

Payment of Service Fees

Policy Statement

South Turramurra OOSH (OOSH/service) aims to provide quality and affordable care for all families who attend Turramurra Public School. South Turramurra OOSH sets fees in accordance with its annual budget to meet the income required to develop and maintain a quality service for children and families. The Parent Management Committee reviews the budget annually, or as necessary.

Legislative Requirements

Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011: 111, 168, 172, 173

Family Law Act 1975

Definitions

Child Care Subsidy

- The main Australian Government payment to assist families with the costs of education and care for their children. It is, with some exceptions, paid directly to providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction.
- Families make a co-contribution to their fees and pay the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount.

Notice Period (Fees)

- The length of time stipulated by a service to notify families before making any changes that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected. The notice period must be at least 14 days.

Implementation Strategies – how will it be done?

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- **set fees** for children to enrol at the service and **ensure policies and procedures are in place relating to the fee schedule and payment options.**
- **take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the** Payment of service fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the service **policy and procedures.**
- **notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures** if the changes will:
 - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected.
 - significantly impact the service's education and care of children.
 - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.
- ensure that **regulatory obligations are met** in relation to payment of fees.

- **implement procedures for the payment of fees.**
- **communicate with families at enrolment about fees**, including:
 - the amounts charged.
 - payment periods and methods.
 - how the Child Care Subsidy or other government subsidy (e.g. from your jurisdiction) will be applied.
 - notice periods.
 - how they can access copies of statements/receipts.
 - financial hardship considerations and payment plans.
- **ensure families receive receipts for fees paid.**
- engage in **ongoing communication with families** about their account.
- **monitor the application of the Child Care Subsidy** or other government subsidy.

Educators and staff will:

- **support families** to approach the person whose role it is to collect fees with any fee-related questions.

Procedures

Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Service

- Fees are set by the Parent Management Committee to meet the budget for each financial year.
- Fees are reviewed yearly, or as necessary by the Parent Management Committee.
- Families will be given at least 14 days' notice of any changes in the fees (Regulation 172).
- Our current fees are as follows:

| | Permanent | Casual |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Before School Care | \$14.50 | \$19.50 |
| After School Care | \$24.50 | \$29.50 |

- Permanent booking fees will be charged from the first day of the booking until the booking ends, excluding pupil free days, public holidays and school holidays.
- Changes to permanent before school care and after school care bookings require 14 days' notice (see *Enrolment policy*). Fees are charged as normal during this notice period.
- Casual bookings can be cancelled 24 hours in advance and the fee will not be charged. Any cancellations within the 24-hour period will result in an absence and a booking fee will be charged.

Additional Fees

- A fee of \$30 will be charged for failure to notify South Turramurra OOSH by 3pm of a child's absence from after school care.
- A fee of \$25 per 15-minute increment, will be charged if a child is collected from OOSH after the 6:15pm closing time (see *Delivery of children to, and collection from the education and care service premises policy*).
- A fee of \$19.95 will be charged (by Debit Success) for bounced Direct Debit payments. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the amount due on their statement is available for debit the next day.
- A fee of \$3.50 will be charged for taking a child to and/or collecting a child from an onsite or offsite extra-curricular activity during an after-school care session.

Payment of Fees

- South Turramurra OOSH parents/guardians must submit a Direct Debit set up authorisation in the Xplor Home app/web log in.
- Fees are charged fortnightly, via direct debit, after care has taken place and CCS rebates have been applied.

- Direct Debits are serviced through Debit Success, in partnership with Xplor.
- An account statement, including statement of entitlement will be sent to families 24 hours prior to scheduled direct debits, via email and Xplor.
- Fees are to be paid for the days the child is booked into South Turramurra OOSH, including times when the child is absent for any reason. CCS will be applied for absent days if eligible.
- Parents/guardians have access to their live account balance in the Xplor Home app/web page, via the finance tab. Parents can download PDF statements of OOSH fees and charges at any time.
- South Turramurra OOSH does not accept any cash or cheque payments.
- One-off, bank transfer payments may be accepted on a case-by-case basis.
- Families will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any changes to the way in which fees are collected.
- If Parents/guardians have any issues with their statements or the fees they have been charged, they should email accounts@tpsoosh.com.au.
- If a family has been overcharged for any reason, a credit will be added to their account. This credit can be seen on their statement.
- All records will be kept confidential and stored appropriately. Parents may access particulars of their fees at any time through their Xplor App or by contacting OOSH.

Overdue Fees

- Where a families nominated bank account/credit card payment is rejected, a notification will be sent requesting a re-attempt of the direct debit. The notification will also contain instructions on how to update payment details in case the family needs to update payment details to avoid future failed debits.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss any difficulties they may have in paying fees with the OOSH Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor, who will facilitate suitable payment arrangement plan for the payment of the outstanding fees.
- If no previous arrangements have been made regarding overdue fees, the following actions will be taken:
 - **Second failed direct debit:** The account will be brought to the attention of the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor.
 - **Third failed direct debit:** The child's booking will be suspended until the account has been paid in full or a payment plan is in place with the approval of the Director/Treasurer.
- If the above procedures are not effective, details or unpaid fees will be referred to the Parent Management Committee to commence debt recovery procedures.
- The Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor will seek approval from the Treasurer if bookings are not intended to be suspended after 3 failed payments.

Childcare Subsidy (CCS)

- To receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) guardians must apply via Centrelink/MyGov to assess whether the family is eligible for CCS. To ensure a smooth enrolment process, complete this prior to enrolment.
- In order for South Turramurra OOSH to link Government approval, and claim these rebates for families, guardians need to provide their own and their child's Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) to South Turramurra OOSH.
- To ensure that rebates are received correctly, guardians need to confirm that their child is attending South Turramurra OOSH via 'MyGov.'
- Families will receive rebates directly to their OOSH account and will be seen on their statement of fees.
- CCS is paid for all bookings, including Vacation Care and Casual Bookings.

- When a child is absent from a permanent booking, families only have 42 absences per financial year per child. Families will not receive CCS for any further absences in that financial year once the 42 absences are exceeded.
- Children must have a recorded attendance every 14 weeks to ensure the CCS enrolment remains active, as per conditions set by Centrelink. If the enrolment ceases due to inactivity for a 14-week period, a new claim must be made via Centrelink.
- Parents will pay full fees for all bookings if rebates are not being processed for any reason. Any backdated rebates will be paid into the parent/guardian OOSH account as a credit to be used towards care fees going forward.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure they confirm their income with Centrelink/via Tax Return each financial year to ensure rebates are not clawed back and that their account is not sent into debit.
- If parents fail to confirm their income and CCS rebates are clawed back, the parent must clear the debt with OOSH and resolve the issue directly with Centrelink. South Turrumurra OOSH is not responsible for any loss in rebate payments.

References and Related Policies and Procedures

References

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) National quality standards <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard/quality-area-7-governance-and-leadership>
- Services Australia - <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/activity-test-for-child-care-subsidy-for-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children?context=41186>
- The Department of Education - <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/child-care-subsidy>
- The Department of Education – CCS Handbook - <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>

Related Policies and Procedures

- Enrolment and Orientation
- Governance and Management
- Delivery and Collection of Children

Approval and Revision History

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