

# Long Day Care Fees Policy / Procedure



## QA7 – Governance and Leadership

***EMERGE promotes a commitment to child safety, wellbeing, participation, empowerment, cultural safety, and awareness including children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and/or communities and children from cultural and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.***

***EEYS has a zero tolerance of child abuse and a duty of care to prevent and manage child abuse risks including physical and online environments.***

### PURPOSE

This policy will provide clear guidelines for families and EEYS Centre Directors to ensure that there is a transparent process in relation to the collection of fees for children accessing EEYS Early Learning Centres.

This policy details EEYS's commitment to:

- the collection of fees
- an equitable and efficient fee payment process for EEYS Early Learning Centres
- the collection of outstanding fees
- supporting families experiencing hardship.

### POLICY PRINCIPLES

EEYS is a not-for-profit community organisation committed to supporting all families to access quality early childhood education and care. EEYS aims to ensure our services are affordable, offer quality and value for money and remain sustainable for future children and families.

### SCOPE

All Centre Directors and families accessing EEYS Early Learning Centres.

### FEES REVIEW

EEYS will review fees on an annual basis and will inform parents as soon as practicable of the charges payable for the following calendar year.

### INVOICING

Families will be invoiced on a weekly basis on a Saturday. These invoices will be generated out of Xap and emailed to families. The payment method is for families to set up direct debit or credit card payment through QuickPay.

### OVERDUE ACCOUNTS AND LATE PAYMENT FEES

Parents will be notified when their fee payments are due or in arrears.

The Centre Director will contact families if an account is overdue.

- When a direct debit payment is declined the Centre Director will send a friendly reminder SMS to be notified of the dishonour and advised that they will be required to pay the outstanding amount & any additional fees prior to the next direct debit date.

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- When an account is overdue 7 - 14 days overdue, the family will be contacted by the Centre Director who will verbally request payment and discuss their payment options.
- If an account is outstanding for more than 14 days the family will receive an overdue payment letter, including an account statement and outstanding fees payment plan calling for immediate payment of arrears. A copy of the letter will be added to the family's file
- If an account is overdue by 21 days and the family has not made contact to make suitable payment arrangements, the child's place at the service will be forfeited, until the account has been settled, and the account may be forwarded to debt collection
- Under exceptional circumstances, any of the above can be waived. Decisions to waive must be made with the approval of the Executive Officer.

### PAYMENT PLANS

Families experiencing genuine difficulty with payment of their fees must agree to a payment plan with their Centre Director. The payment plan should be designed to clear debts while maintaining regular payments for any ongoing early childhood education and care services, and it should be sustainable for both parties. The recommended additional payment each fortnight is 25%-50% of the regular fees paid by the family.

Payment Plans must be negotiated and agreed on the basis that ongoing fees for services will remain current and the additional payments are only to clear debts so that the arrears and late payment fees do not continue to increase.

The Centre Director will write the payment plan and terms of the agreement into a letter, with the family and Centre Director signing two copies. One copy will be kept on the family file at the centre, while the other copy will be given to the family.

### DISHONOUR FEE

If a payment to QuickPay is declined, a dishonour fee will be administered by QuickPay on each occasion for administrative purposes. Further information is available in the Direct Debit Request - Authorisation Form/terms and conditions.

### CASUAL BOOKINGS

Casual bookings can be made by calling the centre directly to see if there are any vacancies on that day. Parents can also put their name down on the casual call wait list for the centre directors to contact them if a vacancy becomes available on a given day.

### LATE COLLECTION FEES

The daily fees are based on the opening hours provided for the centre. In the event that a family is late collecting their child from the service, additional costs are incurred.

A late collection fee will be charged at \$15 for the first 5 minutes and then \$10 every 10 minutes after that. This will be imposed at the discretion of the Director.

If a family is delayed through unavoidable circumstances, they must contact the Centre staff to advise the details and when the child will be collected. If the centre has not been contacted a staff member will attempt to contact both parents and emergency contacts before calling the police.

### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

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Fees are calculated on a weekly basis including public holidays. Families will be charged for public holidays at the same rate as a regular day of care.

### **FAMILY HOLIDAYS AND NON-ATTENDANCE DAYS**

When a child does not attend the service for reasons such as illness or holidays, families will continue to be charged for services according to the child's regular booking. Families who take extended holiday periods but wish to hold their child's place at the centre will be expected to pay the regular fees for the place at the Centre.

