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**FEE POLICY – Duncan Street**

**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**

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| 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**

**Schedule of Fees**

* The Centre will produce a schedule of current fees charged based on an hourly enrolment model.
* 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 the Administration.
* On the enrolment of your child in our Centre, a bond of one week’s fee is required, this will be held on your child’s account until they finish care with us.
* Booked sessions can only be swapped to another day within the same week, if possible due to numbers attending that day.
* Any extra time the child is at the Centre before or after their booked times will charged at $1.50 per minute. It is important that you schedule your child’s hours to suit your needs as we roster our qualified kaiako based on the number of tamariki in the Centre. If you are dropping off early, or picking up late, this affects our child-teacher ratio’s. If you need to extend your child’s hours for a one-off day this may be possible if you give us 24hrs notice. We understand that on the odd occasion there could be an emergency where you need to extend your child’s hours on the day, please phone the office and speak to Administration.
* Families are entitled to a 10% discount if two or more tamariki attend the Centre, this will only apply to the tamariki who are not receiving a child subsidy or 20 hours ECE.
* We require a minimum of two days at 6 hours or more if your child is booked for a full the day or minimum 4 hours/ 3 sessions for part time tamariki. Sessions are 8:30am-12:30pm or 1pm-5pm. These hours are not available in our Under 2’s room.
* The government subsidises early childhood education services a maximum of 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 of staff that occur during the working week and when the Centre may otherwise be closed for any statutory holidays.

**20 Hours ECE Subsidy**

* + The 20 Hours ECE Subsidy is offered at our Centre for tamariki aged three and over.
	+ A maximum of 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

**Work and Income Childcare Subsidy**

* + Some tamariki 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.

**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 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 and 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 before or is picked up after their booked times a $1.50 per minute fee will be charged.
* If parents or approved alternate adults are unable to collect a child on time: after closing time a $2.50 per minute late fee will be charged.
* You are entitled to 3 weeks ‘holiday’ fees at half price. These 15 days can be taken at any time during the year. They can be used for holidays or sickness. Once these days have been used, normal fees will apply (this discount does not apply to the 20 ECE hours).
* If a child is to be away from our Centre for an extended period (more than 3 weeks) due to holiday or hospitalized due to sickness or injury, you should advise the Administration 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 Taupō 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 our Administration 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 will be 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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|  **Under 6 mths**  **6 to 23 mths 2 years**  |
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| **Hours** | **$ per hour** | **$ per hour** | **$ per hour** |
| 0 - 20 | 13.46 |  12.54 | 10.21 |
| 21 - 30 | 10.79 | 9.91 | 8.75 |
| 31 - 40 | 8.46  | 8.16 | 7.00 |
| 41-47.5 | 7.46 | 6.82 | 6.36 |
|  | **Hours** | **3 years plus** |  |
|  | 0 -20 | ECE hours  |  |
|  | 21-33 | 14.11 |  |
|  | 34 -41 | 11.96 |  |
|  | 42 - 47.5 | 8.46 |  |

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 **Table of fees - Effective of :3/04/23 Fees Duncan Street**

**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](http://www.ecc.org.nz)

**Impacts of Policy on Staff, Whānau and Tamariki**

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.

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| **Authorised:** | Centre Manager |
| **Date:** | March 2024 |
| **Review Date:** | February 2025 |
| **Consultation Undertaken:** | Parents and caregivers, staff, local child abuse agencies |