

Quality early education and care provides the foundation for children’s development and social engagement whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our Service 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

Arrival and Departure Policy Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Governance Policy Enrolment Policy Governance Policy	Orientation of New Families Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Termination of Enrolment 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

- An enrolment fee of \$50.00 is charged upon confirmation of enrolment. This fee is added to the first fee schedule payment.
- An annual re-enrolment fee of \$25.00 is charged in February of each calendar year.

### 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 (two weeks) of a child's attendance.
- Fees are to be paid fortnightly through a direct debit system.
- 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).
- Currently fee structure is as follows:

0-2 years \$120 per day

2-3 years \$115 per day

3-6 years \$110 per day

## 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 SmartCentral. Families are required to register for Direct Debit payments via Smart Central and ChildCare EasyPay.
- 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. (See Child Care Subsidy Handbook).
- 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](https://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.

- 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 15 minute 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.
- Silverlea Early Childhood Services may terminate the child's position as per our Termination of Enrolment Policy if the safety of any other child and/or staff member is at risk (Please refer to Termination of Enrolment Policy)

## Responsibility of Management

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- 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](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* (4<sup>th</sup> 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)

## POLICY DETAILS

Date of Issue	September 2020
Updated	
Review Date	September 2021

Silverlea Early Childhood Services Inc has the discretion to update this policy at any time. Relevant proposed and completed updates will be communicated to all stakeholders via preferred method of communication.

This policy can be amended by the Executive Director or the Management Board.

## AUTHORISATION

This policy is authorised and signed by the Management Board.

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NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
POSITION

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE