# Payment of Fees Policy

## (Suburban Centres)

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| Policy first issued | 25th July 2016 |
| Current review date | 9th September 2024 |
| Personnel responsible | Childcare Operations |

NQS 7 Leadership and Service Management

# NQS

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| QA 7 | 7.1.2 | Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service. |

# Aim

For parents to fully understand Little Flyers Learning Centres payment procedures and requirements, and to pay their child care fees on time.

# Related Policies

Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

# Who is affected by this policy?

Parents
Management

# Implementation

**Payment of fees:**

The enrolling parent / guardian (1 and 2) recorded on page two of the Enrolment Form accept full financial responsibility for the payment of all fees and charges incurred as a result of their child's enrolment at the Centre.

- Parents / guardians will be required to pay a **Deposit** which is a payment of two week's fees. This fee is applied to your account.
  **Note:** If a child's booking is cancelled prior to starting at the Centre the **Deposit** becomes non-refundable.
- Fees are generated a minimum of two weeks in advance and account statements are emailed to the parents / guardians preferred email address on a weekly basis.
- A direct debit service (DebitSuccess) is offered and is the preferred method of fee payment. A choice of savings, cheque or credit card account can be nominated for child care fees to be debited fortnightly or monthly to ensure fees remain in advance, except in exceptional financial circumstances where a family require to pay weekly by EFT. For example:

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| Fortnightly Payments | Parents / Guardians will be required to pay one fortnight in advance at all times. |
| Monthly Payments | Parents / Guardians will be required to pay one month in advance at all times. |

- Public holidays, leave of absence taken outside of the Centre's closure period if applicable and absences due to illness, public holidays and local emergencies are charged as per your regular booking. Make up and swapping of days is not permitted. Families eligible for CCS fee reduction are entitled to 42 sessions of absence in each year without clarification. Families with over 42 sessions of absence are encouraged to provide a doctor's certificate for each subsequent absence. Should the absences exceed the allowable limit without certification, full fees will be charged for that absence. Bookings for extra days outside a permanent booking will be charged at the current daily rate. Should a request be cancelled within 24 hours of the booking date a fee will still be charged for the booking. An 'Extra day Request' form needs to be completed before an extra day is approved.

- A **Late Fee** of $60.00 per 15 minute intervals or part thereof will be charged directly to an account if a child is not collected before the Centre's closing time. Late collection fees do not attract any CCS fee reduction.
- A **Dishonour Fee** of $30.00 will be charged directly on every occasion when a scheduled direct debit payment is declined. Please note, this is a charge by the Centre, DebitSuccess will levy their own dishonour fee.
- Please note, our fees are scheduled to change annually. We will notify families in writing at least 14 days before we change our fees or the way in which we collect them.
- Fees are also payable during any period when the Centre closes in response to a local emergency eg fire, flood. Potential emergencies which may affect our Centre are considered in our Centre risk assessment for potential emergencies and covered in our emergency response procedures. (Refer to our Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy.

# Government Funding (Child Care Subsidy)

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidised care to which families are entitled.
Combined family income is used to determine the subsidy percentage. Income thresholds change each financial year. Current thresholds are available from the Department of Human Services website. See servicesaustralia.gov.au/. See 'Activity Level and Subsidised Care'.

If your child does not attend our service on their first or last booked day/s, CCS will not be applied for those day/s and you will be required to pay full fees.
Please note that grievances relating to child care funding entitlements, for example, Child Care Subsidy, should be made to Centrelink through the Federal Government's 'Services Australia.' Complaints may be made online.

| ***Hours of activity per fortnight*** | ***Maximum number of hours of subsidy per fortnight*** |
|---|---|
| Less than 8 hours | 0 hours above $83,280 / 24 hours below $83,280 |
| 8 hours to 16 hours | 36 hours |
| More than 16 hours to 48 hours | 72 hours |
| More than 48 hours | 100 hours |

A broad range of activities meet the activity test requirements, including paid work, self-employment, unpaid work in a family business, active job hunting, volunteering or studying. You can also include reasonable travel time to and from a place of activity. In two parent families, both parents must meet the activity test, and subsidy hours are calculated on the lower number where parents have different levels of activity.

**There are exemptions for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity test requirements.**
Please contact Centrelink through the Federal Government's 'Services Australia'.
The Additional Child Care Subsidy may be available to help support:

- Families needing help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
- Grandparents on income support who are primary child-carers
- Families in temporary financial hardship
- Families moving to work from income support

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a Child Care Subsidy claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the Centre on a families' behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our Centre enters families' enrolment information online, and families confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees. Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is

absent, for example, due to illness, public holidays or family holidays. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlined in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

# Cessation of Care

Should a parent / guardian wish to end their child's booking at the Centre or should management make the decision to terminate a child's place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending / terminating party. If this does not occur, 2 weeks fees will be billed and will be payable by parents / guardians. A 'Cessation of Care' form is required to be completed.

Families who elect not to return to the Centre without prior notification will be liable for payment of full fees generated for the 2 weeks of non-notifications as well as any period of non-attendance following the last session of attendance. If a child does not return, parents / guardians will be liable for full fees at Cessation of Care and this will be applied to parent / guardian accounts.

The nominated supervisor may also terminate a child's enrolment without providing 2 weeks notice, if they believe the child's behaviour poses an unacceptable risk to the welfare and safety of other children and educators.

**Two weeks written notice for:**

- Change to permanent booked days.
- Ceasing permanent booking / leaving the Centre.

# Debtors

- Fees are to be paid a minimum of two weeks in advance.
- If your account is 3 weeks and / or $500.00 in arrears a child's position at our Centre will be suspended. If the outstanding debt has not been paid within 14 days of the formal request for payment and suspension date the position at the Centre will be lost.
- Families experiencing financial difficulties are encouraged to discuss this with the Centre Director.

# NQS

**Bryant, L (2009).** ***Managing a Child Care Service: A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers.*** **Sydney: Community Child Care Co-operative**
**Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011**
**Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care) Act 2009**

## Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

**Last reviewed: 10.09.2024**
**Date for next review: September 2025**