

## PRESCHOOL/CHILDCARE FEES USER GUIDE

### OVERVIEW

*This user guide covers the information contained in the DECD 'Preschool Fees' policy. It covers the duties and responsibilities of all parties involved when devising the amount and payment of fees.*

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### **Governing Council will:**

- Approve a Preschool fee that covers part of the cost of sessions and lunch. The fee should not be used to cover any items or services that are funded through grants or other funding.
- Approve a childcare fee that enables delivery of high quality care and education programs including the required adult to child ratios for staffing at a minimum.
- Determine a fee that is affordable for the majority of families.
- Be responsible for governing the price, structure and administrative processes for management of fees.

#### **Leadership will:**

- Oversee accounts including administrative processes around families with large debts. This process includes following up with families, deciding whether to cancel or reduce care and employing debt collection agencies to ensure the Centre can continue to provide high quality programs.
- Ensure families are aware that fees only cover operational costs and additional charges may be required for excursions and incursions.
- Ensure fee information is available for families to consult (in the handbook, on the website etc.)
- Not deny Preschool to children based on any outstanding charges on their family's account.
- Discuss alternate payment options with families experiencing financial hardship including: allowing payment by installments, reducing or cancelling care and supporting families to access temporary financial hardship options from Centrelink.
- Liaise with the finance officer and Governing Council before approving the writing off of bad debts.

#### **Administration will:**

- Inform families upon enrolment of the fees and bond to be paid each week based on their sessions.
- Inform families of other charges they may incur such as late fees, public holidays, bond increases/ decreases etc.
- Answer any questions about fees families may have on request.
- Discuss CCS requirements.
- Provide an invoice to families for fees to be paid weekly.
- Inform families when their bill is overdue or becoming unmanageable.
- Note any payment plans or pay arrangements with families on their account on KidsXap.
- Ensure changes in this policy are reflected in the fees agreement and Centre handbook.

#### **Families will:**

- Discuss bills and fees with administration or Leadership staff instead of educators.
- Pay their bills on a regular basis. If they are unable to pay the fees before they are due, they should negotiate a payment plan with administration or seek assistance/guidance from Leadership staff.
- **Be responsible for management of their own account. If payment is affected by Centrelink or the account holder's bank, the account holder is still responsible to settle the account in full.**
- Be aware that although Preschool sessions cannot be cancelled, lunch care and childcare can be cancelled if they do not pay their fees. This will mean children who have consecutive Preschool sessions (a morning and afternoon session) will have to be collected and signed out over the lunch period and then signed in at the beginning of the afternoon session.
- Be aware their care options may be reduced or cancelled if their bill is not paid consistently.
- Pay bond amount specified (two weeks in advance of full fees before commencing care at the Centre).
- Pay bond increases associated with the increase in childcare sessions and/or fees.
- Pay additional charges if they want their child to participate e.g. toy orders, excursions. Families should be aware that these charges, if unpaid, are subject to debt collection procedures.
- Contact Centrelink to apply for CCS if they are eligible and arrange for this to be sent to the Centre.

Families are also responsible for any further liaison with Centrelink.

- Follow the fee agreement attached to the enrolment form.
- Understand that they will be charged 100% of the fee for absences due to illness and 75% of fees for public holidays for childcare bookings.
- Understand Preschool bookings will be charged at 100% of the fee for absences and public holidays.
- Be responsible for collecting and dropping off children within session times to avoid late fees and paying late fees if they are incurred.

**Implemented:** January 2011

**Reviewed:** September 2023

**Next Review:** September 2024

***DfE Policies:***

Preschool Fees Policy

***Centre Forms:***

Fee Agreement