

Children’s Services Fee Policy

Policy Statement

Kariong Neighbourhood Centre is a not for profit organisation and fees are required to be paid for all children enrolled in our services. Fees are set while taking into consideration costs associated with operational expenses, including employing professionally trained staff and qualified teaching staff and the resources needed to provide quality programs for children.

We are committed to providing all families the opportunity to enrol their children at our service, with a clear, transparent, fair and inclusive fee structure

Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service.

Scope

Applies to	KNC Board and all staff
Specific responsibility	OOSH Nominated Supervisor

Principles to Inform Policy

We are committed to providing all families the opportunity to enrol their children. We aim for our fees structure to be fair and we accommodate payment plans for families requiring greater flexibility.

We value our families and ensure there is two-way communication with them at all times. We ensure they are familiar with our fees at enrolment and we provide at least two weeks’ notice of any changes to the fee structure.

We prioritise good governance and quality management. Our fees structure is clear, transparent, and our systems and practices ensure that payments are processed correctly and receipts and statements are provided to families.

Procedure

The service’s abridged *Fee Policy* is given to parents on enrolment via the Parent Handbook, relevant to the program the child is enrolling into, i.e. Out of School Hours Care; Little Big School; Active Playgroup.

The fee policy is also available to all families on the service’s website at www.kariongoosh.org.au

1. Fees

Fees are set by the KNC Board and are subject to review with advance notice given of any changes

Setting of fees

Fees are set on an annual basis by the Kariong Centre Board and is based on the annual budget and undertaken in line with the CCS and CPI rates as set by the government. The budget is devised for the centre based on current funding available and the costs of providing a quality service. We acknowledge that there are times, due to rising costs or change in funding, that fees need to be raised. When this is the case we will advise you in writing prior to any increase taking effect.

Enrolment Fee

An enrolment fee of \$50 per child is required when lodging an initial enrolment for Out of School Hours Care.

An enrolment fee of \$12 per year is required for Little Big School.

These fees are non-refundable and are payable at time of enrolment.

Resource Levy

A resource levy of \$20 per family is required at the beginning of each financial year for families utilising Out of School Hours Care and/or Vacation Care. This fee is non-refundable and is added to your account during July each year.

Fee Structure

As At 3rd July 2023

Before School Care Permanent	\$21.50
After School Care Permanent	\$28.50
Before School Care Casual	\$22.50
After School Care Casual	\$29.50
Vacation Care Inhouse/IncurSION	\$70.00
Vacation Care Excursion	\$80.00
Little Big School	\$13.50
Active Playgroup	\$5.00
Playgroup additional child	\$1.00

Overdue Fees

If fees are overdue more than two weeks the Nominated Supervisor will request immediate payment to ensure the child's enrolment is not cancelled. If there are outstanding fees by more than two weeks after receiving invoice parents will receive an overdue notice. Parents who would like an alternate pay should advise the Nominated Supervisor.

Parents should advise the Nominated Supervisor at the earliest possible opportunity if they are experiencing difficulty in paying fees.

Late Pickup Fees

Children must be collected no later than the advertised closing time.

For Out of School Hours Care and Vacation Care this is 6:30 am – 6:30pm. An immediate late fee of \$25.00 for every 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged.

This charge is not eligible for CCS

Other Charges:

If you fail to notify the service prior to 2:00pm of your child's non-attendance at After School Care a fee of \$7.50 per child will be added to your account.

If your child needs to be provided with a water bottle during vacation care excursions a fee of \$6.00 will be applied to your account to cover the cost of purchasing water for your child.

Vacation Care Cancellation Fee of 25% of daily fee is charged if you cancel your vacation care booking.

Inhouse day cancellation fee of \$17.50

Excursion day cancellation fee of \$20.00

These charges are not eligible for CCS

Absences

Fees are payable should the child/ren not attend the Centre due to sickness, family holiday or any other reason for non-attendance.

Casual Bookings

Vacancies permitting, extra sessions may be available to families on a casual basis, charged in addition to your permanent booking. Please advise of any casual care requirements by speaking to a supervisor or emailing info@kariongoosh.org.au.

The service does not exchange days of care and does not arrange make up days during term time.

Withdrawal or Change of Enrolment

Enrolments for Before and After School Care are allocated on a yearly basis. If you wish to withdraw your child, or make changes to their permanent enrolments, you must give 2 weeks' notice in writing.

Holidays and Public Holidays

Fees apply for days your child is permanently booked into the service. This includes days when children are away on holidays and days when the children are away due to ill health.

Family holidays will be charged at ½ rates provided a minimum of 2 weeks' notice is given. This will only apply for a maximum of 3 weeks holiday per year.

Fees are still payable for public holidays where they fall during the school term and your child is permanently booked on that day.

