

Fees Policy:



POLICY STATEMENT:

Grays Point Activity Centre (GPAC) is a not for profit organisation and the annual budget is set to meet the income required to develop and maintain a quality Service for children and families at an operationally break even basis. *Our Service's* fees are also determined by the objectives of the Association's Constitution with one of the current objects of securing a long-term future of Grays Point Activity Centre Inc. We strive to ensure that our Service is affordable and accessible to families in our Community. The GPAC Management Committee ratifies the budget annually, or as necessary, and monitors it carefully throughout the year.

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an Approved Provider must ensure that Policies and procedures are in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the Service and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021).

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.

PURPOSE:

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the GPAC Outside School Hours Care Service fee structure, payment requirements and CCS 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.

IMPLEMENTATION:

GPAC 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 CCS 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.

PROCEDURES:

a) Membership

The Service is an Incorporated Association and as such, families enrolling their child in the Service are bound by the rules of the Association for the period of the child's enrolment.

As a member of the Incorporated Association, one representative of the child's family is entitled to voting rights at any General Meeting held by the Service and may be nominated (with consent) for a position on the Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

A membership fee of \$60 per family is payable on an annual basis either:

Enrolled families: On re-enrolment for following calendar year.

E.g. family enrolled during 2024, re-new fee for 2025 when confirmation of enrolment for

2025 email is sent to family, including invoice for the \$60 Membership Fee.

**This must be paid by January for the calendar year/before the child can attend the Centrelink.*

New enrolment of family: The membership will be valid from commencement of enrolment until the end of that calendar year. Family will need to submit a new membership form/ pay membership fee annually as per enrolled families on re-enrolment.

E.g. if family commences care 15 May 2025, their membership will continue until 31 December 2025 and a new membership form and fee of \$60 will be payable from 01 January 2026.

b) Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is the payment made by the Government to assist families with the costs of childcare. It is paid directly to the families GPAC account and automatically reduces their entitled percentage from the full fee charged by GPAC, if they are eligible for this payment. GPAC then passes this on to families as a fee reduction if you are eligible.

Families are required to make a co-contribution to their childcare fees and pay the Service difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount '**the gap fee**'. Please note that Centrelink does not send through payments to families GPAC accounts if they do not sign in or out/confirm sign in and out times on kiosk, or if there is a discrepancy on Centrelink's system e.g. meet immunisation requirements, be under 13 years etc.

GPAC is not directly involved in the calculation of a family's entitlements. This is a matter between the family and Centrelink.

The family is responsible for ensuring that Centrelink has processed their information and they have logged on through myGov to confirm their child's enrolment at the Service. The family is responsible for providing the Service with correct enrolment details to facilitate the CCS claim for child and CCS claimant, including Centrelink Reference Numbers (CRN's) and Date of Birth.

Families should ensure they provide true and complete information to Centrelink for the purposes of claiming Child Care Subsidy. This is a legal requirement of families, and the provision of incorrect information may result in families incurring debts that need to be recovered at a later date by Centrelink and/or the Service. Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstance to Centrelink (family income, activity levels, relationship changes and other changes to their circumstances).

Any disputes with CCS payments is the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments.

In the event of a dispute between Centrelink and the family or the failure of Centrelink to make a payment of subsidy to the families GPAC account, the family is responsible for paying the outstanding amount on the account and Centrelink will send through the CCS payment directly to the families personal bank account, rather than the families GPAC account if this is prior to the current fortnight. If it is within the current fortnight of subsidy payments, the account will automatically be updated and amended with the new estimation, and following the submission of attendances Centrelink will send through the CCS payments the following fortnight. Full family fees are payable until such time as the subsidy is reinstated.

The Service will provide families with information relating to Special Child Care Subsidy Benefit, Jobs Education and Training, and Grandparents Child Care Subsidy Benefit. This Additional Child Care

Subsidy (ACCS) and consists of 4 elements:

1. ACCS Child wellbeing
2. ACCS Grandparent
3. ACCS Temporary Financial Hardship
4. ACCS Transition to Work

c) Bookings and cancellations

- Each family is expected to make bookings in advance, for the care sessions required. Bookings will only be accepted when families have completed and submitted the Service's Membership Form, online Enrolment Form, orientation and other forms applicable to their child in full.
- Parents are to provide two weeks written notice (three weeks' notice in Term 1) of their intention to withdraw a child from the Centre.
- If termination from the Service is required without notification, families can lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged.
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care.
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law.

Before and After School Care

- Families wishing to cancel their child's place at the Service are required to provide two (2) weeks written notice to admin@gpactivitycentre.org, or they are liable to pay the equivalent of two weeks full childcare fees to the Service. In Term 1 families are required to give three (3) weeks written notice and a penalty of \$60 may be charged if cancelling more than 3 bookings (per family) which is increased to \$100 if more than 6 bookings (per family) are cancelled.
- In the event of a permanent booking no longer being required, the cancellation period may be waived if the cancelled spots can be replaced by a booking on the waiting list.
- Once confirmed, permanent bookings can be made up to two weeks in advance unless they relate to Kindergarten enrolments for the next calendar year in which case confirmation of available places will be confirmed and locked in Term 4 of the previous year for the following year. Please also refer to 'GPAC Access and Enrolment for the Following Year' Policy and procedures.
- Casual bookings must receive a confirmation via phone/text or email to have confirmation of placement. Do not send your child to GPAC until your booking is confirmed.
- Casual bookings require 48 hours' notice to be cancelled or full fee will be charged regardless of attendance. Casual bookings can be placed weeks in advance. If your booking is not cancelled 48 hours prior you will be charged the full casual fee for that session.
- All enrolled families must complete and submit re-enrolment forms for the following calendar year.
- Bookings of existing GPAC families will not roll over automatically per year. GPAC families must complete and submit re-enrolment forms for the following calendar year informing GPAC if the family will continue or cease care. This must be completed and returned before the closing date to ensure a \$60 late fee is not applied.
- In the event that the School has a teachers strike or similar and GPAC operates Before and After School Care on that day, if it is a day your child is permanently booked in, fees will be charged regardless of if your child attends the session. Fees are payable for the day if it falls within a School Term.

If you do not advise us of your child's absence you will also incur the non-notification fee.



Pupil Free Days and Vacation Care Days

- Pupil Free Days and Vacation Care Days require a minimum of 20 bookings to run. Families are required to pay for bookings after confirmation has been sent regardless of their child's attendance.
- Vacation Care bookings are not confirmed until full payment has been received by the Vacation Care invoice due date in advance of care. If full payment is not paid by the scheduled due date your booking may be given to another child. In line with our billing window, Vacation Care will be charged 2 weeks in advance. Families who have opted for direct debit will have their fees debited within that billing window and their Vacation Care bookings will be confirmed once their payment has cleared. Families that wish to deposit their fees into our bank account or make an ad hoc payment via the app will need to do so before the specified due date. If payment is not received by the scheduled due date, your booking may be given to another child. Your booking is not confirmed until full payment has been received.
- A late fee of \$30 will be charged for a families new booking request made for Vacation Care after the booking closure date (subject to availability).
- To amend a Vacation Care booking after the closing date a \$10 administration fee will be payable per change submitted. We will try and accommodate your new booking date but only if there is a vacancy.
- If a booking can be made due to availability, however is granted after the booking closure day the daily booking fee rate will be \$5 extra. e.g. If the fee for Vacation Care for the day is currently \$80, the day will now cost \$85 (not including incursion/excursion fees) due to the lateness.
- If a Vacation Care day is no longer required, no refund will be given within 14 days of the first operational day of that Vacation Care session. Including incursion/excursion fee e.g. If Vacation Care is starting 20th April and you cancel the booking via writing on the 10th April no refund will be given.
- External families (children that do not attend Grays Point Public School) pay \$5 extra per day.
- Families can view their Vacation Care and Pupil Free Day bookings on their Home App or Home Account.

d) Absences

- Fees are payable for family holidays and sick days if those days fall on a day that a child is booked into the Service.
- If a child is ill on a Vacation Care day the fee is also still payable as that booking was reserved for the child, unless a Medical Certificate for that day is provided. The incursion/excursion fee will still be payable.
- If a child is not going to attend a Pupil Free Day session and a confirmation has already been sent, fees are still payable.
- The Service will provide families with information about approved and allowable absences and will adhere to the Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) in relation to absences.
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via myGov and their Home App & Home Account.

e) Service closure

- No fee is charged while the Service is closed and non operational including the Christmas/New Year period.
- Gap fees will not be charged if the Centre is closed due to a Dept of Education directive (e.g.

Coronavirus) or for fire rating closures (e.g. catastrophic fire rating).

- Fees are still payable for Public Holidays that fall or a declared during a School Term.
- If the Public Holiday falls within School holidays we are usually closed as a standard and therefore do not book children in that day or charge families.

f) Payment of fees

- Families will be provided with a statement of fees charged by the Service and will be provided to all families (Regulation 168).
- GPAC's billing window is two weeks in advance. Updated at the start of each week, the accounts will show fees for the current week and the two weeks following.
- Families who have opted for direct debit billing will have their fees deducted from their chosen method of payment weekly, fortnightly, or monthly on Thursday evening. Families are responsible for ensuring that their nominated account contains sufficient funds for each debit. If a payment is rejected due to insufficient funds, a service fee may be charged. We encourage families to take advantage of our direct debiting options to avoid falling behind with payments.
- Families who have not set up direct debit will receive a statement on a fortnightly basis. The amount listed as 'Balance Owing' is the current amount due. Families are also encouraged to check their account balance regularly through the Home app. Payments are to be made using the Home app 'Pay Now' function, or by direct deposit into the GPAC bank account.
- Failure to pay unpaid fees may result in debt recovery action being taken and discontinuation of care for the child unless the family has initiated a successful repayment schedule for the unpaid fees with the Nominated Supervisor.

g) Debt recovery

- The Management Committee (Approved Provider) reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the Service. This can include the engagement of debt collectors to recover the monies owed
- Families may apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink if they are in temporary financial hardship.
- Where a family owes any overdue fees to the Service, the child's place may be suspended, until all outstanding monies are paid, or both parties agree to a payment plan. Fees not paid by the due date will be followed up as below:
 1. Families with accounts 15–30 days overdue will be issued with a statement and reminded that a late fee may be charged if the account is not settled.
 2. Families with accounts 31+ days overdue will be charged a \$10.00 late fee added to their invoice, issued with a statement, and contacted by phone.
If payment is not received, families will be invited, by telephone and sent a written communication (email/letter), to attend a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor and Treasurer within 7 days to discuss a payment plan. In the instance of the Treasurer being unavailable a member of the GPAC Management Committee will assume this role.
 3. Failure to attend the meeting and continued non-payment for a period of 5 working days will result in a second and final letter notifying the family that unless payment is made within 5 working days, or a payment plan entered into, the child will be unable to attend the Service.
 4. If a signed payment plan is not adhered to, a follow-up process will commence at point 2.
 5. The Management Committee (Approved Provider) will reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector and the family will be responsible for all fees associated with recovering the debt.

If a family ever has a debt and GPAC is required to act past Step 3. above, the families booking priority may be affected as per our “Priority of Access” Policy.



If a family had an outstanding debt previously not paid, they will not be able to book into the Centre until the previous outstanding debt has been recovered.

h) Late collection fee

The Service operates School Terms from 7am-8:50am and 3:15pm-6pm. Pupil Free Days and Vacation Care we operate 7:30am-6pm. Staff are unable to accept children in the Service outside of these hours. Should children be present after the closing time, a late fee of \$10/per the first 5 minutes or parts thereof will apply per child. After this it is \$20 per 5 minutes or parts thereof.

e.g. If the close time is 6pm and you pick your child up at 6:10pm you will be charged \$30.

If you have 2 children you will be charged \$60 in this instance.

- The hours and days of operation of the Service will be displayed prominently within the Service (Regulation 173). 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.
- In circumstances that are beyond the control of families, for example, weather and traffic accidents, which may result in them arriving late to collect their child, the Nominated Supervisor will have discretion to decide if families will be charged the late fee.
- Families who are continually late collecting their children, without a valid reason, may jeopardise their child's place at the Service. Should this be the case, the Nominated Supervisor will meet with the family to discuss this. This will occur if the child is picked up late 5 times or more in one calendar year.

i) Non-Notification fee (Phone fee)

- Families are required to notify the Service of their child's absence prior to the anticipated arrival time (3:15 pm for afternoons). Failure to do so will incur a fee of \$10 per child/per instance. If the family has not notified the Service 5 times or more during a calendar year we may suspend or cancel the child from the Centre.
- Families must still pay the 'gap fee' to the Service if their child is unable to attend.

j) Annual membership fee

- GPAC is an Incorporated Association governed by the Association Laws of NSW Trading. Families are required each year to pay an annual membership fee to retain their membership with the Incorporated Association. The annual fee will be due on re-enrolment and the beginning of each new calendar year ahead.

k) Other replacement fees

- Families are expected to pay for items children have damaged which are not considered accidental damage.
- Families are expected to pay for an EpiPen replacement if the GPAC EpiPen is used in the case of emergency.
- GPAC may supply underwear and or items of clothing in the case of a toileting or other soiling or wetness accident.
- Families will be notified of the applicable cost prior to being required to reimburse the Service for replacement for any of the Services' items at reasonable cost.

