

FEES POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 7

Ashwood Children's Centre's Commitment to Child Safety

All children who come to Ashwood Children's Centre have a right to feel and be safe. The physical, emotional and socio-cultural welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to all forms of child abuse and/or harm to children. We, being the educators, members of the Committee of Management, and community of Ashwood Children's Centre, aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children, including indigenous children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and children living with a disability, feel safe and have fun.

PURPOSE

This policy will provide clear guidelines for:

- the setting, payment and collection of fees
- ensuring the viability of Ashwood Children's Centre, by setting appropriate fees and charges
- the equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided by Ashwood Children's Centre

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Ashwood Children's Centre is committed to:

- providing responsible financial management of the service, including establishing fees that will result in a financially viable service, while keeping user fees at the lowest possible level
- providing a fair and manageable system for dealing with non-payment and/or inability to pay fees/outstanding debts
- ensuring there are no financial barriers for families wishing to access an early childhood program for their child/children
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians
- advising users of the service about program funding, including government support and fees to be paid by parents/guardians
- providing equitable access for families eligible for subsidised positions with the service

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, persons in day to day charge of the service, educators and parents/guardians with an enrolled child, or who wish to enroll a child, at Ashwood Children's Centre.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Ashwood Children's Centre offers two types of attendances for the education and care programs implemented within the service. Long day care attendances are offered for children aged three months to four years of age, whilst long day Kindergarten and sessional Kindergarten are offered for children attending the funded four year old Kindergarten program, in the year prior to commencing primary school. Long day care/Kindergarten attendance and sessional Kindergarten attendance attract different fee schedules as outlined below.

The Centre is registered for families to receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) as a fee reduction against their account with Ashwood Children's Centre. Families are required to estimate their annual income and test their fortnightly activity level in order to determine the subsidy percentage and number of hours they are eligible to receive CCS. The payment is made by the Australian Federal Government directly to Ashwood Children's Centre, and is recorded as a fee reduction amount on the families invoice; eligible hours are within a fortnightly period, meaning that some families may experience changing fee reduction amounts from the first to the second week of the fortnight.

Parents are required to provide estimates of their annual income and activity levels via their MyGov account, with the majority of the application process completed online and through the MyGov app. Further assistance and information about CCS and eligibility criteria can be found through the Australian Government's [Department of Human Services](#) (DHS) website.

Parents need to keep in mind that all the information that is received at Ashwood Children's Centre relating to their eligibility for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is provided either by themselves or by the Federal Government's Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) based on information parents have reported to the government through their MyGov accounts.

Further information about applying for CCS is available online at:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

The State Department of Education and Training (DET) provide per capita funding as a contribution towards the costs of running, staffing and managing the funded four-year-old kindergarten program. Income from other sources, primarily fees, is required to meet all the additional costs incurred by the service in the delivery of the children's program. In addition, the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (refer to *Definitions*) enables eligible families to attend the four-year-old kindergarten program at minimal or no cost.

DET also funds eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs as outlined in the *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Sources*).

DET requires that funded services have a comprehensive written fees policy in place, and the content of this policy must be communicated to families. The policy must include a written statement about the fees to be charged, as required under Regulation 168(2)(n), and the payment process. All families must be informed of applicable term and annual fees at the time of enrolment.

Services must also advise eligible families of the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy arrangements. The fees charged must comply with the *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Definitions*) and be responsive

to the local community and the viability of the service. The *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Sources*) outlines the criteria to be covered in the Fees policy.

Whilst fees are usually reviewed at the conclusion of the Centre's financial year (September 30th), the Committee of Management reserves the right to review the fees charged as required, and to adjust accordingly giving the families' a minimum of four (4) weeks written notice prior to changing the fee amount charged. Given the Centre's practice of fees paid in advance, parents need to note that the week prior to the new fee date, their parent invoice will include the new fee amounts for their child's booked day/s of attendance.

The payment of fees for long day care, long day Kindergarten and sessional Kindergarten is required by direct debit transaction, and the Centre maintains a strict parent accounts kept in credit policy for all families in attendance at Ashwood Children's Centre. Upon accepting a position and in completing the enrolment process, all families will be required to complete a direct debit authorisation form, to be used to generate fee payments on a weekly (long day care | long day Kindergarten positions) or term (sessional Kindergarten) basis.

