



Fee Policy

Aim

To ensure the service is financially viable and has clear procedures and guidelines in place for families to adhere to.

Strategies

New Enrolment

- A non-refundable enrolment fee of \$250.00 and two (2) weeks of the families' full fees per child are to be paid and held for a refundable bond all payable prior to care commencement.
- The first two weeks of fees is also payable prior to care commencement.
- Bond statements are to be issued to all families via e mail.
- Fees are paid in full regardless of the following: public holidays, holidays taken from families or when a child is sick.
- As outlined above, fees are payable for all days that children are enrolled, including when children are sick and cannot attend. In relation to coronavirus, this means fees are payable where children are unable to travel home to Australia, are in quarantine or home isolation, or do not attend as a precautionary measure.
- Parents are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days without providing a reason where their child is absent. Additional absences may also be entitled to the Subsidy in specific situations including illness. Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship) is also available to provide short term support to families experiencing significant financial difficulty paying fees, for example because they are unable to attend work. Families should discuss their financial support options with Centrelink where required.
- In line with current Government guidance and recommendations, fees will not be payable if Rose Cottage is directed to close or closes voluntarily to contain the spread of the virus.
- It is explained that all fees are to be maintained at a nil balance and to be paid on a fortnightly basis two weeks in advance. Parents are to sign a contract on the enrolment form agreeing that fees will be paid fortnightly to a nil balance. On all frequency of payments, these payments must be made to ensure the account is kept in credit or at a nil balance.
- Monthly payments may be arranged in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor. These payments will also need to be paid in advance, keeping the account in credit.
- With all service enquiries a parent information pack and parent handbook is given, explaining Child Care Subsidy and service policies.



- A Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) is provided for any new families to establish the basis on which they expect care will be provided. This includes whether the arrangement includes routine sessions (booked days) only or if the centre provides casual days when available at request of the parents or family.
- If casual care is included in the arrangement, it may also set out relevant terms (for example, whether there is a minimum period of care, that it is subject to availability, fees applicable, etc.).
- Casual days are simply utilised on the basis if a child is absent and it is available, keeping in line with our number of licensed places per day (39). It is not possible for families to forfeit fees if their child is absent and another child takes a casual spot in place of that.
- Fees are to be paid to the service through **DIRECT DEBIT ONLY** from credit/debit cards or nominated bank account. We do not accept American Express. No cash payments are taken as fees.

Overdue Fees

- Once a family is behind in their account, a courtesy phone call or e mail will be made as notice. Payment is required within five (5) days of the date of e mail or phone call.
- If no payment has been received within five (5) days a letter will be issued detailing past reminder date and payment to be made within three (3) days from the letter and a \$15 late payment fee applied.
- If there is regular occurrence of declined direct debit payments on a families account the Nominated Supervisor has the authority to apply the \$15 late payment fee prior to reaching the second step of action.
- If no payment has been received by the five (5) days, the child's position will be terminated. A Final Notice is sent to the family and the debt is recovered through the bond and debt collection will take place.
- The family will be liable for all court costs to recover the unpaid debt.
- It is encouraged that at any time families who are facing financial difficulty in meeting their payment obligations are to speak to the Nominated Supervisor and organise a payment plan that is to be adhered to as discussed and agreed.
- It is at the Nominated Supervisors discretion to allow a family to re-enrol at service if they have had an outstanding debt with the service in the past.
- Bonds are to be transferred to the child's account.
- It is expected that the Nominated Supervisor is to ensure family debts are not to accrue over bond amount.



Withdrawal

- Six (6) weeks written notice is required when a child intends to leave the service and cancel care. This ensures all relevant paper work is finalised for you, your child and the service. This increases to eight (8) weeks in the last six weeks of the year and first six weeks of the year.
- Due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the Early Education and Care Relief Package that has been in place since 6th April 2020, our withdrawal notice period is on hold until 28th June 2020 when the relief package ceases. From 29th June, the 6 week notice period for withdrawal or reduction of days will begin again.
- If a child does not attend full fees are to be paid pursuant to applicable laws and regulations.
- Bonds are to be transferred to child's general account and refunded to the nominated financial institution when child's enrolment has ended.

Nominated Supervisor

- To orientate new and potential customers, explaining the fee policy in detail, the bond, two (2) weeks in advance, current week's fees and the fee structure in its entirety.
- To assist and give parents information about the Child Care Subsidy, including the phone number: 13 6150 and My Gov website where they can access an estimator to see what their CCS percentage may be.
- To manage overdue accounts through one on one communication, phone calls and written correspondence with parents as needed.
- To ensure payment plans are upheld as to the individual agreement.
- To monitor and manage the service debts to reflect two week's fee generation of the service's total gap fee payable.

Relevant Legislation

National Quality Standards, Education and Care Services National Regulations and Early Years Learning Framework

National Quality Standard

Standard 7.1 - Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
Elements 7.1.2 and 7.1.3

National Regulations

Part 4.7 Leadership and Service Management

Early Years Learning Framework

Learning Outcome 1 – Children feel safe, secure and supported

Learning Outcome 3 – Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing



Resources

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations October 2011*
- *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Framework for Australia*
retrieved from : https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf
- *National Quality Standard* retrieved from:
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>
- *Fair Work Ombudsman 'Coronavirus and Australian Workplace laws'*
- *Federal Department of Health coronavirus information sheets*
- *Work, Health and Safety Laws and Regulations*

Monitoring and Review

- Review the *Fee Policy* every 12 months.
- Provide families with opportunities to contribute to the review of this policy.