

Quality early education and care provides the foundation for children's development and social engagement whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our Centre is committed to providing quality education and care to all children at an affordable fee for families.

As an approved childcare service, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to reduce fees to eligible families. Our fee structure is based on our ability to provide the requirements of the Education and Care National Law and National Regulations, Family Assistance Law, the Australian Taxation Office and guidelines contained in the Child Care Provider Handbook.

Brunswick Crèche & Day Nursery is a not-for-profit organisation and receives no government (State or Federal) funding, your daily fees cover all the Centre's operating costs. We are committed to providing the best quality childcare at the most affordable cost. Operating costs are reviewed 6 monthly by the Management Committee and childcare fees adjusted, where required. Fee increases are advertised at least 4 weeks prior to their effective date.

Purpose

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Centre fee structure, payment requirements and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains process of fee payment and the necessity of ensuring children's fees are paid on time and consequences for failure to pay fees on time.

Implementation

Our Cen aims to ensure families understand the fee schedule and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to meet our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Child Care Subsidy legislative requirements. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately. Our Centre ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Centre about the enrolled child and family.

Our Fee Structure

General Fees

- Fees are charged for each session of care and vary depending on the age of the child in care and the family's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy (CCS). The Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to the Centre and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's statement).
- Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount- the 'gap' amount
- Fees must be kept in advance of a child's attendance
- Fees are payable in advance for every day that a child is enrolled at the centre. This includes pupil free days, sick days, and family holidays but excludes periods when the Centre is closed. The Centre may be directed to close due to periods of local emergency such as bushfire or flood or a pandemic.
- Fees are charged at full days only (no matter what the attendance hours are)
- Families are required to pay fees using the Centre's direct debit system. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees
- The Statement of Entitlement is available on the Parents Xplor Account
- The Statement of Entitlement will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts.
- The Statement of Entitlement is generated using our CCS Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation



Maintenance and Equipment Levy

A Maintenance and Equipment Levy (per child) is payable upon enrolment and annually thereafter. The levy is \$135 per child, and the levy value is reviewed annually. Families commencing after May will be charged \$67.50 per child. This levy provides additional funds for the maintenance of buildings and equipment and the purchase of play materials, books and toys for the children. This levy also covers the cost of the children's compulsory sun safe hat. These are not covered by your daily childcare fees.

Late Fees

- Our centre is not licensed to have children on the premises after hours. This is a breach in the Education and Care Regulations
- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the Centre. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time. Late fee is **\$5** for the first 5 minutes after 6.00pm then **\$15** for every 5 minutes or part thereof will occur.
- Educators are to monitor those families who are often late and record this in the Late Collection Book. If you have been late 3 times (and on subsequent times) an additional late fine of **\$100** will be charged. Late collection of 5 times will result in cancellation of the child's place at the centre.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late.

Waiting List

In order to objectively manage requests for childcare a waiting list has been established for new families. Interested families must pay a \$25 Non –Refundable Administration fee prior to joining the waiting list and this fee covers the ongoing maintenance of the waiting list.

Acceptance to the waiting list is acknowledged by email which also requests the Crèche be informed of any change in care requirements or family contact details. Families are contacted by email/telephone on a regular basis to confirm their continued interest in the Centre. Families who do not respond to this contact will be removed from the waiting list.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their [myGov](#) account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment

- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy. The child must:
 - Be a 'Family Tax Benefit child' or 'regular care child' and
 - Be 13 or under and not attending secondary school and
 - Meet immunisation requirements
- The person claiming the Child Care Subsidy, or their partner must:
 - Meet residency requirements and
 - Be liable to pay for care provided under a Complying Written Arrangement (their written agreement) with their childcare provider
- Childcare must be provided by an approved provider
- Family's level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
 - Combined family income
 - Activity test of parents
 - Type of early learning and childcare Centre.
- Child Care Subsidy will be provided directly to the Centre and this amount deducted from the parent/family account.
- Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstance to Centrelink (family income, activity levels, relationship changes or any other changes to their circumstances).
- Any disputes with CCS payments is the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments.



- Discounts will only be offered as outlined in the CCS Handbook. Any discounts will be offered on the full rate of care before CCS has been calculated.

Absences from Centre

- Families are requested to contact the Centre if their child is unable to attend a particular day
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the Centre if their child is unable to attend
- Under the Child Care Subsidy families are allowed 42 absence days per child, per financial year and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances. (See Child Care Subsidy Handbook)
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law
- Records and evidence will be kept by the Centre for each additional absence, where required
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via [myGov](https://my.gov.au).
- In a period of local emergency, such as bushfire or pandemic, and our Centre is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families *may* be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

Financial Difficulties

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the Approved Provider.
- Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink for additional fee assistance.
- There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:
 - Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)—to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect. The approved provider is involved in determining children who may require additional support who are at risk of harm
 - Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent)—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
 - Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship)—to help families experiencing financial hardship. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
 - Additional Child Care Subsidy (transition to work)—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment

Failure to Pay

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder letter will be issued after one week and then again, after two weeks if the fees are still outstanding.
- At any time of the debt recovery process the family will be encouraged to enter a debt agreement with the centre to repay outstanding fees. A written contract will be provided for the family to sign outlining repayment plan details. The repayment plan will provide information as to the duration and amount of the repayments as well as steps that will be taken if the repayment plan is not adhered to.
- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after three weeks, for which the family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time the Centre will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements.

Booked Days

Normal fees are charged for all children's booked days even if they happen to fall on a Public Holiday. If a child is absent from the Centre due to illness or holidays, normal Child Care fees will apply. Brunswick Creche & Day Nursery does not swap days of care and does not arrange make up days, due to the restriction of licensed places and maintaining educator to child ratios.

Public Holidays

Our Centre is closed on public holidays. Fees apply for all public holiday closures that fall on your usual day of attendance. The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) will not be paid for public holidays if 42 absences have already been used



Centre Closure

During the Christmas / New Year period the centre will close for 3 weeks. Families will not be charged during this period.

Termination of Enrolment

- Parents are to provide Four Weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the centre. The 4 weeks' notice of withdrawal is effective at the commencement of a new Direct Debit week.
- If termination from the Centre is required without notification, families may lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged.
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care.
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law

Refer to 'Termination of Enrolment Policy' for further information

Responsibility of Management

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring all families are aware of our *Payment of Fees Policy*
- ensuring enrolments are submitted correctly with the appropriate enrolment information
- Providing families with regular statement of fees payable
- Notifying families of any overdue fees
- Providing families with reminder letters as required
- Terminating enrolment of children should fees not be paid
- Discussing fee payment with families if required
- Providing at least 4 weeks written notice to families of any fee increases

Responsibility of Families

- Provide the Centre with the correct enrolment details to facilitate the CCS claim, if required, including:
- Centrelink Reference Numbers for child and CCS claimant
- Date of Birth for child and CCS claimant
- Ensure payment of fees as per policy
- Notify Centrelink of any changes that may affect their CCS entitlement
- Confirm their child's enrolment through the parents myGov account.

Source: Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014). Australian Government Department of Education Child Care Provider Handbook <https://www.dese.gov.au/resources-child-care-providers/child-care-provider-handbook>
Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment *Early Childhood and Care* <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood-and-child-care-0> Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment *Information for child care providers when a period of local emergency occurs* Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018). [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011). Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2020). Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.). Revised National Quality Standard. (2018)

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National Quality Standard – NQS**Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management**

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 defines, and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service

Education and Care Services National Regulations

168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

