



FEES POLICY

Quality early education and care provides the foundation for children's development and social engagement whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Bay Island Early Learning and Care 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

RELATED POLICIES

Delivery and Collection of Children Policy Enrolment Policy Governance Policy	Orientation of for Children Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
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PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the 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 Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our 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 Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

Our fee structure includes:

Enrolment Fee and Bond Payment

Enrolment Fee

- A non-refundable enrolment fee of **\$30.00** per child is charged and payable upon acceptance of an enrolment offer. The enrolment fee covers the cost of processing the child's enrolment, family documentation, and the labour costs incurred by this service when following up any Immunisation or CCS anomalies with families.
- This fee is non-refundable and applies whether your child does or does not take a place at this service.

Bond

- Upon enrolment, families must pay a security bond of **\$50** for one child or **\$100** per family. The bond is fully refundable once the child leaves care provided that all fees are paid up to date, the required notices in writing was given, and the child attends this service on their last day of care.

General Fees

- Fees are charged for each session of care and vary depending on the age of the child in care and the family's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy (CCS)
- 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
- Fees must be kept in advance of a child's attendance.
- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment via email
- Fees are to be paid fortnightly through a direct debit system. If families wish to pay fees on a weekly or monthly basis, 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 Service. This includes pupil free days, sick days, and family holidays but excludes periods when the Service is closed. The Service may be directed to close due to periods of local emergency such as bushfire or flood or a pandemic.
- If a session of care falls on a public holiday, families are required to pay normal fees. CCS will be paid for sessions that fall on public holidays.
- Fees are charged for full sessions only (regardless of the actual attendance hours any day).
- Casual days may be offered to families if available within the Service's license.



Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their [myGOV](#) account linked to Centrelink and provide supporting documentation.
- 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.

Payment of fees

- Fees are set up using the Service's account details through direct deposit or Centrepay.
- Families will be issued with a fee statement on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements.
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees.

Absences from Service

- Families are requested to contact the Service 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. [Fee charging practices are commercial decisions made by each childcare service and are not a matter regulated by the Family Assistance Law. Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment]
- 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.
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason, including public holidays and when children are sick.
- Records will be kept by the Service for each absence.
- 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 / Nominated Supervisor.



- Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink if they are in temporary financial hardship. ACCS provides extra assistance for up to 13 weeks.

Failure to Pay

- 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.
- 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 Service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements.

Late Fees

- Our 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 Service. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time.
- Currently, a fee of \$15.00 per 10 minutes block or part thereof 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.

Termination of Enrolment

- Parents are to provide two weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the centre.
- If termination from the Service is required without notification, families may lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged.

Holidays

- If the child will be absent due to a family holiday, 2 weeks written notice is required. The child will be charged for 4 hours care of the Core Program for each day.
- Our centre is closed on all public holidays. If any of your child's usual days of attendance fall on a public holiday, they will be charged for 4 hours of the Core Program.
- If a child is unenrolled due to extended holidays, (i.e. they unenroll to prevent using allowable absences), their place within the Service will NOT be held and may be unavailable upon return. All returning families must re-enrol their child.

Failure to Pay

- If your account falls in arrears (due to failure to pay or CCS difficulties), a courtesy call will be made to the account holder. This service will work with you to develop and follow a payment plan to bring your account back to two weeks in advance.
- If payments cannot be made or CCS is not available, it may be recommended that the child does not attend the Service until the account is paid and/or CCS is available.



Special and high needs

- Bay Island Early Learning and Care reserves the right to exercise with notice, an alternate attendance and/or daily fee structure that includes all or some of the cost of providing an appropriate level of care to a child identified by this Service as displaying special and high needs (Refer Special and High Needs Policy).

Alternative Fee :

As the IDF covers the partial cost (currently \$23.00 per hour) of an additional career, there is an additional cost outlay incurred by this service, currently approx. \$7.00 per hour. This additional amount, multiplied by the IDF assessed daily hours approved for funding, may be added to the daily fee charged by this service. This additional cost is not covered by Childcare Subsidy.

In the event that a number of children within the same environment are identified with special needs the financial impact of this alternative fee policy on the parent/guardian's may be shared.

Discounts/Alternate Fee Structure:

On providing 2 weeks public notice e.g. newsletter/signage Bay Island Early learning and Care reserves the right to apply and withdraw discounts/alternate fee structures, as follows: -

- I. Promotional e.g. multi-day
- II. Staff discounts
- III. Special and high needs
- IV. Other eg. volunteer, hardship etc

Absence from Care/ Cancellation of Care:

- Families eligible for CCS fee reduction are entitled to 42 sessions of absence in each year without certification. These sessions include Public Holidays and periods of absence as a result of illness and family holidays. All absences must be confirmed via Educator signature on the daily sign in sheet for the booked attendance date.
- Families with over 42 sessions of absence are encouraged to provide a Doctor's Certificate for each subsequent absence. The provision of such documentation may lead to the reinstatement of CCS fee reduction payments for certified absences.
- Full fees are charged by Bay Island Early Learning and Care for all sessions booked. Permanent cancellation of any session will require at least two-week's written notification.

Responsibility of Management

- ensuring all families are aware of our *Payment of Fees Policy*
- ensuring enrolment information includes the parent/guardian's Customer Reference Number (CRN) and date of birth and the child's CRN and date of birth
- 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

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://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/child_care_provider_handbook_0.pdf

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*

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.).

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

Guide to the National Quality Standard.(2020)

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018)

Revision Date	Modifications
January 2015	Adoption of Centre Support Format
March 2016	Inclusion of: Special and High Needs Policy; Staff Discount Policy
May 2016	Inclusion of: Centre Pay Account Refund example for clarification purposes; Vacation Booking Deposit
February 2017	Grammar and Punctuation checked
November 2018	Change to Child Care Subsidy Update Holiday and Failure to Pay sections Include Termination of Enrolment
March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update of payment option• Policy statement added• Implementation information added• CCS section included• Absences section added• Responsibility for Management expanded• Resources and information section added

NEXT REVIEW
DATE

May 2022



Late Fee Reminder

Appendix A

Dear _____ (insert name)

This is a friendly reminder that your account balance is in arrears by \$_____, we understand that oversights happen but would appreciate prompt payment of this amount. If payment has already been made please ignore this email. Please contact admin if you are having any difficulty paying your account to make a payment agreement.

Thank you in advance

Kind Regards,

Tracee



Payment Plan Agreement

Appendix B

Parent/ Caregivers Name: _____

Name of Children receiving care: _____

Amount Outstanding: \$ _____

Agreed amount to be repaid \$ _____ Fortnightly / Weekly

Payment Method: Eftpos / Centrepay / Internet Banking

Agreement:

I, _____ (parent/ guardian's name) agree to pay \$ _____ every week until the above debit is repaid. I understand that if the payments are not made that the centre will commence debt collection.

I acknowledge that if I stop my Centrepay the centre will set up a new centre pay deduction with a once off payment of the outstanding amount.

Signed by:

Parent / Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Director: _____ Date: _____
(Michelle Packness)