Parents will be advised when additional payments will be charged to their accounts – electronically via email and via their parent invoice – and will generally receive a two-week period of notice that the charge will be debited with their fee transaction. Exceptions to this will be a charge for the late collection of a child, late payment of an account, or the purchase of an ACC hat | clothing | replacement water bottle or kaboodle bag.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006* (Vic), as amended 2011
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic), as amended 2012
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* (Vic)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
 - Standard 6.1: Supportive relationships with families – Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role
 - Element 6.1.1: Engagement with the service – Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
 - Element 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
- Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership
 - Standard 7.1: Governance – Governance supports the operation of a quality service

- Element 7.1.2: Management systems – Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management operation of a quality service

4. DEFINITIONS

Child Care Subsidy (CCS): Introduced in July 2018, the CCS is the Commonwealth Government fee reduction subsidy provided to families to assist with the cost of early childhood education and care. Families are required to estimate their annual income and activity to determine fee reduction percentage eligibility, along with the number of hours of attendance they can expect to receive the subsidy for within a fortnight period. CCS is paid directly to services and is provided to families as a fee reduction on their account. CCS replaces both Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR)

Early Start Kindergarten: A funding program that enables three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection to attend a kindergarten program that is planned and delivered by an early childhood teacher for a specific number of hours.

Enrolment fee: All families with children booked to attend a position at Ashwood Children’s Centre for the **first time** are charged a \$35.00 enrolment fee. This payment covers administrative costs associated with the processing of a child’s enrolment application for a place in the service. The enrolment fee is not charged to families when their child attended Ashwood Children’s Centre in the previous year.

Excursion/service event charge: The Committee of Management of Ashwood Children’s Centre has made the decision over many years to subsidise excursions, incursions and service events offered throughout each of the children’s programs. The reasoning behind this decision is to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in excursions, incursions and service events offered within the Centre.

In the Kindergarten program, parents are asked to pay a small screening fee for their child’s involvement in screening tests throughout the year (includes hearing, vision, occupational therapy and podiatry), along with a contribution to an excursion to the Casey Safety Village where children have the opportunity to engage with road and pedestrian safety and fire safety principles and practices. If payment of these charges presents a barrier to your child’s involvement, please speak with Centre Management.

Fees: A charge for a place within a program at the service. The current fee schedule for Ashwood Children’s Centre is included as an attachment to this policy document.

Health Care Card: A Commonwealth Government entitlement providing concessions for low-income earners and other eligible people. The HCC as a proof of concession is only applicable to enrolment in a sessional Kindergarten position.

Kindergarten fee deposit / Long day fee deposit: A charge to secure a place that has been offered in a program at the service. The kindergarten fee deposit is applied to the charge of your child’s term one fees, whilst the long day fee deposit is the equivalent of your child’s first week of booked long day attendance **without** any CCS fee reduction applied. The long day fee deposit will be applied to your parent account against the fees charged for the days of booked care in the coming new year (it

is likely with a family's CCS fee reduction eligibility that this deposit will push the parent account into a credit balance for some part of January in the new year).

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS): A state government subsidy **paid directly to the funded service** to enable eligible families to attend a funded kindergarten program or funded three-year-old place at no cost (or minimal cost) to promote participation. Ashwood Children's Centre receives this funding from the State DET for each child enrolled for their **first attempt** in a four-year-old Kindergarten program.

Kindergarten Funding Guide: Provides operational guidelines for services administering the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy.

Late account charge: Families will be charged \$5.00 if their direct debit payment is rejected twice within the same fee payment week, or if their account is in arrears by two or more weeks. Situations of overdue accounts | rejected fee payments will be advised to the Committee of Management for consideration.

Late collection charge: Families will be charged \$5.00 per 5 minutes (or part thereof) if they sign out and collect their child after 6:00pm (long day care and long day Kindergarten positions) or 4:00pm (for sessional Kindergarten positions during school terms). The sign out time, and lateness thereof, will be determined by the time shown on the electronic sign-in software, accessed via iPad at the entrances to the Centre.

Voluntary parent / guardian contribution: A voluntary payment for items not directly related to the provision of the children's program. Attendance at the service is not conditional on this payment. At present, Ashwood Children's Centre charges a voluntary maintenance levy to all families currently attending the Centre, with the exception of families who are in receipt of a Commonwealth Government Concession Card. The voluntary maintenance levy can be managed by families in three ways (once it has been charged to parent accounts):

1. Families can attend two (2) working bees throughout the year, then request in writing (email is fine) to have the levy reversed from their account;
2. Families can request in writing (email is fine) to have the levy reversed from their account; or
3. Families can pay the levy with their child's weekly fees (for this option you do not need to do anything, payment of the voluntary maintenance levy will occur two weeks after it has been charged to your account).

