

# BOOKINGS, CANCELLATIONS AND 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). Our bookings and cancellation protocols and definitions will be outlined.

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

**RELATED POLICIES**

CCS Accounts Policy Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Governance Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Delivery of Children to, and Collection from and Education and Care Service Premises	Enrolment Policy Fraud Prevention Policy Governance Policy Orientation of Families Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Termination of Enrolment Policy
---	---

**PURPOSE**

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Outside School Hours Care Service booking and cancellation policy, fee structure, payment requirements and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains process of bookings and 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 booking process, 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.

## Booking Definitions

### Permanent Bookings:

Regular bookings made for the same days each week on an ongoing basis (minimum of four continuous weeks) - excluding Vacation Care.

### Casual Bookings:

Bookings made 'as you go' for one off days, either in advance or on the day. This may also be for short periods of time.

### Vacation Care Bookings:

Booking forms are sent out approximately four weeks prior to the program commencing. Vacation Care Forms must be completed and returned to the OSHC program.

### Bookings:

- All bookings should be made in advance where possible.
- All bookings can be made via paper enrolment forms, text messages, phone calls or emails.
- Casual bookings can be made in advance or on the day via the OSHC phone or emailed. (If making a booking for the same day, please inform the coordinator if the child knows to attend or if you will need the teacher notified).

### Cancellations:

To ensure the safety of all children, parents are expected to notify the program if their child is not attending OSHC. We don't automatically receive notification from the school of children away or if they leave as an early departures. A text message to the OSHC Coordinator is adequate notice by 2.00pm.

- 1 weeks' notice is required to permanently cancel permanent bookings.
- All non-attendance still incurs the daily fee regardless of permanent or casual bookings if cancellations are not made.
- Fees will not be charged for school camps or closure of the program due to Public Holidays or whole school events. (Curriculum Day bookings will still be available)
- Families taking extended holidays (5 days or longer) can cancel their bookings for the duration of the holiday. It is expected that 1 weeks' notice is given.

The fee structure of the OSHC Service includes:

### General Fees

Program	Cost	Notes
Before School Care	\$20.00	
After School Care	\$30.00	
After School Care	\$32.00	Last day of term
Vacation Care	\$65.00	Plus Incursion/excursion cost
Curriculum Day	\$65.00	

- Fees are charged for each session for before and after school care and per day for vacation care 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)
- Fees must be kept in advance of a child's attendance.
- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment via email if requested by family.
- Fees are to be paid weekly or fortnightly by credit card or direct debit. It is a requirement that the family pay in advance and are not in arrears.
- Fees are payable in advance for every session that a child is enrolled at the OSHC Service. This includes pupil free days, sick days, and family holidays but excludes periods when the Service is closed. The Service may be closed due to periods of local emergency such as bushfire or flood or pandemic.
- 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.
- Discounts will only be offered as outlined in the CCS Handbook.

### Payment of fees

- Families can pay fees in person by eftpos, or arrangements can be made for direct debit from a credit card (not bank account)
- 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

### Absences from OSHC Service

- Families are requested to contact the Service no later than 2pm of the day their child is booked in if their child is unable to attend a particular session
- 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).
- 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
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason. Families do not have to provide evidence.
- 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 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

### 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

- 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 \$10.00 plus \$1 per minute 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.
- 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.

### 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 4 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.

### 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](mailto:tipoffline@education.gov.au)

### Resources and information for families

[Child Care Subsidy](#)

[Centrelink Customer Reference Number](#)

[Absences from childcare- Australian Government](#)



## 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 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 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).  
 Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Updated 2023).  
 Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.).  
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018)  
[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Kylie Holmes	Coordinator	10/7/23
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MAY 2023
POLICY REVIEWED	MAY 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MAY 2024
VERSION NUMBER	V14.05.23		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy maintenance</li> <li>minor formatting edits within text</li> <li>Change in payment of Gap Fees by EFT (effective 1 July 2023)</li> <li>information added regarding staff discounts</li> <li>continuous improvement/reflection section added</li> <li>Childcare Centre Desktop Related resources section added</li> </ul>		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update of Department name from Department of Education, Skills, and Employment to <b>Department of Education</b></li> <li>policy maintenance</li> <li>minor formatting edits within text</li> <li>hyperlinks checked and repaired as required</li> <li>link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in ‘Sources’</li> </ul>		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
MAY 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy maintenance – name change of related policy <del>Arrival and Departure Policy</del></li> <li>no major changes to policy</li> </ul>	MAY 2023	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minor formatting edits within text</li> <li>• hyperlinks checked and repaired as required</li> </ul>	
AUGUST 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update of Related Legislation</li> <li>• Policy revised to align with recommendations with ACECQA's policy guide (August 2021)</li> <li>• Updated Related Policies</li> <li>• Check of links used within policy</li> </ul>	MAY 2022
MAY 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy reviewed following updates in October 2020 as part of yearly review cycle</li> <li>• Policy content and sources current</li> <li>• Resource-<i>Overdue Fees Procedure</i> information added</li> </ul>	MAY 2022
OCTOBER 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor adjustments recorded</li> <li>• Additional information added- ACCS, absences, responsibility of families, CCS tip-off line and complaints</li> </ul>	MAY 2021
MARCH 2020	<p>Policy statement added  Implementation information added  CCS section included  Absences section added  Responsibility for Management expanded  Resources and information section added</p>	MAY 2021
MAY 2019	<p>Sources checked for currency.  URLs added.  Sources/references alphabetised.  Minor formatting for consistency throughout policy.  'Related policies' alphabetised.</p>	MAY 2020
MAY 2018	<p>New policy created to comply with changes to the Child Care Subsidy</p>	MAY 2019