



## Fees Policy

### NQF

QA7	7.3.2	Administrative systems are established and maintained to ensure the effective operation of the service.
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### Regulations

QA7	168 (2)	Policies and Procedures.
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### Aim

The purpose of this policy is to provide the *Kindergarten Nominated Supervisor* and the Governing Council with instruction on the charging of kindergarten fees in a DECD Preschool.

# Implementation

## The Kindergarten Fee

- Consideration of the following is done when calculating the kindergarten fee:
  - It is a contribution towards the cost for an individual child undertaking the program and must not exceed the actual cost of items and services provided.
  - Items or services that are funded (e.g. through State or Commonwealth Government grants/programs) are **not** be included in the fee.
  - In determining the fee, the capacity of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to meet the cost of the fee must be considered.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed of the **total** fee payable at the time of enrolling, irrespective of the method of billing (e.g. term by term, etc).
- A breakdown of the fee structure is available for parents both via signs on the Parent Information Board and via the handbook provided to all families at the time of enrolment.
- An explanation as to how the fees were established is available upon request.
- Note: Non-payment of the kindergarten fee is **not** subject to common law debt collection processes.

## Other Charges

- Other charges may be levied upon parent(s)/guardian(s). These charges are above and beyond those referred to as the kindergarten fee. Consideration of the following is required with regard to other charges:
  - Other charges must be confined to specific activities and consumable items that are not included in the kindergarten fee.
  - Charges must be clearly identified as separate to the kindergarten fee.
  - Other charges are an optional contribution and the child will not receive the items, or participate in the activities, unless payment has been received.
  - If payment for another charge has been made, a child is entitled to attend and/or receive this item even though the kindergarten fee may not have been paid.
  - In planning specific activities and consumable items that are not included in the preschool fee, services should obtain from parent(s)/guardian(s) a written commitment to pay. Refer to attachment 10.1 – Commitment to Pay Letter (example).

## Charging the Kindergarten Fee

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with a tax invoice notification of the kindergarten fee with GST included for those items or services that require GST.

## Collection of the Kindergarten Fee

No child shall be excluded from the departmental funded preschool program operated at the kindergarten, because of the inability of a parent to contribute financially to the kindergarten fee.

## Payment of the Kindergarten Fee

Payment of the kindergarten fee can be made by electronically using the QKR app on a smart phone. This is our preferred method of payment. If this option is not available, payment can be made via cash, cheque or direct debit, and the *Nominated Supervisor* has the following options available for this process:

- **Allow Payment by Instalments**

- The kindergarten will need to ensure that pay-by-instalment arrangements for fees are in place and are offered to all parent(s)/guardian(s) as a matter of course.
- The specific instalment arrangements must be in writing, and must be negotiated between the individual parent(s)/guardian(s) and the *Director*. These arrangements must take into consideration the specific circumstances of the family's financial hardship.
- Instalment conditions, for example the final payment date, cannot be changed during the course of the year without the agreement of the individual parent(s)/guardian(s).

- **Waive or Reduce the Fee**

- Where families experience financial hardship, the *Nominated Supervisor* can consider waiving or reducing the kindergarten fee.
- The waiving or reduction of the kindergarten fee is to be dealt with confidentially between the family, the *Nominated Supervisor* and the *Treasurer*.
- In exceptional circumstances the *Nominated Supervisor* may accept a parent's/guardian's offer to perform tasks as an '*in-kind*' contribution towards the kindergarten fee. Should this occur, care must be taken to ensure that the kindergarten is not exposed to any undue risk or financial hardship.

- **Refund the Fee**

- The refunding of a fee can occur where the family experiences financial hardship after the payment of the fee.
- The refund is to be dealt with confidentially.

- **Late Fees**

- Late fees cannot be charged for payments not made when requested by the kindergarten.

## Overdue Fees

Any family who is one or more weeks late with their fees will receive a ***Friendly Fee Reminder***. Families can make appointments to speak with the *Nominated Supervisor* regarding payments.

## Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Adapted from DECD Preschool Fees Policy, 2012.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis by the kindergarten staff and the Governing Council.