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- [Kindergarten Funding Guide](#)
- The constitution of Ashwood Children's Centre

Service policies

- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*

- *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider (Committee of Management of Ashwood Children’s Centre) is responsible for:

- reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements
- developing a fee policy that balances the parent’s/guardian’s capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the Nominated Supervisor and educators, and for sessional Kindergarten fees in line with the requirements of DET’s *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Sources*)
- ensuring that this policy is based on the principles of the *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Definitions*)
- considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at Ashwood Children's Centre and removing those barriers wherever possible
- reviewing the number of families experiencing financial hardship and the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered
- considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families
- clearly communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally-sensitive way, and in the family’s first language where possible
- providing all parents/guardians with a copy of the document containing fee information for families (refer to Attachment 1)
- providing all parents/guardians with a statement of fees and charges (refer to schedule in Attachment 2) upon enrolment of their child, and ensure that the *Fees Policy* is readily accessible at the service (Regulation 171)
- complying with the service’s *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees
- notifying parents/guardians within 28 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected (Regulation 172(2))
- ensuring a notice outlining fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to Ashwood Children's Centre.

The Nominated Supervisor (Centre Manager) is responsible for:

- assisting the Approved Provider in developing this policy, and ensuring that this policy is based on the principles of the *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Definitions*)

- implementing and reviewing this policy, in consultation with parents/guardians, the Approved Provider and educators, and in line with the requirements of DET's *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Sources*)
- considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at Ashwood Children's Centre and removing those barriers wherever possible
- considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families
- communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally-sensitive way and in the family's first language where possible
- providing all parents/guardians with a copy of the document containing fee information for families (refer to Attachment 1)
- providing all parents/guardians with a statement of fees and charges (refer to schedule in Attachment 2) upon enrolment of their child, and ensure that the *Fees Policy* is readily accessible at the service (Regulation 171)
- collecting and receipting all fees
- collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documents regarding those with entitlement to concessions, where applicable
- complying with the service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees
- notifying parents/guardians within 28 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected (Regulation 172(2))
- ensuring a notice outlining fees charged by the service is displayed prominently in the main entrance to Ashwood Children's Centre.

Persons in day to day charge of the service, educators and staff members are responsible for:

- informing the Nominated Supervisor and/or Approved Provider of any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service
- referring parents'/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the Nominated Supervisor and/or Approved Provider
- assisting the Nominated Supervisor and/or Approved Provider, as required, in sighting supporting documentation for access to the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading the Ashwood Children's Centre Fee information for families (refer to Attachment 1) and the Schedule of Fees and Charges (refer to Attachment 2[and 3])
- correctly completing the direct debit authorisation form when enrolling their child into a position at Ashwood Children's Centre
- providing correct CRN details for their child and themselves in order to access CCS as a fee reduction against the fees charged
- completing the required confirmation of their child's enrolment through both their MyGov account and their Hubworks! Account (accounts software used by Ashwood Children's Centre)
- notifying the Nominated Supervisor if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees

- providing the required documentation to enable the service to claim the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for eligible families (refer to Attachment 1 – Fee information for families).

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to affordability, flexibility of payment options and procedures for the collection of fees
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- monitor the number of families/children excluded from the service because of their inability to pay fees
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures (Regulation 172(2)).

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Fee information for families
- Attachment 2: Statement of Fees and Charges – Fee schedule – Ashwood Children's Centre
- Attachment 3: Understanding your Child Care Subsidy Assessment Notice

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Ashwood Children's Centre in November 2019.

REVIEW DATE: NOVEMBER 2020

ATTACHMENT 1

Fee information for families

Ashwood Children's Centre 2020

1. Why sessional Kindergarten fees are necessary

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides per capita funding as a contribution toward the costs of providing a four-year-old kindergarten program. Services meet the balance of costs through charging fees and fundraising activities.

DET provides a Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see below) that enables children from eligible families to attend a four-year-old kindergarten program free of charge, or at a minimal cost.

DET also provides funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs.

Ashwood Children's Centre provides a range of support options to parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with payment of fees (see below).