### **ABSENTEEISM**

If a child is to be absent for the day, parents are requested to telephone the service as soon as possible to inform educators. If the child is sick it is important to inform the service of the nature of the illness, symptoms and any diagnosis is helpful in containing the spread of illness. Families will be charged for services on this day.

### **CANCELLATION OF BOOKING**

Families are asked to provide 2 weeks written notice of the cancellation of a booking. Fees will continue to apply until a written cancellation of the booking is received. If your child does not attend the service for the any of the last two weeks, without a medical certificate, full fees will apply and you will not be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.

### **FEE SUBSIDY ENTITLEMENTS**

Most Australian families are entitled to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). The level of CCS entitlements varies according to these factors.

1. Combined family income
2. Activity Test – the activity level of both parents
3. Service Type – type of childcare service

To be eligible, families must apply for CCS online at [www.humanservices.gov.au/families](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/families) through myGov or phone 136 150 between 8 am and 8 pm (local time) Monday to Friday or visit a Service Centre. Families are unable to receive the Child Care Subsidy or ACCS without completing this process.

### **ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (ACCS)**

Additional Child Care Subsidy provides additional fee assistance to support vulnerable or disadvantaged families and children. This support recognises the preventative and protective influence of quality child care on a child's health, wellbeing and development; and the importance of continuity of care.

There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)—to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent)—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren.

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- Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship)—to help families experiencing financial hardship.
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (transition to work)—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work.

EEYS are centrally involved in identifying children who require extra support through Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing).

EEYS are not involved in making applications for the other types of Additional Child Care Subsidy, although they may encourage families who may be eligible to contact Centrelink to apply for additional assistance.

EEYS will be advised of individuals using their service who are receiving these other payments.

EEYS and our Early Learning Centres are registered with the Department of Education as approved Childcare Subsidy Providers. EEYS services will undertake every effort to advise the Department of the hours of care provided to ensure that families receive the appropriate subsidy, however, EEYS has no influence over a family's eligibility or subsidy amount. All terms and conditions of CCS and ACCS are available from the Department of Education and Department of Human Services.

### SOURCES

- Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) 2009
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework 2016
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Reg 73-76,
- Education and Care Services National Law 2010 Section 168 & 323
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic), as amended 2011
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic), as amended 2012
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance and Related Measures) Act 2000

### ATTACHMENTS

- ATTACHMENT 1: Contract for Payment of Fees
- ATTACHMENT 2: Fee Statement

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### ATTACHMENT 1

#### CONTRACT FOR PAYING FEES

I/we (parents /guardians name) \_\_\_\_\_

Of, (address) \_\_\_\_\_

1. Acknowledge that the childcare service is funded by fees paid by the parents. The childcare service cannot operate without the fees paid by parents.
2. Always agree to pay my fees on a weekly basis and on time.
3. Acknowledge having received and read the attached summary of the centre's fee policy, which sets out the procedure for fee payment.
4. Agree that if our financial circumstances change and we are unable to pay the fees as agreed, we will immediately notify EEYS to discuss appropriate alternative payment arrangements.
5. Agree that if our activity and financial circumstances change and we will immediately notify Centrelink to ensure our Child Care Subsidy entitlements are up to date.
6. Agree to pay fees while the child is absent. Examples include annual leave, public holidays, illness, closure due to unforeseen circumstances etc.
7. Agree to collect my child from the service prior to closing time.
8. Agree to give two weeks' written notice of when my child/children will be leaving the centre.
9. Acknowledge that Department of Education and Department of Human Services may view this information if auditing the service.
10. If my account is in arrears it may compromise my child's position at the service.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

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### ATTACHMENT 2 STATEMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES (FEE SCHEDULE 2024)

#### LONG DAY CARE

##### Fees

Site	Room	Fees (\$) per day
Marrang Early Learning Centre	Under 3	\$130
Marrang Early Learning Centre	Over 3	\$120
Nhill Early Learning Centre	Under 3	\$120
Nhill Early Learning Centre	Over 3	\$115
Dimboola Early Learning Centre	Under 3	\$120
Dimboola Early Learning Centre	Over 3	\$115