

POLICY

POLICY 6: PAYMENT OF FEES & EDUCATOR REMUNERATION

OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE:

Perspective: Quality Services
Policy: Services & Programs

POLICY:

Our Village Family Childcare Service is a not-for-profit organisation. The service is eligible to offer Child Care Benefit (CCB), Child Care Rebate (CCR) and JET subsidies to families. Our Village Family Childcare Service sets the fees for the education and care provided to children. All fees apply consistently to all families using the service.

SCOPE:

This document applies to all Educators, Families and Coordination Unit Staff of the Our Village Family Childcare Service.

RATIONALE:

This policy ensures consistency and accuracy in relation to the completion and submission of accurate Attendance Records, administration of fee payments and remuneration to Educators.

PROCESS:

- Our Village Family Childcare will ensure families are aware that it is their responsibility to contact the Family Assistance Office (at Centrelink) to:
 - register their child and to obtain a Customer Reference Number (CRN)
 - follow up on Child Care payment questions directly with the Family Assistance Office
- Fees are charged according to the booked care (permanent or casual) for each child at the service, regardless of attendance
- Full normal payable fees will be charged for all child absences including sickness, holidays, public holidays (even if a child does not attend care on that day) and any other leave that requires the child care place to be kept open for that child
- If care is used on a Public Holiday, the care is charged at the Public Holiday rate (Public Holidays are not deemed personal leave for Educators)
- In line with Family Assistance Law, Our Village Family Childcare will apply CCB, CCR and JET subsidies (depending on each family's eligibility) for fees paid for each absence due to illness of a sick child, parent or sibling. Sick leave absences are unlimited with medical certificates (see Allowable Absences from Care)
- The family member nominated by Centrelink to receive the CCB, CCR and JET payment is the person responsible for ensuring payment of fees to the service

Child Care Benefit (CCB)

- It is the responsibility of the service to advise new families about Childcare Benefit (CCB), Childcare Rebate (CCR) and JET subsidies and the process for applications through the Family Assistance Office (FAO).

- It is the responsibility of each individual family to apply for the Childcare Benefit and Childcare Rebate and to maintain a current assessment.
- Applications for CCB, CCR and JET are lodged directly with the FAO by attending their office, by telephone or by logging onto the FAO website, <http://www.familyassist.gov.au/>
- On receipt (from families) of the parent / guardian and child *birth dates* and their FAO *Customer Reference Numbers*, details will be entered into the Harmony / CCMS program and children will be enrolled on-line by the Administration staff.
- All information provided to the service for Childcare Benefit and Childcare Rebate is kept **strictly confidential** and is available to claimant on request.

Educator and Parent Agreement

Parents must sign a *Parent and Educator Agreement* (a contract for hour/days of care required) with their Educator prior to care commencing. Fees are payable according to the *Agreement* and the actual hours booked. It is expected that parents adhere to the agreed hours of care. If children arrive or leave outside the agreed hours of care, a late fee may be charged by the Educator. A *Booked Hours of Education and Care Alteration Form* must be completed and given to the Educator, providing two (2) weeks notice of the change. The seven (7) day notice is counted from the first day of notice.

24 Hour Care

Coordination Unit must be consulted prior to overnight care occurring. Twenty-four hour care may be available in special circumstances. Application is to be made with Coordination Unit.

Pre-School Care

Educators are paid for the hours a child attends a pre-school (kindergarten) session under the following conditions:

- The Educator regularly delivers the child to, and collects the child from the pre-school
- The Educator is available for the child, should the Educator be contacted whilst the child is at pre-school
- The Educator is available to provide education and care for booked hours when pre-school is not operating e.g., school holidays

School Aged Children in Care

Under CCB legislation, school children are only entitled to 85% of the family CCB entitlement.

Rostered Care

Upon the availability of an Educator, the service can provide rostered care providing a roster is provided to the Educator in advance, as negotiated. The family will be liable to pay for the care that has been booked according to the booking provided to the Educator, regardless of the child attending care. A normal holding fee would apply for this absence which would form part of the allowable absence number for that financial year. In the event of parental annual leave a holding fee averaging the preceding four (4) weeks care would apply to hold your place with the Educator.

Travel

When an Educator is requested to transport a child to pre-school or school, the travel costs will be met by the parents. A charge will apply according to Our Village Family Childcare Fee Structure.

Fees for Absences

- In the event of an absence from education and care, the parent/guardian must notify the Educator, giving the reason for the absence.
- The Educator will document the absence on the child's timesheet with an 'A' and record the booked hours.
- The parent / guardian must record on the attendance record the absence with an 'A' and sign the timesheet to verify that the information is correct.
- Fees for absences will attract the Childcare Benefit subsidy for a maximum of 42 days per financial year, per child, as long as the child is booked in for that day.
- When all 42 absent days are used, CCB can be paid for additional absence days for the following reasons:
 - a. an illness (with medical certificate)
 - b. an outbreak of an infectious disease, when the child is not immunised (with written evidence)
 - c. rostered days off/rotating shiftwork of the parent/guardian (with written evidence)
 - d. temporary closure of a school or pupil-free days
 - e. periods of local emergency
 - f. shared care arrangements due to a court order, parenting plan or parenting order (with copy of documentation)
 - g. attendance at preschool
 - h. exceptional circumstances
 - There is no limit to the number of additional days for which CCB will be paid, so long as they are for the reasons specified above, have supporting documentation and these are days in which the education and care would have normally been provided. Such documentation is to be provided to the Coordination Unit.
- If all 42 days have been used and there is no evidence to support additional days as outlined above, **full fees for the absent day/s will apply.**
- If a child has two (2) weeks of absences and the parent/guardian has not contacted the Educator and/or submitted a *Booked Hours of Education and Care Alteration Form or Holiday Leave Form* then absences cannot be paid beyond the two (2) weeks. In this case full fee would apply, unless the child returns to Family Childcare at a later date after the parent/guardian has first contacted the Coordination Unit.

