

Fees

Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership

Policy Statement

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten has a commitment to ensuring our fees are as affordable as possible and that all families have access to any subsidies that are available to reduce these fees. The setting and payment of fees takes into account all requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Australian Tax Office, Privacy Act and the guidelines contained within the Child Care Provider Handbook. All records held at the service will be maintained in accordance with the service Confidentiality and Privacy Policy. Families will be provided with accurate fees statements and clear information regarding fee payment processes.

Goals

To enable our service to provide high quality early education and care for children we need to ensure we are always financially viable at all times. Our service's financial health and access to our service will be maximised by ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment.

Strategies

Fee Payable/Accounts

- The Approved Provider will determine the required fee level to meet budget prediction for the year.
- The fee schedule and fees payment policy will be fully explained to families during the enrolment process.
- Fees payable will be based on termly amounts.
- Families will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any fee increase.
- Fees per day will be charged to all families for the same education and care arrangements.
- Fees are set incorporating the Start Strong Funding – 600hr incentive bonus: 4-year-old, Equity Children and Aboriginal Children.
- A statement of fees will be sent to parents/guardians at the commencement of each term.
- Families are required to pay fees in advance. A dated receipt, in accordance with Australian Government Guidelines, will be provided for each payment unless other arrangements with the Director or Administration Staff have been made.
- Families are not charged a fee on public holidays if the holiday falls on their regular booked day.
- Families should contact the service to advise of their child's inability to attend as soon as this is known. Fees will still be required on days the child would normally attend.

Payment of Fees

- Fees are payable from the agreed commencement date and must be paid two weeks in advance.
- Fees may be paid by cheque or electronic funds transfer to our nominated bank account (internet banking). We have EFTPOS facilities at the Preschool via Square, and all associated charges will be added to each transaction, currently 1.6% with a card and 2.4% a manual transaction.
- OWINA – Direct Debit via OWINA, this can be set up via enrolment process. Any charges for failed payments or insufficient funds will be passed on to family accounts.
- Centrelink – a free direct bill-paying service offered to customers receiving payments from Centrelink.

Overdue Fees

- Parents/guardians with overdue fees will be encouraged by the Director to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay, including the option of a payment plan. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the matter may be referred to a debt collector and/or cancellation of the child's booking may occur.
- With the current government subsidy of the 2-day 'No Fee for Service'. If fees are overdue, and your child attends preschool for three days per week, the third day will be cancelled, and no casual days will be available until the fees are paid.

Late Collection Charge

- Our service reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians have not collected their child/ren from the service before closing time. This charge will be set at a level determined by the Management Committee and based on the service's need to recoup expenses incurred in employee overtime wages.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011. ▪ Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements. ▪ Developing a fee policy that balances the parent's/guardian's capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability. ▪ Considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at the service and removing those barriers wherever possible. ▪ Providing parents/guardians with a regular statement of fees and charges. ▪ Ensuring that the Fees Policy is readily accessible at the service. ▪ Notifying parents/guardians within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected. ▪ Ensuring a notice outlining the fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to the service.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing parents/guardians with a regular statement of fees and charges. ▪ Collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documents regarding those with entitlement to concessions, where applicable. ▪ Notifying parents/guardians within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected. ▪ Ensuring a notice outlining the fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to the service.
Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Referring parents'/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the Administration Staff or Nominated Supervisor.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading this policy and referring any questions, queries, or concerns to the Nominated Supervisor. ▪ Record the arrival and departure times of their child or children attending care. ▪ Pay for any booked day of education and care which falls on a public holiday.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure all fees are always kept two weeks in advance. ▪ Provide documentation for additional absence days as required. ▪ Provide 2 weeks' notice of withdrawal from service. If child does not attend during this 2-week notice period full fees will be chargeable. ▪ Notifying the Approved Provider if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees.
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Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 12 months.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership–Standard 7.1

Sources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) –www.acecqa.gov.au
- Community Early Learning Australia CELA

Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), as amended 2011