of parents

- To ensure fees are kept up to date
- To keep the Service informed of any changes in attendance (e.g. family holidays, other absences)
- To respond promptly to communications from the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) to maintain CCS eligibility.

Procedure and forms

- Child Ceasing Care Administration Form
- Child Holiday Advice Administration Form
- Child Request for Altered Days of Attendance Form
- Fee Schedule
- Late Fee Notice

Additional safe practices for babies

- N/A

Responsibilities of parents

- To ensure fees are kept up-to-date.
- To keep the Service informed of any changes in attendance (e.g. family holidays, other absences)
- To respond promptly to communications from Centrelink to maintain CCB eligibility.

Procedure and forms

- Late Fee Notice

Links to other policies

- Attendance Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Reg	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
	172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
QA	6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
	7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

Family Assistance Legislation

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* accessed 30 December 2020
- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* accessed 30 December 2020
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017 (Minister's Rules) accessed 30 December 2020
- Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017 (Secretary's Rules) accessed 30 December 2020
- Any other instruments (including regulations) made under the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* and the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* accessed 30 December 2020
- Schedules 5 and 6 to the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance and Related Measures) Act 2000* accessed 30 December 2020

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Department of Education and Training (Australian Government). <https://docs.education.gov.au/node/50791> accessed 30 December 2020
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 (September 2020 Update): Section 4 – Operational Requirements <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guide-to-the-NQF-September-2020.pdf> accessed 30 December 2020

Further reading and useful websites *(Consistent with the approach of the National Quality Framework, the following references have prioritised efficacy and appropriateness to inform best practice, and legislative compliance over state or territory preferences.)*

- Department of Education, Skills and Employment – <https://www.dese.gov.au/> accessed 30 December 2020
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Department of Education and Training (Australian Government). (n.d.). <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0> accessed 30 December 2020
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service’s commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	
2	10 January 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF and CCS requirements.	
3	6 September 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
4	13 May 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references, particularly those related to Department of Education, Skills and Employment	
5	2 August 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to include Family Assistance Law requirements. Included relevant Family Assistance Law in Sources and referenced Child Care Provider Handbook.	
6	30 December 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	

Date reviewed: June 2021

Next review date: June 2022

Reviewed by: Rose Smith