



## **FEES AND LEVIES POLICY**

### **Introduction:**

To enable Normanhurst West Community Preschool to provide high quality education and care for children we need to ensure that the Preschool is financially viable at all times. Prompt payment of fees allows us to plan with certainty. We have a commitment to ensuring our fees are as affordable as possible and that all families have access to any subsidies that are available. The NSW Department of Education subsidizes the service operation; and the shortfall is met by charging fees to attend the program.

### **Aims:**

- A proposed budget will be prepared by the Treasurer in consultation with the Director to enable the Management Committee to set fee levels each year;
- As a not for profit service, fees will be kept as low as possible but with the responsibility to ensure the Preschool's financial viability;
- The fee structure will support equitable access by offering subsidies for low income families in keeping with Department of Education's start strong funding model;
- Families will be aware of their financial responsibilities through the *Enrolment, Waiting List and Orientation Policy*;
- Fee collection will be systematic to assist families to meet their obligations in a timely manner;
- Days of attendance are **NOT** transferable.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

#### ***The Approved Provider will:***

- Ensure vacant positions are filled using the allocation guidelines showing priority of access listed in the *Enrolment, Waiting List and Orientation Policy*;
- Ensure adequate records of attendance are kept for each child as required using a 'Sign In Register' form for each day;
- Comply with Department of Education's funding agreements as required;
- Ensure the service remains financially viable and can meet its debts and other obligations as they fall due;
- **Review fees and levies annually at the budget review meeting, keeping in line with CPI and market forces; however, may be reviewed in line with current funding and subject to change at any time with 14 day's notice;**
- Ensure statement of fees are issued for all children minimum once per term;
- Only collect and disclose personal information about children to government departments as legally required.
- Ensure that families receive at least 14 day's notification of any changes to fee levels or collection procedures as per regulation 172.

### **The Director/Nominated Supervisor will:**

- Ensure all families are made aware of service fees, payment options and available subsidies upon enrolment using the 'Fees & Levy Schedule; and Fee Relief Policy. (If applicable)
- Ensure statements of fees are given to all families minimum once per term from Bookkeeper;
- Join in advocacy actions designed to reduce the cost of Early Education and Care fees for families wherever possible;
- Ensure families are aware that 4 year olds refers to Children who turn 4 by 31<sup>st</sup> July in year of attendance;
- Ensure that families understand their financial obligation to pay fees in a timely manner.

### **The Book Keeper will:**

- Prepare, email and ensure fee invoices and notification of due dates are given to all families at the beginning of each term;
- Issue tax invoices via email at the beginning of each term.
- Maintain records of deposits made in the 'Fees Register' and liaise with the Director regarding the information when necessary;
- Follow the overdue fees procedure with any families whose fees are overdue.
- Notify the Director of due dates and Director will send information to families.

### **Families will:**

- Record the arrival and departure times of their child/children attending Preschool in the sign-in register form;
- Ensure all fees are paid by the due date;
- Pay for any enrolled day where the child does not attend regardless of illness or personal events;
- Be aware that days of attendance are not transferable;
- Be required to pay for enrolled days when they fall on a public holiday or pupil free day;
- Be aware that 4 year olds who attend more than 3 days per week will be charged the unfunded fee for any extra days of attendance.
- Be aware that our fee structure is calculated by the term.
- Be aware that all levies are charged per enrolled child.
- Ensure notification is given by the last day Term 3, if their child is leaving the Preschool or transitioning to school the following year.
- Ensure '4 term weeks' notice is given when withdrawing from the Preschool at other times than as above;
- Ensure '4 term weeks' notice is given when dropping individual days for each day dropped.
- Be aware that fees are calculated on number of weeks (including extra days) of attendance, if children commence mid-term.

## **PAYMENT OF FEES**

- Tax invoices are issued at the beginning of each term, notifying parents of payment due date. All fees must be paid by Electronic Funds Transfer or Direct Deposit at a bank branch. This is NOT BPay but a direct transfer from your account into the Preschool's account. We do not accept cash payments and the Preschool has no Credit Card facilities.

