

Payment of Fees Policy

Policy first issued	25 th July 2016
Current review date	9 th July 2021
Personnel responsible	Childcare Operations Manager

NQS 7 Leadership and Service Management

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QA 7	7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
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Aim

For parents to fully understand Little Flyers Learning Centres payment procedures and requirements, and to pay their child care fees on time.

Related Policies

Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Who is affected by this policy?

Parents
Management

Implementation

Payment of fees:

The enrolling parent / guardian (1 and 2) recorded on page two of the Enrolment Form accept full financial responsibility for the payment of all fees and charges incurred as a result of their child's enrolment at the Centre.

- An **Application Fee** payment of \$50.00 per child is required to secure a position on our waiting list. This fee is only applicable for families who do not currently have a child enrolled in the Centre. This fee is charged to cover administrative / processing costs and is non-refundable.
- Parents / guardians will also be required to pay a **Deposit** which is a payment of two week's full fees. This fee is applied to your account.
Note: If a child's booking is cancelled prior to starting at the Centre the **Deposit** becomes non-refundable.
- Fees are generated a minimum two weeks in advance and account statements are emailed to the parents / guardians preferred email address on a fortnightly basis.
- A direct debit service is offered and is the only method of fee payment. A choice of savings, cheque or credit card account can be nominated for child care fees to be debited fortnightly or monthly to ensure fees remain in advance, except in exceptional financial circumstances where a family require to pay weekly by EFT, cheque or cash. For example:

Fortnightly Payments	Parents / Guardians will be required to pay one fortnight in advance at all times.
Monthly Payments	Parents / Guardians will be required to pay one month in advance at all times.

- Public holidays, leave of absence taken outside of the Centre's closure period if applicable and absences due to illness, public holidays and local emergencies' are charged as per your regular booking. Make up and swapping of days is not permitted. Families eligible for CCS fee reduction are entitled to 42 sessions of absence in each year without clarification. Families with over 42 sessions of absence are encouraged to provide a doctor's certificate for each subsequent absence. Should the absences exceed the allowable limit without certification, full fees will be charged for that absence.

- Bookings for extra days outside a permanent booking will be charged at the current daily rate. Should a request be cancelled within 24 hours of the booking date a fee will still be charged for the booking. An 'Extra day Request' form needs to be completed before an extra day is approved.
- A **Late Fee** of \$55.00 per 15 minute intervals or part thereof will be charged directly to an account if a child is not collected before the Centre's closing time. Late collection fees do not attract CCS fee reduction payments.
- A **Dishonour Fee** of \$30.00 will be charged directly on every occasion when a scheduled direct debit payment is declined. Please note, this is a charge by the Centre, Debitsuccess will levy their own dishonour fee.
- Please note, our fees are scheduled to change annually. We will notify families in writing at least 14 days before we change our fees or the way in which we collect them.
- Fees are also payable during any period when the Centre closes in response to a local emergency eg fire, flood. Potential emergencies which may affect our Centre are considered in our Centre risk assessment for potential emergencies, and covered in our emergency response procedures. (Refer to our Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy).

Government Funding (Child Care Subsidy)

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidised care to which families are entitled.

Combined family income is used to determine the subsidy percentage. Income thresholds change each financial year. Current thresholds are available from the Department of Human Services website. See serviceaustralia.gov.au/. See 'Activity Level and Subsidised Care.

If your child does not attend our service on their first or last booked day/s, CCS will not be applied for those day/s and you will be required to pay full fees.

Please note that grievances relating to child care funding entitlements, for example, Child Care Subsidy, should be made to Centrelink through the Federal Government's 'Service Australia.' Complaints may be made online.

<i>Hours of activity per fortnight</i>	<i>Maximum number of hours of subsidy per fortnight</i>
8 hours to 16 hours	36 hours
More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
More than 48 hours	100 hours

A broad range of activities meet the activity test requirements, including paid work, self-employment, unpaid work in a family business, active job hunting, volunteering or studying. You can also include reasonable travel time to and from a place of activity to the Centre. In two parent families, both parents must meet the activity test, and subsidy hours are calculated on the lower number where parents have different levels of activity.

There are exemptions for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity test requirements.

Low-income families who do not meet the activity test can access 24 hours of subsidised care per fortnight under the Child Care Safety Net. Families who do not meet the activity test but have a preschool-age child attending preschool are eligible for 36 hours of subsidised care per fortnight.

People with disability or impairment, including those who receive Disability Support Pension or an invalidity service pension or who have been diagnosed by a registered medical practitioner or clinical psychologist as impaired to a significant degree may be exempt from the activity test.

Families who need more than their available hours of subsidised care per fortnight to exceptional circumstances can also apply to Centrelink for additional hours.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy may be available to help support:

- Families needing help to support their children's safety and wellbeing

- Grandparents on income support who are primary child-carers
- Families in temporary financial hardship
- Families moving to work from income support

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a Child Care Subsidy claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the Centre on families' behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our Centre enters families' enrolment information online, and families confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees. Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is absent, for example due to illness, public holidays and parental leave. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlined in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

Cessation of Care

Should a parent / guardian wish to end their child's booking at the Centre or should management make the decision to terminate a child's place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending / terminating party. A 'Cessation of Care' form is required to be completed. If this does not occur, 2 weeks fees will be billed and will be payable by parents / guardians.

Families who elect not to return to the Centre without prior notification will be liable for payment of full fees generated for the 2 weeks of non-notifications as well as any period of non-attendance following the last session of attendance. If a child does not return parents / guardians will be liable for full fees at Cessation of Care and this will be applied to parent / guardians accounts.

The nominated supervisor may also terminate a child's enrolment without providing 2 weeks notice, if they believe the child's behaviour poses an unacceptable risk to the welfare and safety of other children and educators.

Two weeks written notice for:

- Change to permanent booked days.
- Ceasing permanent booking / leaving the Centre.

Debtors

- Fees are to be paid a minimum of two weeks in advance. The Eltham College Foundation Ltd will apply a \$30.00 administration fee to all accounts in arrears at the end of each fortnight.
- If your account is 3 weeks and / or \$1000.00 in arrears a child's position at our Centre will be suspended. If the outstanding debt has not been paid within 14 days of the formal request for payment and suspension date the position at the Centre will be lost.
- Families experiencing financial difficulties are encouraged to discuss this with the Centre Director.

NQS

Bryant, L (2009). *Managing a Child Care Service: A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers*. Sydney: Community Child Care Co-operative

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care) Act 2009

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be conducted by:

- Management

- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: 09.07.2021

Date for next review: June 2022