

Policy Title:	Fees
Effective Date:	July 2018
Review Date:	As necessary by the Policy and Procedure Development Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Fees are set at a level which reflects the cost of quality child care, a cost which is affected by both Centre philosophy and Government regulation and support. The fees are set from time to time by the Management Committee taking into account that Inner City Care (ICC) is a not-for-profit community based childcare centre. Families will be notified of changes to fees through the Newsletter and through notices in the children's pockets.

Users of the service give a commitment to promptly pay their fees.

Fees are payable for all hours of a child's regular attendance, whether or not the child uses the space booked. This includes holidays, days off sick and other absences. Fees are also payable for Public Holidays. The Centre is closed annually for a short period at Christmas – no fees are payable for this period. Long day care commences at 7.30am and ceases at 6.00pm.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This policy was developed according to Management Committee decisions and is reviewed regularly. It was ratified by the Management Committee in March 2007, October 2008, November 2009 and in June 2015. This policy was updated in July 2018 to reflect changes to bond payments and change the method of preferred fee payments to a direct debit system.

POLICY DETAIL/ BUSINESS RULES

Bond:

All enrolments from full weeks down to single-day places require a bond equal to the ordinary fee of 4 weeks. Four weeks of the bond is payable immediately after the family accepts an offer of place and receives the enrolment package. If the family then decides not to commence care after the place has been accepted, then the four week bond is non-refundable. The entire bond will be returned when the child leaves the Centre, providing there are no outstanding fees to be paid and 4 weeks' notice of termination of child care has been given in writing. The bond can be paid off in 4 equal installments over a 4 week period.

Fee Payment:

Fees must be paid using the Centre's direct debit system – Debit Success. Families can select the frequency of payments e.g. weekly, fortnightly or monthly. Changes to any card, account or the frequency of fee payments made need to be sent in writing. If the Centre processes a fee payment and the payment is rejected due to insufficient funds, the families will incur a processing fee. Fees must always be paid up to date for the previous week of care used.

Accounts in Arrears:

Children for whom fees are more than 4 weeks in arrears will be excluded from the Centre. For accounts that exceed 2 weeks in arrears, the Centre Director will be informed and a letter requesting payment will be sent. For accounts exceeding 3 weeks in arrears, the Management Committee will be informed and actions discussed.

The Centre understands families may experience financial difficulties and encourages them to discuss any payment issues with the Director. Any such payment arrangements can be made at the discretion of the Management Committee.

Late Fee:

A late fee will be charged for children not collected by 6.00pm which will be added to the fee account and must be paid the following week.

Child Care Subsidy:

The Federal Government provides Child Care Subsidy to families who are Australian residents/citizens (subject to a means test) to assist with the cost of their child care fees. The claim form for the Child Care Subsidy can be made through a family's MyGov account, if they have the services of Centrelink linked.

The Centre will charge full fees until it receives the subsidy amount directly from the Australian Government's Department of Human Services. It is also imperative that children are signed in and out on the iPad each day to record times of attendance. Each day a child attends ICC will be counted by the Government as a daily 10 hour session of care amount which is taken off the hours a family is eligible for the subsidy, even if the child has only attended for 2 hours that day.

Occasional Care:

Occasional care is only offered to children already enrolled at the Centre or who have been enrolled in the past – unless at the discretion of the Director. Fees for time in excess of the booked period are due and payable on collection of the child. **The Centre must be notified of cancellation of occasional care by 8am of the relevant day or the full fee will be charged.**

Minimum charge is half day session and only applicable when a half day session is available. Occasional care will not be made available while fees are outstanding.

Planned Absences:

All permanent booked spaces must be paid for. Inner City Care cannot waive fees or discount fees, according to the budget approval process. You must give ICC notice of your child's absence. The service requires full fees to be paid unless there are other circumstances, stated below:

- Bereavement - When an immediate family member/s have passed away, Inner City Care may discount your fees to 50%, providing their child's spot has been booked by another child and their documents to support your claim.

Illnesses:

In the case of absences of more than one week due to infectious disease (chicken pox, rubella, measles, etc) or hospitalization, full day fees for permanent bookings may be reduced retrospectively to 50% of the standard daily fee rate if all the following three conditions are met:

- A medical certificate must be produced covering the period of absence;
- There must be no vacancies at the Centre for the relevant day of absence, i.e. the budgeted amounts of child care places must have been filled; and
- We must have sold your place to someone wanting occasional care for the relevant day of absence.

Note that where all of the above conditions are satisfied on some but not all of the days of absence, the fee reduction will apply only to those days where all the conditions are satisfied.

Absence without Notice:

Should a child not attend the Centre for 2 – 4 weeks without notification, his/her enrolment may be discontinued – at the Director’s discretion.

Closure of the Centre:

The Centre is closed annually for a short period at Christmas. No fees are payable for this period.

Public Holidays:

Full fees are payable for Public Holidays occurring on children’s normal enrolment days. These days paid for are not transferable to other days.

Excursions and Entertainment:

A charge will be made to parents to cover the costs of occasional excursions and entertainments. This is usually only a small charge to cover transport costs, etc. and is not obligatory.

Termination of Enrolment:

Four weeks’ notice of termination of a permanent booking must be given in writing to the Director or Administrator, otherwise fees equivalent to 4 weeks must be paid in lieu of attendance.

Fee Increase:

The amount of the Daily Fee is determined by the management committee according to the service budgetary approval process. Any fee increases are discussed in great detail by our parent management committee, our auditors’ recommendations and comparisons to other services in the local area are always taken into account.

Families and carers will be given a minimum of a 4 week notice to an increase in the centre’s Service fee.

Waiting List Fee:

An administration fee will be charged for all waiting list applications – other than families with siblings currently at the Centre or Centre staff. A waiting list fee can be waived at the discretion of the Director if a family is able to take an immediate vacancy that is available and the 2 week bond payment is made immediately to secure the space.

AUTHORITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Centre Director is responsible for ensuring all ICC staff has training in this policy. All ICC staff is accountable for the implementation of this policy.

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulation 2011.

APPROVAL

Approved by Management Committee	
Meeting date:	
Policy Owner:	Inner City Care – Centre Director
Effective date:	
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