2. How fees are set

As part of the budget development process, the Committee of Management of Ashwood Children's Centre sets fees each year for the programs of the service, taking into consideration:

- the financial viability of the service
- the level of government funding provided for the program, including the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- the availability of other income sources, such as grants
- the fees charged by similar services in the area
- the capacity of parents/guardians to pay fees
- reasonable expenditure in meeting agreed program quality and standards
- requirements of [Kindergarten Funding Guide](#)

Whilst fees are usually reviewed at the conclusion of the Centre's financial year (September 30th), the Committee of Management reserves the right to review the fees charged as required, and to adjust accordingly giving the families' at least four (4) weeks written notice prior to changing the fee amount charged.

3. Other charges

Other charges levied by Ashwood Children's Centre are included on the Schedule of Fees. These include:

- **Kindergarten fee deposit:** This payment secures a child's place at the service and is payable on acceptance of enrolment. The deposit is retained as part payment on term one fees. Families eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see below) are required to pay a reduced deposit of \$5.00. Families experiencing hardship should also discuss any difficulties with the service.
- **Excursion/service event charge:** This additional charge is required to cover the cost of **specific excursions** that Ashwood Children's Centre believes are of immense importance for children's involvement, learning and/or growth and development. Such specific excursions/events include

(but are not limited to) children's vision, hearing, occupational therapy and podiatry screening, Kindergarten visit to the Casey Safety Village. Whenever a fee is charged for incursions / excursions Ashwood Children's Centre educators will provide families with detailed information about the relevance of the event, and options for families' and children's involvement in the event. At all times, Ashwood Children's Centre will subsidise children's involvement, with families charged a nominal amount for their child's participation (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*).

- **Voluntary maintenance levy:** The participation of parents/guardians is encouraged by the service and can help to keep costs more affordable. However not all families are able to assist at the service. A refundable levy system has been introduced by the service and replaces voluntary labour with paid labour. Payment will be refunded upon written request to parents/guardians with or without participation in specified activities such as working bees, maintenance and gardening etc. Eligible concession card holders will not be charged this levy. The levy is not intended to be a barrier to participation and families experiencing difficulties should discuss this with the Centre.
- **Late collection charge:** The Committee of Management of Ashwood Children's Centre has implemented a late collection charge when parents/guardians are late in collecting a child from the service. This charge is set out on the Centre's Schedule of Fees and will be charged to parent's accounts a week after the late collection of their child.

4. Fundraising

Not all service costs are covered by DET per capita funding and the fees charged. Fundraising is undertaken to meet the balance and/or pay for additional items for the service. While participation in fundraising is voluntary, the support of every family is encouraged. Fundraising activities are also an opportunity for families and communities to come together.

5. Subsidies

5.1 Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (four-year-old programs only)

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is provided by DET **to the service** and enables eligible children to attend kindergarten free of charge or at minimal cost. Eligibility conditions change from time-to-time – contact the service for further information.

Families who may be eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (four-year-old programs only) include those who are:

- Health Care Card holders
- Pensioner Concession Card holders
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card holders
- Temporary Protection/Humanitarian Visas 447, 451, 785 or 786
- Asylum seekers on Bridging Visas A–F
- Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visa 200–217
- Resolution of Status (RoS) visa, Class CD, subclass 851
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children

- triplets or quadruplets attending a funded kindergarten program in the same year.

Supporting documentation must be sighted by the service on acceptance of a place or on commencement in the program. Families are eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for the full term in which their concession is valid. Contact the service for further information.

5.2 Early Start Kindergarten fee subsidy

Three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children known to Child Protection are eligible to attend a funded early childhood program that is planned and delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher free of charge. The service receives funding for children who meet the eligibility criteria. Contact the service for further information.

5.3 Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is an Australian Government payment that can assist eligible families with the [costs of childcare](#) at an approved or registered care provider. Ashwood Children's Centre is an approved care provider with the Family Assistance Office (FAO). Families will need to estimate their annual income and provide evidence of their fortnightly activity to test their eligibility for CCS, which will then be applied as a fee reduction to their account (as payment to the service their child is attending)

In accordance with the [CCS rules](#), a child who does not physically attend on their first booked day of attendance and/or their last booked day of attendance will be charged full fees without access to any eligible CCS.