**A minimum of 50% of fees are due by week 2 and other 50% is due in week 6 of each term.**

Late Payment of Fees – In the case that fees are not paid by the due date, families will be charged a **Late Payment of Fees penalty of \$40**. The late fee will be applied on a second invoice issued in week 4, unless advised otherwise at the discretion of the Director.

## **OVERDUE/NON-PAYMENT OF FEES**

Every attempt should be made by the parent to pay Preschool fees, even if this requires a payment plan to be arranged.

Delayed payment of fees can be approved at the discretion of the Management (Executive) Committee and Director. A written request must be made by the parent to the Director before the fees due date, outlining the reasons for the request. There is no guarantee that requests will be approved.

If fees have not been paid by Week 2 and Week 6 of the term and become overdue:

### **The Approved Provider and Director will:**

- Make decisions about approving requests in writing for delayed payment of fees. There is no guarantee that requests will be approved;
- Inform the bookkeeper regarding outcomes for requests in writing about approved payment arrangements, denials or forfeit of deposits etc.
- Ensure that if fees are unpaid at first instalment due date;
  - A second reminder invoice will be issued by the bookkeeper including late fee if no payments have been received.
  - Discuss and implement with family a weekly payment plan arrangement if fees are not paid by Week 6 and communicate this with Bookkeeper.
  - Failure to meet payment plan will result in prevention of child attendance to the preschool until fees are up to date.
  - If fees are not paid up to date by **the second Wednesday** of the following school holidays, the child's spot will be surrendered.
  - Ongoing communication with family and Bookkeeper.

### **The Book Keeper will:**

- Issue fee invoice/s with a minimum of 50% of fees due by week 2 and other 50% due in week 6 of each term.
- Contact the families who have not made payment by the first **due date** with an updated invoice including late fee of \$40 applied, if no written explanation has been previously provided and approved.
- Inform Director if non payment by Week 6, Director to discuss payment plan arrangement with family.
- Keep Director up to date with payments made or not made as per plan.
- Fees **MUST** be paid in full by the end of term. If fees are not paid by second Wednesday of the following school holidays their spot will be surrendered.
- Ongoing communication with family and Director.

### **Families will:**

- Make a written request to the Director before the fees due date, outlining the reasons for the request for delayed payments of fees.
- Pay a late fee, if fees are overdue.
- Communicate and agree to go onto a weekly payment plan if fees are still overdue by week 6. If payment plan installment is not paid by week 7, child will be prevented from attending preschool.
- Fees will be paid in full by the end of term. If fees are not paid by second Wednesday of the following school holidays child's spot will be surrendered.

- Inform the Director when days are required to be dropped, with at least '4 term weeks' notice in writing.

## **PAYMENT OF LEVIES**

**Enrolment/Equipment Levy** - A non-refundable enrolment/equipment levy per child is required, to secure an enrolment position at the Preschool upon acceptance of the position. This levy is non-refundable should your child not take up the position. This levy contributes to administration and purchase of new equipment and supplies. Receipts for this fee will only be provided upon request. See *Attachment 1: Enrolment and Fee Payment Information*.

**Association Membership Levy** - An annual fee per family is charged per calendar year in Term 1 on the fees invoice. New enrolment starting after Term 1, will be charged on their first invoice for that calendar year. Membership gives families a right to vote at meetings of the association.

**Maintenance/Building Levy** – All families contribute to the maintenance of the Preschool. This is invoiced each term. Levy is reviewed regularly to reflect preschool needs.

**Garden Duty** – Each family will be allocated a weekend through the year to complete garden duty. In the event that you're not available to do garden duty on the weekend allocated and aren't able to find a family to swap with, you can choose to pay a levy with at least 2 week's notice and we will pay our handyman to come on your allocated weekend to complete the work.

