

CEEC FA POL FEES & ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Sponsor	BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGY
Document type	POLICY
Applicable to	CATHOLIC EARLY EDCARE
Approved by	DIRECTOR, CATHOLIC EARLY EDCARE

POLICY STATEMENT

Catholic Early EdCare is committed to providing families affordable education and care services, with clear, transparent, fair and inclusive fee structures.

BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires policies and procedures to be in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

<u>Education and Care Services National Regulations</u>	
Reg 111	Administrative space
Reg 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
Reg 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Reg 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Reg 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

<u>National Quality Standard</u>		
Quality Area	Governance and Leadership	
Standard 7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
Element 7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

<u>Family Assistance Law</u>
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999 and subsequent updates, including Cheaper Child Care Amendment 2022
Child Care Provider Handbook , Department of Education, Skills and Employment

PRINCIPLES

- We are committed to providing all families with the opportunity to enrol their children by ensuring a fair fee structure, whilst still meeting service development and operational needs.
- We support Service Leaders to consider the principles of stewardship, thereby ensuring the sustainability of the service into the future.
- We implement clear and transparent fee structures, with systems and practices to ensure payments are processed correctly and receipts and statements are provided to families.

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- We ensure all legislative requirements and obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations as well as Family Assistance Law are met.
- We value the contribution of funding programs e.g. Queensland Kindergarten Funding (QKF) which can reduce costs for eligible families, by ensuring all requirements for funding are implemented and monitored, including regular reporting of data.
- We provide governance and management by supporting Service Leaders and staff with policies, procedures, and guidelines which clearly outline their roles and responsibilities, focusing on quality outcomes for children.
- We prioritise the privacy and confidentiality of personal information and details provided by families and provide an administrative area and processes to support good governance practices.
- We support families with the process of finalising their child care arrangement either through a Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) or a Relevant Arrangement (RA) where relevant.
- We appreciate fee structures can be complex and have provided a summarised table as Attachment 1 to this policy outlining all care types, written notice periods, public holidays, absences, payment terms and other relevant details.
- We understand families benefit from time to plan for any changes and commit to notifying families of any change to policy with a minimum of 14 days' notice.
- We value the learnings and experiences children have on incursions and excursions, whilst also aiming to keep costs reasonable for families, through the implementation of Educational Program fees in addition to the standard care costs, which can be applied when required and notified to families.
- We embrace the learnings from Catholic Social Teachings and support families in kind and respectful ways when resolving understandings and compliance with our policies and procedures.
- We support families in shift working roles by showing additional flexibility in altering bookings, at the discretion of the Service Leader, in order to ensure continuity of care for children.
- We understand that while permanent bookings are preferred, some families require additional flexibility and may require a casual booking. Casual bookings are based on vacancies and charged at a higher rate to permanent bookings.
- We aim to minimise outstanding debt for the families and the service by asking families to utilise our automatic debit process (Xpay as the preferred payment option).
- We assist Service Leaders with debt collection with CEEC Administration Team managing outstanding debt .
- We acknowledge, as a not-for-profit organisation, payment of fees by families, and Child Care Subsidy are our sole source of income, resulting in the delivery of a sustainable service with consistently high standards of education and care focused on quality outcomes for children.
- We will make all efforts to resolve outstanding debt issues and support families, however, continued non-payment of fees may result in cessation of care.

KEY TERMS

Term	Meaning	Source
Absences	An occasion when a child is not physically present for a session of care	Child Care Provider Handbook
Additional absence day	An absence day that occurs after a child has been subsidised for the allocated number of days in a financial year, for a reason specified under Family Assistance Law.	

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Additional Child Care Subsidy	A payment that provides targeted fee assistance to families and children facing barriers in accessing affordable child care in certain circumstances.	
Approved provider	A provider of child care that has been approved under Family Assistance Law to receive and pass on Child Care Subsidy on behalf of the Australian Government.	
Child care software	Software developed and provided by commercial providers to interact with the Australian Government's Child Care Subsidy System and to support administration and management activities for child care services.	
Child Care Subsidy	The payment to assist families with the costs of education and care for their children. It is, with some exceptions, paid directly to providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families make a co-contribution to their fees and pay the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.	
Complying Written Arrangement / Relevant Arrangement	An arrangement (an agreement between a child care provider and an individual to provide child care in return for fees) that includes required information.	
Customer Reference Number	An individual reference number allocated by Centrelink for each child and one for each parent or guardian who is claiming Child Care Subsidy.	
Electronic Funds Transfer	Includes payment by credit card, debit card and EFTPOS, direct deposit payments, direct debit payments and electronic bill payments through systems, such as BPAY or PayPal. However, it will not include payment by cash or by cheque.	Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Cheaper Child Care) Bill 2022
Enrolment	An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide care to a child and the provider submits an enrolment notice in the Child Care Subsidy System. It is a requirement under Family Assistance Law for all children who attend child care (or have an arrangement for care) to have an enrolment notice regardless of their Child Care Subsidy eligibility status.	Child Care Provider Handbook
MyGov	The website that provides a secure way for individuals and families to access Australian Government services, including their Centrelink online account, with one login and one password.	
Nominated Supervisor	Workers who have consented to the nomination by the Approved Provider to take on the responsibility and obligations under the National Law and National Regulations to manage a childcare service.	Guide to the NQF
Notice period (fees)	The length of time for a service to notify families before making any changes that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.	National Regulations
Responsible Person	An individual who is physically present and is responsible for the operation of a centre-based service for an agreed period of time. A responsible person must be present at all times that the approved service operates and can be:	Guide to the NQF

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the approved provider or a person with management or control of the service; ▪ a nominated supervisor of the service; or ▪ a person placed in day-to-day charge of the service in accordance with the National Regulations 	
Statement of Entitlement	A statement from a provider to a family giving details of sessions of care provided, the child's attendance and resulting fee reduction amounts.	Child Care Provider Handbook
Stewardship	Looking after what we have and leaving it in better shape than which we received it.	

