

Fees Policy

NQF

QA7	7.1.2	Management systems – Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
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Aim

Parents fully understand fee payment procedures and requirements, and pay their child care fees on time.

Related Policies

Enrolment Policy
 Orientation for Children Policy
 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Who is affected by this policy?

Parents
 Management

Implementation

The McLaren Vale OSHC service sets fees in accordance with our annual budget to meet the income required to develop and maintain a quality service for children and families. We strive to ensure that our service is affordable and accessible to families in our community. The annual budget is ratified by the McLaren Vale Primary Schools Governing Council, or as necessary, and monitored carefully throughout the year. Families will be given a minimum of fourteen days' notice of any fee increase.

The service uses SPIKE software which is a package specifically designed to process bookings, attendances and produce a statement to show family fees. This package is approved for the Australian Government by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The service will support families by providing relevant information as it becomes available but families must be responsible for liaising with the Family Assistance Office as needed.

Families are reminded that the service is unable to communicate with the FAO with regard to details of their CCS. This is a confidentiality matter for all parties.



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Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidised care to which families are entitled.

<i>Hours of activity per fortnight</i>	<i>Maximum number of hours of subsidy per fortnight</i>
8 hours to 16 hours	36 hours
More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
More than 48 hours	100 hours

A broad range of activities meet the activity test requirements, including paid work, self-employment, unpaid work in a family business, active job hunting, volunteering or studying. You can also include reasonable travel time to and from a place of activity to the centre. In two parent families, both parents must meet the activity test, and subsidy hours are calculated on the lower number where parents have different levels of activity.

There are exemptions for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity test requirements.

<i>Exemptions</i>	<i>Number of hours of subsidy per fortnight</i>
<i>Families do not meet activity test and have low income e.g. combined annual income less than \$66,958 2108/2019 year</i>	24 hours
<i>Families do not meet activity test, child attends centre-based service with appropriate preschool program, and will attend school following year</i>	36 hours

The percentage of subsidy a family receives is based on their estimated combined annual income. All families wishing to access Child Care Subsidy need to complete an online Child Care Subsidy assessment through their myGov account. Assessment asks families to provide information about their expected combined family income, activity level of parents and types of child care service being used.



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The Additional Child Care Subsidy may be available to help support:

- families needing help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
- grandparents on income support who are primary child-carers
- families in temporary financial hardship
- families moving to work from income support

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a Child Care Subsidy claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the service on families' behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our service enters families' enrolment information online, and families confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees.

Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is absent, for example due to illness, public holidays and parental leave. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlined in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

Child Care Subsidy may not be paid by the Government in certain situations and families will be required to pay full fees for the period involved. These include:

- non-attendance for 14 weeks in a row
- for any days before a child attends the service for the first time.
- for any days in the final attendance period after a child last physically attends the service.

Statement of Account

We will issue weekly statements (with the child/children's full name/s, date of care, date of payment etc) detailing the fees paid and the amount of Child Care Subsidy received. (Parents' My Gov accounts will also have how much care families have received and how much Child Care Subsidy has been paid.)

Absence Charges, Casual Surcharge and Late Fees:

We strongly encourage permanent bookings to assist us with staffing and activity preparation. However, in the event that you need to make a casual booking a surcharge will be applied to your account.

A permanent booking can be cancelled by the service if a child hasn't attended three consecutive sessions of the same type, for example three Monday before school care sessions in a row, with or without prior notice of absence. Exceptions will be made for pre-arranged absences for significant events such as being away on holiday, sickness, or coincidence. This amendment is designed to encourage families to be organised with their bookings to allow more spaces for other families who are on a waiting list for bookings.

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Your account will be charged for any BSC or ASC booking if your child is absent without 24 hours notice of the cancellation. We require **7 days' notice of any cancellation for vacation care, unless you provide a doctor's certificate for illness.** Without a doctor's certificate you will still be charged at the booked rate. In emergency situations this charge may be waived at the discretion of the OSHC Director and/or with a Doctor's Certificate.

A late fee will apply if children are collected after closing time. Families need to allow themselves time to collect belongings, sign out and speak with OSHC educators **before** closing time. **A late fee will apply if children are collected after closing time – \$1.00 per minute.**

Paying Your Account:

The service is a not-for-profit business that is funded entirely from the fees that each family pays to use the service. We receive no other ongoing funding and so the financial viability of the service relies heavily on all OSHC users maintaining regular payment of their OSHC fees.

There a number of ways to make payments. We accept cash, credit and EFTPOS cards or online payments.

It is condition of access to the service that you pay all parent contributions in a timely and consistent manner as outlined below.

Payment of Fees:

Invoices are issued weekly, generally the week following that your child was in care. This delay between the period of care and the issue of the invoice for the period is to allow Centrelink to process each family's Childcare Subsidy (CCS).

Please pay careful attention to the following conditions:

- **Accounts are to be paid in full, WITHIN 7 DAYS of issue of each invoice.**
- If you use OSHC each week, you should be expecting to pay OSHC fees each week also. You should not allow your fees to accumulate for more than a week.
- If for any reason OSHC fees remain unpaid for more than 14 days, you will be sent a reminder and your access to the service may be suspended until the outstanding fees are paid in full.
- If fees remain outstanding after we have issued a reminder, you will be issued a final notice of demand giving you 7 days to settle the matter.
- If the matter is not settled after the conclusion of the 7 days' notice, your account will be handed over to Credit Solutions Debt Collection & Recovery. They will commence legal action to recover the outstanding fees, plus expenses.
- Fees should not exceed \$200. If this happens you will be asked to pay the outstanding amount before using the service again.

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- Invoices are issued by email (unless you request us to post them to you). It is your responsibility to check for your invoices each week and contact us if you haven't received one.

If for any reason you are having difficulty paying your account, please speak to the OSHC Director to discuss alternative payment arrangements.

Sources

Bryant, L. (2009). *Managing a Child Care Service : A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers*. Sydney: Community Child Care Co-Operative.
Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations
Family Assistance Law

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Management
- Employees
- Family Members
- Interested parties

Reviewed: 16th March 2023

Date for next review: 16th March 2025