

Fee Payment Policy

Purpose:	<p>The objective of this policy is to set out the requirements for leadership and service management policies and practices in relation to fee payment, and for families to gain a clear understanding of the fee structure and the importance in complying with fee payments.</p> <p>Cash flow management is vital to all businesses to enable them to continue to provide a consistent level of quality. Therefore it is vital that River School Early Childhood Centre is clear on the terms and conditions and amount of fees required from families.</p> <p>Families are expected to maintain their weekly fees at least one week in advance at all times, by the end of every week. Account statements are accessible, to ensure that the account is being monitored and fees remain up to date and to keep families informed of any changes with the fee or Child Care Subsidy (CCS).</p>	
Scope:	The policy applies to children attending the service, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes: All previous Fee Payment Policy
Authorised by:	Dee Farquharson	Date of Authorisation: 20 Sep 2021
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 • National Quality Standards for Education and Care Services • Information Privacy Principles as stipulated in the Privacy Act 1988 • Office of the Australian Information Commissioner • Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act 1982 • Commonwealth Ombudsman Act 1976 • Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority 	
Review Date:	Every 2 years	Next Review Date: 21 Aug 2023
Policy Owner:	AMEL Board	

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VERSION	1	PAGE	1 of 3
DOCUMENT NUMBER	RSECC – QA7.1	This document may be subject to change without notice. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	

Policy Statement

River School Early Childhood Centre has a proven debt management procedure. We will endeavor to hold conversations with families to arrange payment plans in consultation with account holders if accounts fall more than three weeks in arrears. If a family’s account falls into arrears, and no arrangements can be reached, we will take steps to recover the outstanding amount, at the risk of losing the child’s position at the service and a possible bad credit rating for the account holder if the outstanding amount is not collected.

River School Early Childhood Centre accept Direct Deposit for payment of fees.

Fees are charged daily and may vary depending on Child Care Subsidy (CCS) eligibility. Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to the service.

Fees are subject to change at any time provided the legislative notice period has been given.

IMPLEMENTATION

Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person will:

- Monitor Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for any possible errors.
- Ensure families know how they can access current account statements and encourage them to review them at least once a week.
- Monitor accounts to identify any issues on a weekly basis.
- Advise the account holder as soon as possible of any changes or discrepancies to the family’s regular account that they have identified.
- Advise account holder that non-payment of fees will jeopardise the child’s place in the service.
- Ensure relevant notes are added to the service accounts data base for future reference.
- Provide account holder with a Payment Agreement if fees have fallen behind, ensuring account is up to date within four weeks.
- Ensure approved and valid fee discounts have been applied to accounts.
- Ensure a current fee schedule is available for families.

Account holder will:

- Be responsible for checking their account statement weekly and ensuring the amount is correct. If there are any discrepancies, families should call the service and notify the Centre Manager as soon as possible to ensure correct amount. This should be followed up with an email or letter to confirm change, as soon as possible.
- Maintain fees one week in advance at all times.
- If fees fall behind, make arrangements for fees to be bought up to date immediately.
- Accept the conditions of the Payment Agreement if account is in arrears

Payment Agreements

The Centre Manager will make Payment Agreements with account holders that have allowed their accounts to fall behind.

LAST REVIEWED	20/09/2021	NEXT REVIEW	21/08/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	2 of 3
DOCUMENT NUMBER	RSECC – QA7.1	This document may be subject to change without notice. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	

Additionally, if the account holder is in arrears and struggling with payment of fees, please notify the Centre Manager to arrange a suitable Payment Agreement plan.

All Payment Agreements require fees to be completely brought up to date within a four-week timeframe.

In some circumstances, Additional Child Care Subsidy may be applied. Evidence will be required to accompany an application and the Nominated Supervisor will grant approval.

Children remaining at the service after licensing time / Late Fees

In the event a child or children are collected after the services' licensed closing time, a late fee of \$10 per minute for every minute after 5:30pm, will apply to **each** child remaining at the service.

Holidays

There is no discount of fees for holidays taken by families, outside the licensed operating time of the service, i.e. 50 weeks of the year.

Community Inclusion Discount

Community Inclusion Discount may be applied for by certain applicants. The service has criteria that must be met and approved, before any discounts are applied to an account. Noting that the discount may not apply until the criteria has been met and approved. At the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor, discount conditions may change at any time.

Public Holidays, Absent/Sick Days and Make up days

Where a child's routine and booked day of attendance falls on a Public Holiday, standard daily fees apply and are payable in full.

Additionally, when a child is absent or sick on a routine and booked day, standard daily fees apply and are payable in full.

Make up days and swap days are not offered. Additional days can be booked, if available and must be approved by Centre Manager, prior to attendance.

Termination of enrolment

Two weeks written notice is required of the intention to withdraw a child from the service, this can be via an email or a letter.

If termination is required without providing such notification, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) will be jeopardised resulting in full fees being charged.

Appendices – The River School Discount Policy

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Owner	Responsibility	Change Description	Review Date
1	23 March 2020	River School Board	Nominated Supervisor, Centre Manager	Replaces all previous Policies	20/09/2021

LAST REVIEWED	20/09/2021	NEXT REVIEW	21/08/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	3 of 3
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