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES / DOCUMENTS

- CEEC FA PRO Fees & Account Management Procedure
- CEEC GOV POL Enrolment, Orientation, and Booking Policy
- CEEC GOV PRO Enrolment, Orientation, and Booking Procedure
- CEEC GOV POL Governance and Service Management Policy
- CEEC Information Handbook
- CEEC FA LTR Second Stage: Repeated Late Collection
- CEEC FA LTR Third Stage: (Final Warning) Repeated Late Collection
- CEEC FA LTR Fourth Stage: Potential termination of enrolment after consistent late collection
- CEEC FA LTR Stage 2 Outstanding Fees Reminder Letter
- CEEC FA LTR Stage 3 Outstanding Fees Overdue Letter
- CEEC FA LTR Stage 4 Outstanding Fees Final Reminder Letter
- CEEC FA LTR Stage 5 Outstanding Fees Suspension of Enrolment Letter
- CEEC FA LTR Stage 6 Formal Debt Recovery Letter
- CEEC FA GUIDE Dictionary Pay Items and Account Tags
- CEEC FA FORM Request to Write Off Bad Debt
- CEEC FA FORM Parent Payment Agreement
- CEEC FA FORM Account Refund Request
- CEEC FA FORM Account Refund Checklist (Refund of Fees in Advance)

INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

This policy will be available on the Archdiocesan Intranet (AI) and the Catholic Early EdCare website. Service Leaders and Managers are responsible for ensuring staff are able to access policies and supporting documents. All staff are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy. Educators and families are able to access this policy on the Catholic Early EdCare website.

- Educators and families will be invited to participate in the review of this policy.
- Families will be able to access a copy of this policy during the enrolment process.
- Summary information will be included in the CEEC information handbooks
- Changes to this document will be shared with families and educators.
- Ongoing training opportunities for educators will be provided using a range of learning platforms.

Please contact the Policy Sponsor for further interpretation of this policy.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Monitoring of compliance with this policy and the related procedure will be completed by the Business Development and Systems team, in conjunction with the Governance and Performance team's Service Compliance Officer.

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The review process for this policy will begin 8 (eight) weeks prior to the stated review date and include a consultation period with families, educators, Catholic Early EdCare team and any other relevant stakeholders and will be facilitated by the Research and Policy Officer.

Communication about any changes in or review of the policy, procedure or related supporting documents will be provided to Catholic Early EdCare team, Service Leaders, educators and families once finalised.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with under Centacare's misconduct provisions, as stated in the Employment Guidelines Code of Conduct.

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ATTACHMENT 1 – FEE STRUCTURES AND NOTIFICATION PERIODS

Care Type	Approved Model		Additional Fees and charges	Charge by	Written Notice Periods to end or amend a booking		Public Holidays	Absences	Payment Terms	Other Information
	Child Care Subsidy	Queensland Kindergarten Funding			Permanent	Casual				
Long Day Care (LDC)	Yes	Yes	Yes – refer to Fee Schedule	Daily Fee	7 days	24 hours	Charged	Charged	Weekly in arrears	Ten hour full time bookings may be applied to children booked 5 days weekly. Children's attendance for these bookings cannot exceed 10 hours.
Kindergarten (Stand-alone services)	No	Yes	Yes – refer to Statement of Fees	Daily Fees	7 days	24 hours	Not charged	Charged	Fees to be paid in full prior to end of term	Fees are not charged for school holiday periods Children ineligible for QKF will be charged the total daily rate
Outside School Hours Care	Yes	No	Yes – refer to Fee Schedule	Sessional Fees Before School Care (BSC) After School Care (ASC) Vacation Care (VAC)	7 days	24 hours	Not charged	Charged	Weekly in arrears	Vacation Care - Permanent bookings made prior to the vacation period - Casual bookings are made during the vacation care period
Hubs (Combined Care types eg. OSHC /Kindergarten or LDC / OSHC)	Yes	Yes	Yes – refer to Fee Schedule	Daily fee for Kindergarten and LDC Sessional Fee for OSHC	7 days	24 hrs	As per care types listed above	Charged	Weekly in arrears	Fees not charged for Kindergarten during the school holiday period. Kindergarten eligible children requiring care during school holidays will be able to access the Vacation Care program as outlined above.

Late Collection Fee

Charged at \$25 per 15 minutes or part thereof

More than two occasions of late collections per month will be issued with a show cause letter regarding why late fees should not be doubled

Consistent late collection may result in the termination of enrolment

Educational Program fees may be applied in addition to the daily or sessional fees for incursions or excursions, or other events as required and when notified to families

From 1st July 2023 payments for gap fees can only be accepted via electronic funds transfer, as per the [Cheaper Child Care Bill Amendment to A New Tax System \(Family Assistance\) Act 1999](#)

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