

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021).

Quality early education and care provides the foundation for children’s development and social engagement whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our Service is committed to providing quality education and care to all children at an affordable fee for families. The services financial sustainability will be considered when discussing fee arrangements and the long-term Preschool viability to ensure sound financial management.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
111	Administrative space
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures



## RELATED LEGISLATION

	Family Law Act 1975
	A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation as identified within the Child Care Provider Handbook in <a href="https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook">https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook</a>	

## RELATED POLICIES

Dealing with Complaints Policy Delivery of Children to, and Collection from and Education and Care Service Premises Enrolment Policy	<b>Fraud Prevention Policy</b> Governance Policy Orientation of Families Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy <b>Termination of Enrolment Policy</b>
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## PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Service fee structure, payment requirements and Government funding prior to enrolment. This policy explains process of fee payment and the necessity of ensuring children’s fees are paid on time and consequences for failure to pay fees on time.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service aims to ensure families understand the fee schedule and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to meet our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Government for community preschool legislative requirements. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately. Our Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.



### GENERAL FEES

- Will be set and reviewed by the approved Provider.
- Will comply with the Government Funding for community preschools funding guidelines for set fee levels and priority of access.
- Will be communicated with families through the preschool handbook and updated as and when required.
- Will be communicated with families with at least 14 days' notice if there are any fee changes required (Regulation 172 requires a minimum of 14 days' notice)
- Will continued to be charged while a child is absent from Preschool but their enrolled place at Preschool is held for them (this might be due to short term illness or long-term holidays etc)
- Casual Days (above the 15hrs funded by Start Strong) will be charged at the highest fee level.
- Will not be charged if the Preschool is shut for any reason and families are unable to attend on their enrolled days.
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason. Families do not have to provide evidence.

### PAYMENT OF FEES

- Families are required to pay fees using the option of Direct Debit or Direct Transfer.
- Fees and charges associated with direct debit system are outlined upon enrolment
- Statements will be provided to families monthly with fees to be paid in advance of enrolled days. Receipts to be provided upon payment of account.

# East Lismore Community Preschool



## DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURE

- In the event that a families' account balance becomes overdue, a payment plan will be put in place to ensure that the account does not fall further behind and there is progress made towards the account being paid in full.
- The preschool will be considerate of personal circumstances families may have and support them in strategies to help them pay their fees, however, a child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after **two or more months and no payment agreement has been reached**, for which the family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position.

## LATE FEES

- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the Service. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time
- Currently, a fee of \$5.00 per 15 minutes block or part thereof will be incurred by the family
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late with fee payment.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF NOMINATED SUPERVISOR

The approved provider and nominated supervisor are responsible for:

- ensuring that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* are met
- ensuring the service and all Persons with Management and Control (PMC) comply with the rules under Family Assistance Law (FAL)
- Ensuring compliance with the Government Funding for community preschools funding guidelines.
- ensuring Persons with Management and Control (PMC) are considered 'fit and proper' persons.
- taking reasonable steps to ensure all educators, staff and volunteers follow the *Payment of Fees Policy* and procedure
- ensuring all families are aware of our *Payment of Fees Policy*
- ensuring enrolments are submitted correctly with the appropriate enrolment information
- providing families with regular statement of fees payable
- providing families with receipts of fees paid
- Reviewing the preschool budget and fee levels annually
- Ensuring the Preschool remains financially sustainable in the short and long term

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- notifying families of any overdue fees
- providing families with reminder letters as required
- terminating enrolment of children should fees not be paid
- discussing fee payment with families if required
- providing at least 14 days written notice to families of any fee increases or changes to the way fees are collected.
- Ensuring accurate attendance records and fee records are kept.
- Working together with individual families as required to ensure that accounts can be paid and that every opportunity is provided for a child to continue to be enrolled at preschool.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF FAMILIES

- Indicating the personal responsible for fees on the enrolment form
- Acknowledge (through a tick) on the enrolment form that they understand that fees are required to be paid on a regular basis and any failure to do so may result in forfeiture of their child's preschool place.
- Keeping fees paid regularly, preferably in advance, always.
- Notifying the preschool if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees.
- Giving two weeks' notice of withdrawal from the Preschool and payment of fees for this notice period.
- Paying for all enrolled days that the preschool is open and the child could attend even if the child is absent in the short or long term.
- Record the arrival and departure times of their child on the iPad app OWNA.

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## CONTINUOUS

## IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Payment of Fees Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually in consultation with families, staff, educators and management.

## CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

Fee Increase Letter – General Overdue Fee Payment Letter	Overdue Fee Payment Procedure Payment Plan Template
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## SOURCES

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework.](#)

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2021). [Policy and procedure guidelines. Payment of Service Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Service.](#)

Australian Government Department of Education [Child care discount for early childhood workforce](#)  
<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-package/early-childhood-workforce/child-care-discount-early-childhood-workforce>

Australian Government Department of Education Child Care Provider Handbook

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>

Australian Government Department of Education *Early Childhood and Care* <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood>

Australian Government Department of Education (2024). [Help in an emergency](#)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations.](#) (Amended 2023).

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Jemimah Savins	ECT	02/01/25
POLICY REVIEWED	January 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	January 2026
VERSION NUMBER	V18.05.24		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual policy maintenance</li> <li>• added content to responsibility of approved provider/management</li> <li>• sources checked for currency and hyperlinks updated</li> <li>• updated late fee</li> </ul>		