**FEE RELIEF** – See separate fee relief policy for full details

Families may be eligible for a reduced rate of fees. If a family can produce a current Health Care Card or current Pensioner Concession Card with the enrolled, dependent children listed on it, they qualify for the disadvantaged loading under the Start Strong Funding Model.

This is the only documentation the Department will accept for this purpose. A current copy of this documentation must be provided to the Preschool to be eligible for a reduced fee at the time of enrolment and the Director MUST be advised if a family's circumstances change.

### **Families will:**

- Advise the Preschool of any changes to the information provided in this application, which would affect eligibility.

## **OCCASIONAL CARE DAYS**

Currently enrolled children may attend for an extra occasional care day, if there is a vacancy. Families must advise the Director in writing. The fee charged will be a flat rate as per the occasional care fee rate on the *Term Fees & Levy Schedule*, as determined by the Management Committee. Fees will be due on or before the day of care.

### **Refer to Other Policies:**

- Enrolment, Waiting List and Orientation Policy
- Fee Relief Policy

### **Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Enrolment and Fee Payment Information
- Attachment 2: Fees and Levy Schedule

### **Review History:**

March 2008

Policy created

## Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| April 2012       | Policy reviewed   |
| June 2013        | Policy reviewed to reflect National Regulations of 2014<br>Policy renamed and amalgamation with previous policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deposit Policy created March 2008<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Non Payment Policy created March 2008</li><li>➤ Fee Relief Policy created March 2008</li></ul></li></ul>  |
| October 2014     | Policy reviewed   |
| January 2016     | Policy reviewed and Non-payment policy & Fee Relief Policy amalgamated with Fees and Deposits Policy. Fee Relief application form obsolete.   |
| March 2016       | Renamed to include levies in name of policy. Deleted dropping days and added a \$50.00 late fee. Included new policy on swapping or selling days.   |
| April 2016       | Changed notice to drop days to 4 Term weeks. Deposit changed to be non-refundable for all families commencing after June 30, 2016. Deposit monies to be used for purchases of new resources. Occasional care fees are to be charged at a flat rate. Swapping days was removed from the policy.  |
| October 2016     | Policy edit to reflect the non-refundable deposit clause adopted in April.  |
| February 2017    | Start Strong Funding introduced and fee policy changed to meet the funding model. Name of Policy Changed and Fees calculated on Term basis only based on 40weeks/year. Enrolments will ONLY be taken as a minimum of 2 days for 3year olds and 3days 4year olds.  |
| June 2017        | Wording changed to reflect the Start Strong Funding Model – pupil free days not excluded from fees. Maintenance fee is charged per child. Enrolment fee increased by \$10.00 New policy effective 1July 2017.   |
| August 2017      | Annual Fundraising levy reintroduced at \$100/year. Maintenance levy increased to \$100/annum. Forfeiture of deposits deleted as the enrolment fee is a one off, non-refundable fee. 4yr olds attending more than 3 days will be charged at the unfunded rate for extra days. All new levies effective 1 January 2018.  |
| March 2018       | Amended to calculate mid-term start calculation of fees.  |
| September 2018   | Reviewed and amended to reflect NQS and legislation. CCB removed from the policy.   |
| October/Nov 2018 | Review Date if changes required for 2019  |
| August 2019      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Review and update of Overdue/Non payment of fees process, to provide an active and purposeful process.</li><li>- Late fee amount of \$40 to be applied to overdue fees. Updated policy process and implemented from term 4 2019</li><li>- Building and Maintenance Levy will be increased to \$100 as previously agreed but not applied, this will apply from 2020.</li><li>- Fee review planned for term 4 2019.</li></ul> |
| December 2019    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fee reviewed completed with fees increased based on budget needs. New fees recorded on fees and levies Schedule at \$4 per day increase and calculated in a term amount.</li></ul>  |

### Legislation: Review History:

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010:

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 168(n)

Links to National Quality Standard: 7.1

Family Law Act 1975 (Cth) as amended 2011