- Families may be charged if their child damages furniture or equipment from soiling themselves, bodily fluids, blood or vomit or asked to pay for the replacement or cleaning costs.
- Families will be charged if GPAC is required to purchase supplies for your child while on an excursion including water or if this is not provided by the parent prior to the departure of the excursion.

l) Methods of Payment

- Fees can be paid by:
 - ✓ Direct debit. GPAC uses the payment collection company Debit Success. A direct debit request form can be filled out and submitted via your Home App or Home Account or a paper form can be provided to you upon request. The following fees apply and passed on directly to families (as at April 2025):
 - i. Bank account - \$1.05 per transaction (plus GST)
 - ii. Mastercard/Visa – 2.78% (plus GST)
 - iii. AMEX – 5.2%
 - iv. Dishonour fee \$19.95
 - ✓ Home App/Home Account. Families can add their bank or credit card details on their Home App or in their Home Account and make ad hoc payments. This can be done in lieu of or in addition to direct debiting.
 - ✓ Bank Deposit - from your bank account to the Service's bank account. Details of the Service's bank account are included in the Family Handbook and also on your invoice.

The Service does not accept any cash payments.

You can also physically bank the cash at a branch with your details of payment recorded.

m) Confidentiality

- All information in relation to fees will be kept in strict confidence. Members of staff, management or the Management Committee (Approved Provider) will not discuss individual names and details openly. Information will only be available to the nominated persons required to take action, for example, to initiate debt recovery.
- Families may access their own account records at any time, or particulars of fees will be available in writing to families, upon request.

n) Fee Review

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided written notice is given to families. The fees are set by the Management Committee (Approved Provider) in order to meet the budget for each financial year. **There will be ongoing monitoring of the budget and, should it be necessary to amend fees, families will be given a minimum of fourteen days notice of any fee increase (Regulation 172).**

o) Acknowledgement of responsibility to pay fee

- Families are required to read and tick Sections *Payment of Fees* and *Disclaimer/Informed Consent* of the Service's online Enrolment Form

Complaints relating to the administration of Child Care Subsidy:

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of CCS should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this Policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.

Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the Department of Education via their [Online contact form](#). Additionally, information about any potential breach of Child Care Subsidy can be reported anonymously by submitting an online report directly to the Department of Education. For more information visit the Department of Education website: [Reporting fraud via a tip-off](#).

Resources and information for families

[Child Care Subsidy](#)

[Centrelink Customer Reference Number](#)

[Absences from childcare- Australian Government](#)

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2021). [Policy and procedure guidelines. Payment of Service Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Service](#).

Australian Government Department of Education [Child care discount for early childhood workforce](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. Child Care Provider Handbook

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>

Australian Government Department of Education *Early Childhood and Care* <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood>

Australian Government Department of Education (2024). [Help in an emergency](#)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

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

CONSIDERATIONS:

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
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures
173	Policies and procedures to be kept available

RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017	Family Law Act 1975
Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017	A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation as identified within the Child Care Provider Handbook in https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook	

Other Service Policies/documentation	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment Form • Priority of Access Policy • Enrolment & Orientation Policy • Delivery & Collection of Children Policy • Confidentiality Policy • Governance & Management Policy • Family Handbook • Record Keeping and Retention Policy • Management of Complaints Grievance Handling Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Subsidy System • Xplor

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: _____ May 2022, September 2022, May 2023, May 2025 _____

Date for review: _____ November 2026 _____

GPAC's Fee Policy was approved by the Committee on 12th February 2019. Revised April 2020. Revised September 2020. Revised May 2022. Revised and approved 20th May 2023. Amended 2nd August due to Xplor and DDebits. Amended 26.5.2025 ACCS and DD transaction fees

MANDATORY

Revised 12022019 KG GPAC

Kate Foster – Treasurer

Amended 17032020 Committee mtg 20032020 Email approval 30042020

Amended JH 28092020. Revised KG 28092020 Approved committee JW 01102020

Amended KG 27042022 TG Committee 09052022 KG 21092022

Amended JB KG 15052023 Committee 18052023 20052023 TG

Amended JB AA KG 02082023 Committee TG JA

Amended 01042025 Added Minister's rules KG JB

Amended 26052025