

Governance & Leadership

# Fee Payment Policy.

## Our Vision.

To give every child **the best start in life.**

## Our Mission.

To deliver high quality childcare and exciting learning opportunities for every child, giving them a head start as they prepare for school.

## Our Values.

- Care** We take care of the children entrusted to us and our dedicated staff. All are appreciated and diversity is valued.
- Quality** We maintain the highest standards in care and safety and provide exceptional early years education.
- Service** We provide exceptional service and are integral to supporting parents bringing up children.
- Value** We provide outstanding value for our families.





It is vital that Busy Bees Early Learning Australia is clear on the terms and conditions and amount of fees required from Families as cash flow management is essential to continue to provide a consistent level of quality.

| NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)  |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| QUALITY AREA 6 - Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities |                                     |
| 6.1 - Supportive Relationships with Families                              | 6.1.1 - Engagement with the Service |
| QUALITY AREA 7 - Governance and Leadership                                |                                     |
| 7.1 - Governance  | 7.1.2 - Management Systems          |
|   | 7.1.3 - Roles and Responsibilities  |

| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS |   |
|--|---|
| Part 4.3   | Physical Environment (111)                                |
| Part 4.7   | Governance and Leadership (Reg - 168, 169, 170, 171, 172) |

| RELATED LEGISLATION  |
|--|
| Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017  |
| A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999  |
| Family Law Act 1975  |
| Family Assistance Law - Incorporating all related legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook |

| RELATED POLICIES                       |  |
|--|--|
| Child Enrolment and Orientation Policy | Confidentiality and Privacy Policy         |
| Code of Conduct Policy                 | Delivery and Collection of Children Policy |
| Complaints Policy                      | Governance Policy                          |

## PURPOSE

This policy sets out the requirements relating to the management of Service fees, and for Families to gain a clear understanding of the fee structure and the importance in complying with fee payments.

## SCOPE

Children, Employees, Management, Visitors and Families

## POLICY

Busy Bees Early Learning Australia fees are charged daily and vary depending on Child Care Subsidy (CCS) eligibility. Current fee schedules will be displayed for Families in the entrance of the Service.

Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to the Service. Services will monitor accounts and reports to ensure any issues with payments are actioned promptly.

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

Families of children enrolled at the Service will be notified at least 14 days before making any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

## Direct Debit and Payment Expectations

Busy Bees only accepts Direct Debit for payment of fees.

Families are required upon enrolment to complete a Direct Debit form with a valid bank account or credit card for fees to be deducted from. Where any changes to payments are required, a new Direct Debit form must be completed and signed by the relevant account holder/s.

Families are expected to always maintain their fees in advance. Depending on the direct debit cycle in place at the relevant Service, this will either be 1 week or 2 weeks in advance. Families with questions about the direct debit cycle that applies at their Service can contact their Service Manager (for current Families) or the Enrolments Team (for new Families).

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). Families will be responsible for checking their account statement to ensure the amount being debited or paid is correct. If any discrepancies are noted, Families will need to notify the Service as soon as possible to amend payments and provide alternative account or credit card details if direct debits decline. This should be followed with an email or letter to confirm the change.

A penalty fee will be applied for any declined direct debit payment.

## Outstanding Fees

Contact your Service Manager as soon as possible if your account has fallen in arrears. Busy Bees does offer short term payment agreements to assist Families in bringing their accounts up to date. All payment agreements require accounts to be fully brought up to date within a four-week timeframe.

Should an account fall into arrears with no attempts made by the account holder to rectify this, Busy Bees debt management procedure will be implemented.

In some circumstances, Additional Child Care Subsidy may be applied. Evidence will be required to accompany an application and the National Support Centre will grant approval where appropriate.

## Debt Management

Busy Bees has a debt management procedure. Where a Family's account has fallen in arrears, we will enact the debt management procedure to recover the outstanding amount. This may jeopardise your child's enrolment at the Service and the account holder's credit rating if the outstanding amount is not recovered.

## Late Collection Fees (Children remaining at the Service after licensing time)

In the event a child/ren are collected after the Services licensed closing time, a late fee of \$30 for the first 15 minutes or part thereof and \$1.00 per minute after that, will apply to each child remaining at the Service.

## Casual Care

A routine booking of at least one day per week must be maintained for all enrolled children. Casual care days, in addition to routine attendances, can be requested and will be subject to approval.

If casual care days appear to become a regular booking pattern, Families will be required to make a routine attendance booking.

Where cancellation of a casual day occurs within 24 hours of the attendance date, standard fees will be charged.

## Fee Discounts

Fee discounts that apply to certain Busy Bees Services and employees may have criteria that must be met, and approved, before any discounts are applied to an account. Discounts will be applied once approved and the adjustments made will be reflected on the account accordingly.

At times discounts may be applied during leave periods, noting that in some instances the discount may not occur until the leave has been taken.

At the discretion of the company, discount conditions may change at any time.

## Holidays

Holiday rates will be applied providing two weeks' written notice has been given in advance to the dates requested, and the account is up to date as per policy.

The discount rate will be calculated on the Services full fee, not the gap fee, and is eligible for 4 weeks each year.

One week is deemed, Monday to Friday, regardless of attendance. For example: If you attend 1 day per week you are entitled to 4 days per year, 3 days per week you are entitled to 12 days per year, or 5 days per week you are entitled to 20 days per year. Holiday discounts will not be applied to public holidays.

**Families please note:** Holiday rates will only be applied to Services who offer this service and may be applied to your account when you are on holidays which may affect the direct debit amount deducted from your bank account, noting that this may occur after the leave is taken.

## 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. As noted above, holiday discounts will not be applied to Public Holidays.

Additionally, when a child is absent or sick on a routine and booked day, standard daily fees apply and are payable in full. Families are requested to contact the Service if their child is absent on a booked day.

Make up days and swap days are not offered.

## 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, letter, or relevant form. If termination is required without providing such notification, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) will be jeopardised resulting in full fees being charged which are payable by the Family.

The Service reserves the right to terminate a child's enrolment in conjunction with Busy Bees Senior Management should non-compliance continue.

Should non-compliance to this Fee Payment Policy occur, it may result in disciplinary actions. Should non-compliance to this Fee Payment Policy be found to have occurred by Busy Bees employees, disciplinary action may result.

## Funded Kindergarten Programs

Families may be eligible for additional subsidies when enrolling children in Universal access to early childhood programs. The service will apply for subsidies on behalf of the Family based on the eligibility of each child. If approved any relevant subsidies will be credited to Family accounts as per the relevant State and Territory guidelines and Busy Bees Parent Kindergarten Acknowledgement form.

# Fee Payment Policy.



## SOURCES

- [Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulation](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)
- [Early Childhood Australia](#)
- [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](#)

## VERSION CONTROL

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and/or in line with legislation and organisation requirements.

| Version | Date       | Owner                   | Responsibility             | Change Description            |
|---------|------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1       | 01/10/2023 | Chief Operating Officer | Policy Development Officer | Replace all previous versions |

This document is uncontrolled when printed and may be varied, replaced, or terminated without notice