



Fees Procedure

Policy

The Service operates as a not-for-profit incorporated association and is committed to providing quality education and care for children, with any profit being reinvested back into the Service and allowing for any unforeseen circumstances. The Service will ensure the equitable application of fees across the programs and provide a fair and manageable system for dealing with non-payment and/or inability to pay. The Service will advise families about program funding, including government support and fees and charges to be paid. Confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians will be maintained at all times.

The Board of the Service is responsible for the approval of fees each year as part of the annual budgeting process and ongoing monitoring of the Service's financial position throughout the year. As a not-for-profit organisation, the aim is to achieve a balanced budget that ensures the Service remains financially viable for the current year and in the future. This takes into consideration the amount of government funding expected and the expected costs in providing high quality education and care programs for children.

Application of Procedure

This procedure applies to the Approved Provider (being the Service), Persons with Management and Control (being the Centre Director and Centre Manager), Nominated Supervisors, employees and parents/guardians with an enrolled child, or who wish to enrol a child at the Service.

Key Definitions:

Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS): ACCS is part of the Child Care Safety Net, to give the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, as well as those from regional and remote communities, a strong start through access to quality early childhood education and care. Further information can be found at: <https://www.education.gov.au/accs-child-wellbeing-guide>

Child Care Subsidy (CCS): A Commonwealth Government means tested subsidy to assist eligible families that use approved childcare services. Payments are paid directly to approved childcare services. Further details are available at: <https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>

Dishonor Fee: This fee is applied if a direct debit is rejected by the bank.

Enrolment application fee: A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the Service.

Fees: A charge for a place within a program at the Service.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS): A state government subsidy paid directly to the funded service to enable eligible families to attend a funded kindergarten program at no cost (or minimal cost) to promote participation.



Hawthorn Early Years is committed to:

Providing clear guidelines for the setting, payment and collection of fees.

Ensuring the viability of the Association by setting appropriate fees and charges.

The equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided by HEY, including supporting families who are entitled to concessions or have fees paid by a third party.

The Board of Governance will:

Delegate operational responsibility and day to day management of the Service to the Nominated Supervisor, Centre Director and Centre Manager.

Appoint a Business Manager who will be responsible for overseeing the management of billing and the collection of fees.

Monitor the performance of the Association, including responsibilities contained in this procedure, through regular reporting and by ensuring appropriate resources are available to carry out the organisation's functions.

Be responsible for approving the annual budget and any corresponding fee increases in line with this Procedure.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

Review the current budget in conjunction with the Business Manager to determine fee income requirements.

Ensure comprehensive fee information is made available for families prior to enrolling their child and within the Family Handbook.

Ensure all parents/guardians are provided with a copy of this procedure upon enrolment of their child, and ensure that the *Fees Policy and Procedure* is readily accessible at the Service and via an online platform accessible to families.

Notify parents/guardians within 30 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected.

Ensure a notice, outlining fees charged by the Service, is displayed prominently in the main entrance to the Service.

Be responsible for approving Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) applications, and will seek clarification from governing bodies where needed.

Be responsible for developing, implementing and reviewing this procedure, in consultation with the parents/guardians, staff, Board of Management, and in line with the requirements of DEECD's *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and other Government funding criteria*.

Support families with financial difficulties by offering a suitable payment plan.



All employees will:

Inform the front office of any parent/guardian concerns in relation to fees, or any queries relating to this Procedure.

Comply with the Service's *Governance and Management of Service Policy and Privacy Procedure* regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees.

Parents/guardians will:

Read the Parent Handbook and Fees Procedure which includes a Statement of Fees and Charges.

Sign and comply with the declarations included in the child's Enrolment Form.

Provide the required documentation to enable the Service to claim the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for eligible families.

Complete the appropriate Direct Debit Agreement.

Ensure that the bank account and/or credit card details provided to HEY are up to date and accurate.

Ensure that there are sufficient cleared funds in their nominated account by the due date to enable the direct debit to be honored.

Notify the front office team if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees.

Complete the late collection form should they be late in collecting their child from any program.

Pay the Enrolment Fee when re-enrolling their child for the following year

Fees information for families:

Waiting List Applications

Parents/guardians are required to pay the non-refundable Application Fee to place their child on the waiting list (refer to Waiting List Procedure for payment details).

Enrolment Fees

To secure the child's place at the Service, an Enrolment Fee is payable upon enrolment (or re-enrolment of existing children for the following year) by the specified date in the Letter of Offer. Should parents withdraw prior to the specified commencement date, the Enrolment Fee will be retained by the Service. A reduction to booked days will be applied on a pro-rata basis, with payment for the reduced days forfeited.

Fee Increases

Fees are reviewed every 6 months to insure an informed approach is taken determining if an fee increase is needed. The criteria we consider is:

- Maintain our previous financial position to ensure ongoing viability of the service
- Maintain a liquidity ratio of 1.5 minimum
- Sector wage increases
- Current Capital expenditure needs
- Increase operational costs resulting from inflation



30 days' notice will be provided to families prior to a fee increase coming into effect.