Ashwood Children's Centre does not offer discounted fees for children absent from the Centre on holidays, as families are paying to maintain the booked days of attendance for their child when they return. [CCS rules](#) also apply to families travelling on extended holidays (6 weeks or longer) outside Australia. Once a child has been absent for 6 weeks or longer overseas, families will receive notification from the FAO that their CCB / CCR eligibility has been cancelled. If families return within 13 weeks of their departure date from Australia, the CCS eligibility will be reinstated automatically. If families return 13 weeks or longer after their departure date from Australia, a new claim for CCS will need to be made.

If a child is absent for a period of longer than eight (8) weeks from their booked days of care, cessation of care will occur for the child within the Child Care Subsidy Scheme (CCSS). This means that the child's position will still be available however it will not be eligible for CCS fee reduction until the family returns to the service and confirms the enrolment notice for their child's position. Further information about periods of absence and cessation of care can be found [here](#).

6. Payment of fees

All families enrolling children into a position at Ashwood Children's Centre are required to complete a direct debit authorization form, which will be used to generate fee transactions on a weekly basis (this will usually occur on a Tuesday). Parent invoices will be sent electronically via the Hubworks! software program prior to the fee transaction occurring. Parents need to be aware that the fee amount will be for the next week of booked attendance for their child, and that CCS fee reduction

information is received from the federal government, based on information advised by parents themselves.

For sessional Kindergarten positions, the first term's fees must be received in full prior to the end of the previous year of the child commencing in the program. Subsequent term fees will be invoiced to families two weeks prior to the end of the previous term, with direct debit transactions generated on the Tuesday of the final week of term. (i.e., term 2 fees will be charged two weeks prior to the end of term 1).

If required, parents may choose to transfer their child's booked sessional Kindergarten position to a long day Kindergarten position on the same days. Once this transfer has occurred it cannot be reversed, and the position remains a long day Kindergarten position for the remainder of the child's 4 year old Kindergarten year. Any sessional fees paid for the current term will not be refunded unless notice to transfer booked attendance is received PRIOR to the term commencing. Long day Kindergarten positions are charged at the current daily fee and attract any CCS fee reduction families may be eligible for.

Parents/guardians experiencing difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the Nominated Supervisor to arrange a suitable alternative payment plan. The *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* of the service will be complied with at all times in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances.

7. Rejected or returned fee payments

If a direct debit parent payment is returned due to unavailable funds, the following process will be followed:

- As soon as the first direct debit payment has been advised as 'returned', a second payment will be processed, and an email will be sent to the parents advising that this has been done.
- If this second payment is returned, parents will be notified that they are required to immediately make a fee payment into the Centre's designated fees account and send proof of payment from their bank to cm@ashwoodchildrenscentre.org

Failure to make payment as required, or persistent returned or rejected direct debit payments will be referred to the Committee of Management. Similarly, parent accounts with an outstanding balance amounting to two or more weeks of fees will be referred to the Committee of Management discuss your child's continued enrolment. Such decisions may include: contacting the service within a specific time frame and signing onto a developed payment plan, consideration of financial assistance and/or the requirement to apply for [Temporary Financial Assistance through CCS](#), withdrawal of the child's position and/or the debt placed with a debt collecting service. Communication will be delivered via electronic and hard copy letter, and verbally via telephone.

If you are experiencing difficulties paying your child's fees, please contact the office – Centre Management is always willing to work with parents to ensure that education and care affordability is maintained for families, and that families are supported during difficult times.

If a decision is made to withdraw the child's place at the service, the parents/guardians will be provided with 14 days' notice in writing, via electronic and hard copy correspondence.

8. Refund of fees

If a family becomes eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy during a term, a full refund of the applicable term fees (and fee deposit, where appropriate) will be provided. Fees may still apply for programs offering more than the required minimum hours per week.

In any other case, fees are non-refundable (exceptional circumstances may apply – these are at the discretion of the Committee of Management of Ashwood Children’s Centre). There will be no refund of fees in the following circumstances:

- a child’s short-term illness
- family holiday during operational times
- closure of the service due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances.

Fees for long day care/long day Kindergarten are not charged for the following situations:

- gazetted public holidays
- Centre closure across the Christmas/New Year period
- Centre closure for educator training day/s, clean-up day and set up day.

At the completion of a child’s enrolment at the Centre, and in the event of a credit balance remaining on a parents’ account, a refund will be issued at the end of January the year after a child’s enrolment has ceased. Refunds will be issued either via cheque, or if bank details are provided to admin@ashwoodchildrenscentre.org via electronic transfer.

