

PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY

January 2018

Purpose

Montessori Works has a purpose to provide high quality early education and care for children we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times. Our service's financial health and access to our service will be maximised by ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment.

Responsibilities for the Approved Provider

The Approved Provider of an education and care service must -

- Ensuring the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011.
- Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements.
- Developing a fee policy that balances parents/guardian's capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability.
- Considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at the service and removing those barriers wherever possible.
- Providing parents/guardians with a monthly statement of fees and charges.
- Ensuring that the Fees Policy is readily accessible at the service.
- Notifying parents/guardians within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected.
- Ensuring a notice outlining the fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to the service.

Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor

The Nominated Supervisor of an education and care service must –

- Providing parents/guardians with a monthly statement of fees and charges.
- Collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documents regarding those with entitlement to concession, where applicable.
- Notifying parents/guardians within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected.
- Ensuring a notice outlining the fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to the service.

Responsibilities of the Educators

The Educators of an education and care service must –

- Referring parent/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the Approved Provider or Nominated supervisors.

Responsibilities of the Family/Guardian

The Family/Guardians of an education and care service must –

- Reading this policy and referring any questions, queries or concerns to the nominated supervisor.
- Obtain a Customer Reference Number from Centrelink as soon as practical before or after enrolment at the service.
- Record the arrival and departure times.
- Provide documentation for additional absence days as required.
- Provide 4weeks' notice of withdrawal from service. If child does not attend during this 4 weeks' notice period full fees will be chargeable ie no CCB reductions are possible.
- Notifying the Approved Provider if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees.

Fee Payable/Accounts

- The Approved Provider will determine the required fee level to meet budget prediction for the year.
- The fee schedule and fees payment policy will be fully explained to families during the enrolment process.
- Fees payable will be based on either daily or weekly amounts.
- Families will be given minimum of 14 days' notice of any fee increase.
- The same fee will be charged to all families for equivalent care arrangements.
- A statement of fees will be sent to parents/guardians monthly, in accordance with Australian Government Guidelines, will be provided for each payment.
- Families are required to pay fees on public holidays if the holiday falls on their regular booked day.
- Fee payment will be recorded according to Australia government Guidelines. Families may also view details about their child care usage and total fees charged and the fee reductions calculated by the Centrelink office (FAO) on the View Child Care Attendance online statement available through the FAO website.
- Families should contact the service to advise of their child's inability to attend as soon as this is known. Fees will still be required on days the child would normally attend.

Child Care Benefit (CCB), Child Care rebate (CCR) and the Child Care Management System (CCMS)

- Our service will comply with the Australian Government requirements to be an approved education and care service for the purposes of Child Care Benefit (CCB) and the Child Care Rebate (CCR). The online Child Care Management System (CCMS) reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering CCB and the CCR will be maintained by the service.
- It is the enrolling parent/guardian's responsibility to complete and lodge their CCB and CCR applications with the FAO.
- All fees are charged at the full rate and submitted to the CCMS office. Each family's eligible for CCB and CCR is then calculated and the service is then forward these funds. Deductions may then be made to each individual family's accounts.
- Any changes in a family financial circumstance may result in cancellation of CCB and CCR. It is the family's responsibility to contact the Centrelink office if they wish to dispute this or discuss it further.

- CCB and CCR will be deducted from a family's fee within 14 days of the service being notified of the amount via CCMS.
- Families will only be eligible for CCB and CCR if child care attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult, and other eligibility requirements are met.
- Families are entitled to 42 absence days for each registered child in each financial year. CCB is paid for these days provided that the child would normally attend on that day, and fees have been charged.
- Additional absence can be claimed when the first 42 days have been used. Supporting documentation may be required for approval of additional absences.
- All documentation pertaining to CCB and CCR will be kept for the specified period of time and made available to Australian Government Officers on request.

Payment of Fees

- Fees are payable from the agreed commencement date and must be paid two weeks in advance.
- Fees may be paid by cheque, electronic funds transfer by direct deposit (internet banking) or by EFTPOS.

Overdue Fees

Parents/guardian with overdue fees will be encouraged by the Director to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay, including the option of a payment plan.

If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the matter may be referred to a debt collector and/or cancellation of the child's booking may occur.

Late Collection charge

- Our service reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians have not collected their child/ren from the service before closing time. This charge will be set at a rate determined by the Service Management and based on the service's need to recoup expended incurred in employee overtime wages.

Definitions, Terms & Abbreviations

Term	Meaning
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CCR	Child Care Rebate
CCMS	Child Care Management Services
FAO	Family Assistance Office

Related Statutory Obligations & Considerations

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) - www.acacqa.gov.au

CCB Information www.humanservices.gov.au

Education and Care Services National Law 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), as amended 2011

Related Telephone Numbers

Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate 1800-619-113

Amendment History

Version	Amendment	Short Description
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This policy will be updated to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements every year. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulation*, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Date:

Version:

Last Amended By:

Next Review:

Position:
