

FEE POLICY

GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Purpose

The purpose of this operational policy is to ensure written information outlining any fees charged by our centre is provided to parents in alignment with Ministry of Education's Licencing Criteria GMA3 and to ensure parents are informed.

Position Statement

This centre will provide a current schedule of fees and information to all parents upon enrolment, this information will be accessible to all parents in the centre. If management make changes to the fees, parents will be notified of any changes in writing. Parents understand they are fully responsible for payment of fee's and have a clear understanding on the consequences of not paying fees on time.

Issue Outline

Information about fees charged by the centre is clearly communicated with parents at the time of enrolment to avoid confusion, late payments or non-payment. Parents should be fully aware of all costs and the penalties for not paying fees on time. Making things clear from the start will support centres to maintain positive relationships with parents.

Detail

What our Fees Cover

- Our fees are based on an hourly enrolment model
- The government subsidises early childhood education services up to six hours per day and up to 30 hours per week.
- The fee includes provision for all services provided and includes provision for the centre to meet its employment obligations for staff for any statutory holidays that occur during the working week and when the centre may otherwise be closed.
- **20 Hours ECE Subsidy**
 - The 20 Hours ECE Subsidy is offered at our centre for children aged three and over
 - Only up to six hours in any one day can qualify for the 20 Hours ECE Subsidy
 - Parents must advise the centre where they choose to share their 20 Hours ECE Subsidy entitlement with another ECE service. A child entitled to access the government's 20 Hours ECE Subsidy may only access a total of six hours per day or 20 hours per week government funding at this level.
 - The amount charged before the 20 Hours ECE Subsidy is deducted and the amount that parents will pay after the 20 Hours ECE Subsidy is shown on the invoice/statement.
 - We invite you to pay an Optional Charge of \$2.00 per hour for the 20 Hours

ECE Subsidy. This is because the subsidy does not cover all the costs incurred by our centre. The Optional Charge is voluntary. You may elect to pay this, or you may elect not to. If you commence paying the Optional Charge and then elect to stop, you are required to give us one month's notice to give us the opportunity to make changes to our financial planning. In our enrolment pack we provide you with details on what the Optional Charge covers. Please note that if you elect not to pay the Optional Charge, your child may not receive some additional services from us or be asked to pay for additional services.

- **Work and Income Childcare Subsidy**
 - Some children are eligible for the Childcare Subsidy from Work and Income. If this applies to your child, you must advise us immediately
 - If applicable, the Childcare Subsidy will be paid directly to the centre
 - If a child entitled to WINZ subsidy attends the center for more hours than the subsidy covers, the additional hours will be charged at the full rate of fees.
 - You cannot claim both the 20 Hours ECE Subsidy AND the Childcare Subsidy for the same hours of attendance, but you can claim both subsidies for different hours of attendance.
 - Families anticipating childcare subsidies (WINZ) will be charged the full fee until we have received the payment statement. Then the charged fees will be amended.
 - WINZ allows up to 3 continual weeks of absence. If there is no communication from the parents during this time the child can be removed from Taupo Childrens Corner centre rolls.

Schedule of Fees

- The centre will produce a schedule of current fees charged
- Our schedule of fees is included in the enrolment pack with our Fee policy and is displayed in the Centre. Additional copies are available from administration.
- On the enrolment of your child in our centre, an advance of one week's fee is required, this will be held on your child's account till they finish care with us.
- Booked sessions can only be swapped to another day within the same week.
- Any extra time the child is at the centre before or after their booked time's is charged per quarter of an hour.
- Families are entitled to a 10% discount if two or more children attend the centre, this will only apply to the children who are not receiving a child subsidy or 20 hours ECE.
- We require a minimum of 6 hours or more if your child is booked for the day or minimum 3 hours/ 3 sessions for part time children.

Changes in Fees

- Management reserves the right to change the fee rates and policies, changes will be applicable to existing as well as new enrolments. Parents will be given one month's notice in writing of proposed changes to the Fees Schedule
- The centre will keep accurate records relating to enrolments and attendance.