Vacation Care

Vacation care is classed as casual care and has its own fee structure. Vacation care needs to be booked in advance for each vacation care period. Permanent term bookings do not guarantee your child is enrolled to attend vacation care.

At the time of booking Vacation Care a 25% deposit will be required to be paid. The balance will then be subject to normal fee collection procedures.

2. Invoices and Statements

Enrolments, fees, statements and invoices are managed through our Child Care Management Software.

Invoices are issued to families every week via email. Invoices are accurate at the time of issue.

Fees are to be paid in advance based on the payment frequency you require and kept in advance. For example, if you pay weekly, your fees are to be a week in advance, fortnightly, a fortnight in advance and monthly, a month in advance. Payments are to be made using the methods outlined below. Our invoices are emailed to families on a Friday, and will show the previous week's fees and payments, the current weeks fees and charges and the next week's fees and charges. They will also show the **estimate** of the CCS that may reduce your fee payment. Please note this is an **ESTIMATE** only and may change.

A statement of entitlement will be issued fortnightly for the previous fortnight. Invoices and statements can also be accessed via your Hubworks account.

3. Payment Method

Our preferred method of payment:

Direct Debit

We can debit your nominated account or credit card (Visa or Mastercard) for any fees on the date and frequency you require. This is processed through our Child Care Management Software. Please ensure the banking details are completed on your enrolment form, or complete your details via the Direct Debit form available from the office.

iPay Transaction Fees:

Bank Account	Per Transaction	\$0.75
Visa/Mastercard	Calculated on transaction value	1.56% + \$0.75
Amex	Calculated on transaction value	1.56% + \$0.75
Failed Transaction	Per failed or returned transaction attempt	\$2.75
Claim/Chargeback	Only charged when payment is reversed	\$50.00
Refund	Per refund (credit/debit card only)	\$2.75

HUBHELLO CHILDCARE (for Credit Card or Debit Card debits) or HUBHELLO CCARE (for bank account {BSB & Account No. Listed} debits) will appear as the transaction reference on customer account statements.

EFTPOS

We have EFTPOS facilities available at the centre and payments can be made at any time the service is open.

Fees for Little Big School and Active Playgroup can be made via EFTPOS on arrival of each session.

Please talk to staff if you require alternative payment options.

4. Government Assistance

At Present the Australian Government aids families with the cost of child care through the Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

It is the responsibility of families to ensure that their details are correct and up to date with the Family Assistance Office to be able to access any of the assistance options. Families are liable to pay full fees in the event that Government Assistance is not available.

Gap fees charged to families are determined by the information that you provide to the family assistance office. Queries with changes to CCS entitlements are to be directed to the Family Assistance Office.

Note: If you are awaiting on CCS eligibility you will be required to pay full fees until eligibility is granted.

Absences

Child Care Subsidy is payable for up to 42 absence days for a child in a financial year for sessions of care a child is enrolled in and did not attend. Absences beyond the 42 allowable will not receive Child Care Subsidy and full fees will apply for subsequent absences.

In special circumstances, you may get CCS for more than 42 absence days. You may need to provide supporting documentation.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Approved Provider will:

- ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *National Regulations* are met
- set fees for children to enrol at the service and ensure policies and procedures are in place relating to the fee schedule and payment options
- take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the **Fee Policy** and **procedures**
- ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and are available for inspection
- notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy and procedures if the changes will:
 - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - significantly impact the service's education and care of children or
 - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to payment of fees
- implement procedures for the payment of service fees
- communicate with families at enrolment about fees, including:
 - the amounts charged
 - payment periods and methods
 - how the Child Care Subsidy or other government subsidy will be applied
 - notice periods
 - how they can access copies of statements and receipts
 - financial hardship considerations and payment plans
- ensure families receive receipts for fees paid
- ongoing communication with families about their account
- monitor the application of the Child Care Subsidy or other government subsidy.

Families will:

- ensure they understand the service's fee requirements and expectations at enrolment and any ongoing changes
- meet the fee requirements
- raise any fee-related questions with the person responsible for fee collection at the service

Related Policies

- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
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Relevant Laws and Provisions

Education and Care Services National Law (2010) and Regulations (2011)

Regulation 111	Administrative space
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

Policy Controls

Effective Date	Review Date	Lead by	People Consulted	Review Approved
6 th January 2020	June 2023	Jacqui Pearson: OOSH Nominated Supervisor	Management and workers, Management Committee, Finance and Risk Committee, Governance Committee	Gail Ransley: Chair of Governance Sub Committee 6 th January 2020
3 rd July 2023	June 2024	Jacqui Pearson: OOSH Nominated Supervisor	KNC Board Management and Staff	16 th May 2023