



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;
- Consider the option annually or termly to opt into the Fee Free Preschool scheme when available.
- 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;
- Consider fee free preschool annually or termly and if agreed, children will received 15hrs free of charge and remaining hours will be charged at rate set on the fee schedule.
- 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**;
- Fees charged outside the 600hrs per year when opted in to Fee Free Preschool will be reviewed annually to ensure it allows the preschool to remain financially viable.
- 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 preschool fees and levies, payment options and available subsidies upon enrolment using this policy the '*Fees & levies Schedule; and Fee Relief Policy. (If applicable)*
- Ensure statements of fees are given to all family's 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 31st 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 if the preschool communicates that they are apart of the fee free preschool scheme, families will receive 15hrs free preschool per week and will be required to pay the remaining hours per week as indicated on the fees and levies schedule.
- 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 children 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.

Fees are due in FULL by the end of week 2 each term.

If you need to put a payment arrangement in place, please contact the director to discuss. 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 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 2 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 with full fees due by week 2 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 3, 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 3. If payment plan instalment is not paid by week 5, 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.

OTHER PAYMENTS AND LEVIES

Enrolment/Equipment Levy – this involves an annual payment of \$210 on acceptance of the position offered at the preschool and includes a preschool hat and show and tell bag. This levy goes towards administration and purchase of new equipment and supplies. This levy is voluntary when part of the fee free preschool scheme.

Maintenance/Building Levy – A levy to assist in repairs and maintenance of the Preschool. This is invoiced at \$65 per term. This levy is voluntary when part of the fee free preschool scheme.

Choosing Not to Complete 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 attend on your allocated weekend and aren't able to find a family to swap with, you can choose to pay \$40 with at least 2 weeks notice and we will pay our handyman to come on your allocated weekend and complete the work.

Fee Relief - The Preschool offers fee relief for low income families who hold a current Health Care Card or current Pensioner Concession Card. Please contact the Director and refer to the Fee Relief policy for more information.

Late Payment of Fees – If families fail to pay the fees by the date requested on the fee invoice, families will be charged a Late Payment of Fees penalty.

Membership fee – this is paid as a compulsory annual levy of \$5 to become a member of the association. It also allows all members the right to vote at General and Annual General Meetings.

Occasional Care - Currently enrolled children may attend for an extra occasional care day, if there is a vacancy. Occasional Care fees are due on or before day of attendance. Days of attendance are NOT transferable.

All levies are voluntary when the preschool is part of the fee free preschool scheme, however payment is greatly appreciated as this allows the preschool to provide quality entertainment, resources, and environment for the children to enjoy and learn and allows the scheme to continue review.

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 & Contributions 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 Levies Schedule

Review History:

March 2008	Policy created
April 2012	Policy reviewed
June 2013	Policy reviewed to reflect National Regulations of 2014 Policy renamed and amalgamation with previous policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deposit Policy created March 2008<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Non Payment Policy created March 2008➢ Fee Relief Policy created March 2008
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.

Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management

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

- Review and update of Overdue/Non payment of fees process, to provide an active and purposeful process.
- Late fee amount of \$40 to be applied to overdue fees. Updated policy process and implemented from term 4 2019
- Building and Maintenance Levy will be increased to \$100 as previously agreed but not applied, this will apply from 2020.
- Fee review planned for term 4 2019.

December 2019

- 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.
- October 2020 - fee reviewed and \$2 increased applied and approved by committee, updated on fee schedule for 2021.

November 2022 - reviewed

- Update of minimum enrolment to 3 days per week per child. The consideration of fee free preschool annually.
- Families are aware that if the preschool communicates that they are part of the fee free preschool scheme, they will receive 15hrs free preschool per week and will be required to pay the remaining hours per week as indicated on the fee schedule.
- Update of levies and the details of each payment, when the preschool is opted in to Fee Free Preschool levies are voluntary.
- An increase of \$4 per day applied to daily fee schedule to support budget.
- Fees charged outside the 600hrs per year when opted in to Fee Free Preschool will be reviewed annually to ensure it allows the preschool to remain financially viable and meet operational costs.
- Fee payment due in Full by end of week 2.

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