Payment of Fees

- All families must complete an electronic direct debit agreement to confirm an enrolment. Direct debit from a nominated bank account or credit card is the only payment option accepted by the Service. No other payment methods (e.g. cash, cheque, EFTPOS, or direct deposit facilities) are available for payment of fees.)

Fees are payable fortnightly and will be direct-debited on the first Thursday of each fortnight. The charge will include the current week plus one week ahead.

Fees are payable when children are absent due to illness, holidays or other parental/family choice for non-attendance.

Offers that are made to new families for children to begin in the new calendar year must accept the position from the first week of operation. Fees charges will commence from the first enrolled day. If a position becomes available throughout the year, enrolment offers made to new families must commence within four weeks of the acceptance of offer.

All families must booked a minimum of two days of care per week per child. This is necessary for consistency for children and for them to get the most out of their time at HEY. Invoices will be available for download from the parent access website or application platform. Upcoming scheduled payments can be viewed in the Account section of the parent access application. The amount due will be debited from the nominated account.

Termination of Enrolment/Reduction of Days

Parents are required to provide four weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the Service or to reduce days.

For families who have accept a 4 year old kindergarten place for the following year and withdraw prior to or during Term 1, they will be required to give a Terms notice and pay all fees associated with attending in Term 1 regardless of attendance. After Term 1 the notice period reverts back to the original notice period mentioned above.

If parents choose to withdraw their child from the Service prior to the notification period ending, families will be ineligible for CCS payments beyond their last attended day and full fees will be charged.

Should you choose to withdraw your child from the Service at any stage in the current year, the offer for a place for the following year will also be withdrawn.

Should you withdraw from the program, a new waiting list application will need to be completed for re-entry into the Service. Priority is not given to families who have previously attended the Service.

Current bookings cannot be terminated or reduced during the months of November or December. Fees will be charged until the date of the Service's year end closure prior to Christmas.

Swapping days of bookings is not permitted, however requests for permanent changes of booked days will be facilitated where they are available.



Fee Subsidies

For information about the **Child Care Subsidy**, refer to the Parent Handbook or contact Centrelink directly.

If you are experiencing temporary financial hardship, you may be eligible for the Temporary Financial Hardship Subsidy. Please contact Services Australia for more information and to ascertain eligibility.

Unpaid Fees

If fees are not paid in full by the due date, the following steps will be taken;

- An initial reminder email will be sent to the person responsible for the payment of fees and a Dishonour Fee will be charged.
- If no response is received or full payment of fees are not made within two weeks of the initial due date, the family will be contacted to discuss available options.
- Failure to comply or continued non-payment may result in receiving notice that the child's place at the Service will be withdrawn. This may also result in referral to a Collection Agency, with any additional related charges payable by the family.

Statement of Standard Fees and Charges (Applicable from 10th July 2023)

Standard Fees for children not holding any concessions:

Service Type	Daily Fee	Waiting List Application Fee Per Child (Non-Refundable)	Enrolment Fee	Hat Charge (Per child annually)	Wet Bag Charge (Per Bag)	Maintenance Levy (Per family annually)
Long Day Care	\$170 ¹	\$50	2 Week's Fees	\$7.00	\$10.00	\$100
4 year old Kinder	\$163 ¹ (lunch not included)	\$50	2 Week's Fees	\$7.00	\$10.00	\$100
Late Collection Fees apply as follows: \$50 per child for the first 15 minutes or part thereof after the session ending time, and \$10 for every 5 minutes thereafter or part thereof.						
Dishonour Fee: \$20.00 per instance						

¹Fees are not charged for Public Holidays or other days that the Service is closed.

- The **Maintenance Levy** will be charged per family and is payable with the first direct debit of the year. There is no refund if your child withdraws from the Service during the year. Families joining mid-year will be charged on a pro rata basis based on the term in which they start.



- A **Dishonor Fee** will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees. This will be in addition to any dishonor fee charged by your financial institution and/or the Direct Debit facility.
- Parents/guardians are required to pay the **Enrolment Fee** by the specified due date in order to secure the child's booking at the Service. This payment will then be applied to the account in the first billing period of the associated booking.
- A **Late Fee** will be automatically applied to accounts where children are not collected and signed out prior to the Service closing at 6pm. A late collection form will be completed whenever a child is collected late and a review of the child's enrolment will occur for on-going and consistent late collections.
- **Hat and Wet Bag** charges will be payable when securing your child's place at the Service, and then as required.

See Also:

1. Fees Policy
2. Governance and Management of Service Policy and Procedure
3. Family Handbook
4. Enrolment Procedure
5. Orientation Procedure
6. Waiting List Procedure
7. Privacy Procedure