Change in Care Arrangements

A *Booked Hours of Education and Care Alteration Form* must be completed and given to the Educator giving two (2) weeks notice of the change. The seven (7) day notice is counted from the first day of notice.

Termination of Care

See Appendices Section . Our Village Family Childcare Fee Structure

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

1. Using a black or blue pen, all details regarding hours of care, meals and travel are recorded on a fortnightly attendance record which parents sign as verification of their child's attendance.
2. The Australian Government guidelines require that all details on the attendance records must be completed with the child's arrival and departure times. The times must be recorded and signed by the family (or the person delivering or collecting the child) on a daily basis.
3. This is a contractual and legal requirement of a child's participation in the Family Childcare service.
4. Anyone other than the parent/guardian receiving the Child Care Benefit (CCB) who delivers the child into care or collects the child from care **must provide a full signature** on the attendance section of the record.
5. The *Attendance Record* is to be signed in the top section by the parent at the end of each week and in doing so, the parent acknowledges that the hours recorded for processing are in accordance with the agreed booked hours and will be the hours that the Educator is paid for.
6. Educators are to ensure that they submit *Attendance Records* to the Coordination Unit for processing on time and within the fortnightly pay cycle. All children who have been in education and care during the fortnightly period must have an *Attendance Record*
7. Absences must be verified by parent signature. Each day the child attends Family Childcare for outside school hours care, parents will be required only to sign the child into the Educators home in the morning (for before school care) and to sign the child out of the Educators home in the afternoon (following after school care). In these circumstances, the Educator will sign the child out of the Educators home in a before school hours care situation and into the Educators home in an after school hours care situation.
8. Where approval has been given by the parent or guardian for the service to administer the Child Care Benefit, Special Child Care Benefit, Jet Fee Allowance and/or the Child Care Rebate claims will be made on behalf of the parent and shown as a deduction on their account.
9. Payment summary reports will be generated and filed with the corresponding Attendance Records. At the end of each fortnight, Educators forward the completed attendance record to the Coordination Unit for processing. The attendances are then submitted by the service to the Federal Childcare Management System for calculation of CCB/CCR and JET entitlements.
11. A copy of the Attendance Record will be provided to families by the Educator at the end of each fortnight.
12. Once processed, *Attendance Records* are required to be kept by the Coordination Unit for at least 36 months from the end of the calendar year in the original form.

EDUCATOR REMUNERATION

- *Attendance records* are processed each fortnight according to the information submitted by the Educator
- Our Village Family Childcare will submit *Attendance Records* that have been authorised by families to CCMS (Centrelink) for CCB, CCR and JET approval after processing
- After fortnightly processing, the Educator will be paid directly from Our Village Family Childcare according to the hours of care claimed together with a *Payment Advice* which outlines the hours of care used by each child in their care for that processing period.

It is the responsibility of all Educators to arrange their own income tax payments to the Australian Taxation Office.

Repayment of Incorrect Remuneration

Any incorrect remuneration made to the Educator by the service in the way of errors or omissions will be made to the Educator as an adjustment as soon as practicable but no later than the following fortnight after CCMS processing.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Tax Invoices to Families

Each fortnight families will be issued a Tax Invoice outlining the child care costs for the previous fortnight. Payment is to be made within five (5) working days, unless specific arrangements have been made with the Manager.

Non-Payment of Fees

Our Village Family Childcare will implement recovery methods for any accounts not paid by the due date. The service reserves the right to terminate care if the all attempts to negotiate the recovery of fees are not met by the family.

APPENDICES:

Our Village Family Childcare Fee Structure

DEFINITIONS:

Child Care Benefit (CCB): is a payment made by the Australian Government to help all families with the cost of child care.

Child Care Rebate (CCR): is a payment made by the Australian Government to help all families with the cost of child care.

Jobs, Education & Training (JET): Assists with the cost of approved child care for eligible parents undertaking an approved activity.

REFERENCES:

Child Care Services Handbook 2013-14

Department of Education (Commonwealth)

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999


Child Care Benefit (Eligibility for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000

Education and Care National Regulations 2011

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Engagement & Registration of FDC Educators - 13
- Enrolment and Orientation - 31
- Provision of Information, Assistance and Training to FDC Educators - 34

This box to be completed after final draft has been approved.

Issue Date:	November 2016	Previous Review(s):	Jul '15, Mar '12, Nov '11, Dec '11, Jul '10, Jul '09
Issue Number:	Seven (7)	Next Review:	November 2019
Owner:	Manager, Family Day Care	<p>Signed in accordance with Deed of Delegation:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1/12/2016</p> <p>X </p> <hr/> <p>Marcus Bosch General Manager, Child, Youth & Family Services Signed by: Marcus Bosch</p>	