Payment Methods

- Our centre accepts payments by Bank Automatic Payment, Bank Internet Transfer and by Eftpos Card
- Any flexible payment plans, or extensions or alternative payment methods are to be

- discussed with and approved by the Administrator, on a case-by-case basis.
- Fees are to be paid in full before the child's last day of care.

Invoicing Practices

- Parents will be invoiced for services on a weekly basis, invoices are sent out Monday for the week prior.
- At the end of the financial year, a receipt showing fees paid for the year will be issued if requested.

Holidays, Being Late and Absences

- If the centre is to close during holiday periods, we will advise you one month in advance to give you the opportunity to make alternative childcare arrangements. You will not be charged for any holiday closures, the Centre is usually closed for two weeks over the Christmas, New year period.
- If a parent wishes to withdraw their child temporarily from our centre over a holiday period, half our fee will continue to be charged to ensure the enrolment remains secure. We require written notice of when your child will be away on holiday with a return date.
- We would otherwise reserve the right to enroll another child to take up the available place.
- If a child arrives 15 minutes before or after booked times a partial fee will be charged.
- If parents or approved alternate adults are unable to collect a child on time: after closing time a \$2.00 per minute fee will be charged
- If a child is sick, they should not attend the centre. This ensures the risk that other children and adults may share unwelcome bugs is minimised. Half our normal fee applies for sick days when informed on the day, otherwise full fees will be charged. (this discount does not apply to the 20 ECE hours)
- If a child is to be away from our centre for an extended period due to sickness or injury, you should advise centre management immediately so that alternative enrolment and fee arrangements may be made.
- Bulk funding from the MOE also ceases after 3 weeks absence. If there is no communication from the parents during this time the child can be removed from Taupo Childrens Corner centre rolls.

Failure to Pay Fees on Time

- Our fees are due at the time they are invoiced. If you are aware that you cannot pay our fees when you receive our invoice, you must advise us immediately so we may discuss alternative payment options with you.
- Failure to pay our fees may result in suspension of the child's enrolment at our centre; referral to a debt collector and additional debt collection charges being applied. The extra charges are the agency fees.

Forced Closure

- Due to events outside the control of the centre, the centre may be forced to close at the instruction of the Ministry of Health, Civil Defence, or the New Zealand Police, an act of Nature, or Pandemic. If we are instructed to close at any time, we will inform you immediately. You will not be charged any fee for the period of the forced closure.

Withdrawal

- We understand that parents, from time-to-time, may choose to withdraw their child from our centre. We require a weeks’ notice of such instances.

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Table of fees - Effective of 20/09/2021: Fees Duncan Street Alignment with other Policies/Documentation

Relevant Background (including legislation/regulation references)

Licencing Criteria 2008, Governance, Management and Administration:

- **GMA3:** Written information is provided to parents about any fees charged by the service.
- Ministry of Education Funding Handbook
- Chapter 4 of the Ministry of Education's funding guide with regards to 20 hours early childhood education <http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz/~media/Educate/Files/Reference%20Downloads/Lead/Files/Funding/FundingHandbook/Chapter420HoursECE.pdf>

Supportive information and resources

- Work and Income Brochure <http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/documents/brochures/help-with-childcare-costs.pdf>
- Early Childhood Council's enrolment template (approved by the Ministry of Education) and only requires one signature http://www.ecc.org.nz/Folder?Action=View%20File&Folder_id=146&File=EnrolmentAgreementFormBWwithNSN.pdf
- Ministry of Education's enrolment template <http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz/ManagementInformation/RecentAnnouncements/UpdatedECEEnrolmentAgreement.aspx>
- Sample Fees Schedule and agreement wording available on the ECC Website
- www.ecc.org.nz

Impacts of Policy on Staff, Parents, Children

Making the fees schedule and policy visible aims to avoid any confusion or animosity about costs involved or consequences of not paying fees on time

Alignment with the Centre/Curriculum Philosophy

This policy is in alignment with our Centre Philosophy.

Implications and/or risks

Clear procedures have been developed and will be followed by the person responsible within the Centre, under the guidance of the Centre Manager.

Implementation

Review

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised:	Centre Director
Date:	September 2021
Review Date:	March 2022
Consultation Undertaken:	Parents and caregivers, staff, local child abuse agencies