

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 payment 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.

The [Busy Bees Website](#) contains all Services operating hours and full fee schedule.

Direct Debit and Payment Expectations

Busy Bees only accept 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 statements 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.

Should Families elect to use a credit/debit card for fees payment, a credit card surcharge will also be payable, calculated as a percentage of each transaction as follows:

Visa	2.06%
Mastercard	2.06%.
American Express	3.96%

These surcharges are charged by Quickpay (Paychoice) and will not be included in the amount credited to your Busy Bees account.

A penalty fee will be applied for any declined direct debit payment, currently \$8.80 charged by Quickpay (Paychoice). Personal bank charges may apply.

Families that cancel a direct debit, other than how permitted under clause 3 of the Direct Debit Request Service Agreement, will incur a direct debit cancellation fee, currently \$33.00.

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.

Any discounts may be suspended until the account is paid in full.

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 holiday, 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. Unless they meet state priority of access criteria. Refer to state specific details and Priority of Access Policy.

CCS will not be applied to absences at the end of an enrolment. Refer to the following for more details.
<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/providers/howto/manage-absences#toc-absent-sessions>

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.

Government Funded Programs

Families may be eligible for additional subsidies when enrolling children in government funded 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.

Australian Capital Territory

- Funding will be applied during the school term on a weekly basis
- Payments begin on the first week of the school term
- The Free Kinder Subsidy will appear as 'ACT Free Kinder' on family statements
- Children must only receive funding for *Free Kinder* at one service. If a child attends more than one service that offers a funded kindergarten program (e.g., a sessional service for some days and a long day care service on other days), the family must nominate which service they will receive their funded kindergarten program and therefore their Free Kinder funding.
- The Free Kinder Subsidy program provides funding to deliver free, quality preschool education to children aged three who are enrolled in a partnered early childhood education and care service. The program supports access up to 300 hours free preschool* per year, per eligible child.
- Busy Bees Kindergarten program hours are 7.5 daily, running from 8:00-4:30
- The ACT 3-year-old Preschool runs across the State school terms, with the funding being applied during this period
- Priority of Access criteria will be assessed as per the Priority of Access Policy

New South Wales

- Funding payments are applied weekly with backdating of payments when required.
- Payments start at the end of the first full week of the Calendar year
- The funding will appear as 'NSW Government Fee Relief' on family statements
- Children must only receive funding for *Start Strong Funding* at one service. If a child attends more than one service that offers a funded kindergarten program (e.g., a sessional service for some days and a long day care service on other days), the family must nominate which service they will receive their funded kindergarten program and therefore their Free Kinder funding.
- For integrated long day care programs, the service must pass the full Free Kinder savings on as a fee offset to families. This is because fees are charged for all hours of education and care, not just the kindergarten program hours, and fees can vary based on factors like the family's Commonwealth Child Care Subsidy entitlement.
- Busy Bees Kindergarten program hours are 7.5 daily, running from 8:00-4:30
- The program runs across the year with payments being applied weekly on a Friday
- Priority of Access criteria will be assessed as per the Priority of Access Policy

Queensland

- Funding payments are applied automatically by our CCMS provider during the school terms
- Payments will show on the statement during the week of the school term period
- The funding appears as 'QLD Government Free Kinder' on family statements
- Children must only receive funding for *Free Kinder* at one service. If a child attends more than one service that offers a funded kindergarten program (e.g., a sessional service for some days and a long day care service on other days), the family must nominate which service they will receive their funded kindergarten program and therefore their Free Kinder funding.
- Kinder is 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year and is free. This equates to 2 days a week, 7.5 hours a day. <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/freekinder#/search>
- Busy Bees Kindergarten program hours are 7.5 daily, running from 8:00-4:30
- The QLD Free Kinder runs across the State school terms, with the funding being applied during this period
- Priority of Access criteria will be assessed as per the Priority of Access Policy

South Australia

- Funding payments will be applied to Eligible children at the end of each semester
- Payments will begin at the end of each semester for eligible children
- The funding appears as 'Targeted Child Subsidy' on family statements
- A 4-year-old child can attend a South Australian Government-approved Preschool program for up to 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year. Access can also be shared across multiple services to support working families.
- Targeted subsidies are available for families who meet the eligibility criteria, which further reduce your out-of-pocket costs when enrolled in Preschool
- Busy Bees Kindergarten program hours are 7.5 daily, running from 8:00-4:30
- Priority of Access criteria will be assessed as per the Priority of Access Policy

Victoria

- Funding payments are applied fortnightly in advance with backdating of payments when required
- Payments usually commence in Late January early February depending on the state Government's dispersal of funds
- The funding appears as 'Victorian Government Free Kinder Offset' on family statements and invoices
- Children must only receive funding for *Free Kinder* at one service. If a child attends more than one service that offers a funded kindergarten program (e.g., a sessional service for some days and a long day care service on other days), the family must nominate which service they will receive their funded kindergarten program and therefore their Free Kinder funding.
- ESK payments are applied the same way as the VIC free Kinder, fortnightly in advance
- For integrated long day care programs, the service must pass the full Free Kinder savings on as a fee offset to families. This is because fees are charged for all hours of education and care, not just the kindergarten program hours, and fees can vary based on factors like the family's Commonwealth Child Care Subsidy entitlement.
- Busy Bees Kindergarten program hours are 7.5 daily, running from 8:00-4:30
- The Program runs across the year, with payments being applied fortnightly in advance
- Priority of Access criteria will be assessed as per the Priority of Access Policy.
- Termination of Enrolment notice periods may be waived for families who meet the Victorian priority of access criteria

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
2	26/02/2025	Chief Operating Officer	Policy Development Officer	Updated in line with VIC Education review funding requirements

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