9. Support services

Families experiencing financial hardship often require access to family support services. Information on these services is available from the kindergarten service provider and a list can be supplied to those families who require it.

10. Notification of fee changes during the year

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget ‘break even’ point. Parents/guardians will be notified 28 days in advance of any required fee increase, with the reasoning for the fee increase outlined in the electronic/hard copy letter advising of the impending fee increase.

ATTACHMENT 2

Schedule of Fees and Charges

Ashwood Children's Centre

Fee schedule November 2019

Four-Year-Old Kindergarten

Kindergarten Fee:	\$700.00 per term
Kindergarten Deposit:	\$350.00 (payable on acceptance of position, and held as part-payment of term 1 fees)

(Deposit of \$5.00 required to secure sessional Kindergarten position for holders of eligible concession cards.)

Long Day Care | Long Day Kindergarten

Weekly Fee:	\$670.00 [7.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday]
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Daily Child Care Fee:	\$134.00 [7.00am – 6.00pm]
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Half Day Child Care Fee:	\$114.00 [7.00 am – 12.30 pm OR 12.30 pm – 6.00 pm]
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Fees applicable to all types of attendance within Ashwood Children's Centre

Waiting List Fee	\$20.00 per family
Enrolment Fee	\$35.00 per child
Initial Membership to ACC:	\$3.00
Ongoing Membership:	\$2.00 (covered by ACC Parents & Friends)
Voluntary Maintenance Levy:	\$50.00 per annum (refundable on written request refundable on working bee attendance & written request)
Account in Arrears penalty:	\$5.00 per week in arrears
2 nd Rejected Direct Debit transaction attempt in the fee week	\$5.00
Late Collection of Child penalty:	\$5.00 per 5 minutes or part thereof

ATTACHMENT 3

Understanding your assessment notice – information taken from Department of Human Services, Federal Government

Understanding your assessment notice

The Child Care Subsidy summary table tells you about the child care fee assistance you're able to get.

Child Name	Subsidy Type	Subsidy Percentage	Subsidised hours per fortnight	Annual Cap	Withholdings
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Child name

This will list any children you have completed an assessment or made a claim for.

Subsidy type

This tells you what you're eligible for.

If you're eligible for CCS, you may also be able to apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS).

Read more about [Child Care Subsidy](#) and [Additional Child Care Subsidy](#).

Subsidy percentage

This is your CCS percentage. We work it out based on your family income estimate for the 2018-19 financial year.

Your CCS percentage will apply to the lowest of either the:

- hourly fee you're charged by your child care service, or
- hourly rate cap

If your subsidy percentage is zero, your family income estimate was \$351,248 or more. If this applies to you, it's still important you did your claim or assessment. We'll [balance your payments](#) after the end of the financial year. If your actual family income ends up being less than \$351,248, we'll pay you the CCS you're entitled to.

Remember, if you're eligible for CCS but your percentage is zero, you may still be eligible for [ACCS](#).

Read more about how your [family income affects your CCS percentage](#).

Annual cap

This tells you if we'll cap your CCS. This depends on your family income estimate. There is no annual cap on your subsidy if your family income estimate was \$186,958 or less.

If your estimate was more than \$186,958 and under \$351,248, your annual cap is \$10,190. This cap applies to each child in care for each financial year.

Read more about the [annual cap](#).

Subsidised hours per fortnight

This is the number of hours of child care we'll subsidise. We work this out based on your hours of activity per fortnight. If you have a partner, we use the lower of your two activity levels.

If your subsidised hours is zero, you told us you or your partner do less than 8 hours of activity.

You need to do at least 8 hours of activity per fortnight. Recognised activities include working, training, studying and volunteering. For example, 4 hours a week of any one of these activities will give you access to 18 hours of subsidised care a week.

Read more about [how your activity level affects CCS](#).

Withholdings

We'll withhold 5% of your CCS each fortnight to reduce the likelihood of an overpayment. An overpayment could result in a debt after the end of financial year when we balance your payments.

After 2 July, families will also have an option to increase or reduce their withholding.

Read more about [withholding](#).

Updating your details

It's important to make sure your details are correct so we can give you the right amount of subsidy.

You need to tell us if:

- your circumstances change
- any details you gave us in your assessment or claim change

The easiest way to update your details is with your [Centrelink online account](#) via [myGov](#).

We'll reassess you if you give us new information.

Read more about [changes of circumstances](#).

