

# Payment of Fees Policy 2019

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## Policy Statement

Pooh Bear's House offers a superior quality environment and an outstanding educational program for the children. To achieve this, we must remain financially viable, while ensuring child care fee levels are at an affordable cost for families. We recognise that rising child care fees have created difficulties for many families, and we have developed our fee system to maximise all families' access to subsidies. Therefore, it is imperative all families pay their child care fees on time, to ensure Pooh Bear's House in return, can continue providing exceptional care for all families.

### **Pooh Bear's House is committed to:**

- Providing responsible financial management of the service, which includes setting fees that will result in a financially viable and high quality service.
- Ensuring regular fee payments are made by families.
- Providing a fair and manageable system for dealing with the failure to pay fees, and/or inability to pay outstanding debts.
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians.
- Advising families of how child care and preschool programs are funded and that they are reliant on parent fees to operate the service.
- Complying with all legislative requirements.

## **Payment of Fees**

Pooh Bear's Fee Policy will be given, and explained, to parents at the time of enrolment, it will include the following:

- Families will be **invoiced every Friday**.
- You can choose to have your invoice emailed to you, or if you need a hard copy you can pick up a copy from the office.
- Fees may be paid by **Cash, EFTPOS, or Direct Transfer (Strictly NO CHEQUES)**.
- If paying by cash please insert the cash into an envelope and include your child's name, date of payment and amount on the front of the envelope. Cash is to be placed in the fees box outside my office door.
- Fees are to be paid for all days the child is enrolled, regardless of attendance.
- It is the parent's responsibility to apply for Child Care Subsidy. This needs to occur prior to the child's commencement date to avoid full fees being charged. When there is a delay in receiving your CCS percentage rate from Family Assistance Office full fees are payable. DEEWR.

## **Public Holidays, Days in Lieu, Discounted Fulltime Care**

- Full fees are charged for Public Holidays and sick days. However, you can use holiday rates for a Public Holiday, or you can elect to have a Day in Lieu (a day free of charge) in the future, subject to availability. This is not available to families using fulltime care who have weekly discounted fees.
- Fulltime families will receive a weekly discount of \$35 per week, which equates to \$1,820 annually. This discount helps cover public holidays and illnesses throughout the year. \*public holidays will be discounted if they fall during your holidays.
- We also offer alternate days in cases where your child is absent due to illness (with a medical certificate).
- 'Days in lieu' are not offered for family holidays.
- Days in lieu must be used in the quarter the child was absent. No days in lieu are carried from one quarter to the next.
- Days in lieu are not given if your account is in arrears.
- If you choose to accept a placement as a make-up and fail to arrive that day, it will use your allocated day as other families were not able to take advantage of this day. This policy is to help minimise illness in the Service. If your child is sent home sick from the Service, no make-up day is allocated.
- Parents applying for holiday fees must give a minimum of two-weeks' notice for holidays. If your account is more than two weeks behind, holiday rates will NOT be given.
- If a child is absent due to holidays, refer to the Reduced Holiday Fee option (see attached).
- You cannot use holiday rates for illness or hospital stays.
- You cannot use holiday rates for school transition days. These days generally only require children to attend school for a couple of hours each visit. We are more than happy to receive children late on the day or release them earlier for their transition schedule.

## **Fee Subsidies**

- Fees are charged daily and vary depending on the Child Care Subsidy (which replaced the current Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate from 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018). The Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to the Service.
- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy for a child include:
  1. The age of the child (must be 13 years or under and not attending secondary school)
  2. The child meeting immunization requirements
  3. The individual, or their partners, meeting the residency requirements
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
  1. Combined family income

2. Activity level of parents
  3. Type of child care Service
- Fees must be kept in advance of a child's attendance
  - Fees are to be paid either weekly, fortnightly or monthly depending what you have discussed with PBH management. However, if families wish to pay fees on a monthly basis, it is a requirement that the family pay in advance and are not in arrears.
  - Fees are charged at full days only (no matter what the attendance hours are)
  - Casual days may be offered to families if available within our service's license
  - **See Centrelink for further details.**

### **Preschool Program Subsidy**

This subsidy is only available if the child does not have approved CCS applied to the fee paid for the time spent in the funded preschool program at Pooh Bear's House.

Pooh Bear's House is eligible to receive the kindergarten fee subsidy for each child who meets the following criteria.

The child

- Is eligible to attend a funded kindergarten program, and
- Individually holds or has a parent/guardian who holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card or a Commonwealth Pensioner card and does not have approved Commonwealth Child care Benefit applied to the fee paid for the time spent in the preschool program.

More information is available from the Family Assistance Office at:  
[www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au) 13 61 50 between 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday.

### **Debt recovery**

The Management Committee reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the service. This may include the engagement of a debt collector. The cost of this service will be paid for by the parents/guardians in arrears. Where a family owes a substantial amount of money to Pooh Bear's House, no further placements will be provided to any child in the family, until all outstanding monies are paid or both parties agree to a payment plan.

## **Cessation of care**

Two full weeks' notice is required in the event of leaving Pooh Bear's House, or dropping booked days.

## **Absences from care**

Families are requested to inform POOH BEAR'S HOUSE in advance, or by 9am on the day, if their child is going to be absent. If families provide notification before 9am and provide a medical certificate, a day in lieu will be provided.

## **Child care subsidy**

Absences: Under the Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) CCS is strictly monitored. A child can have 42 absences in a financial year for any reason, but a fee must be charged to gain CCS. Once 42 absences have been reached documented proof is required for any additional absences, for continued CCS entitlement. A fee is still required to be charged to claim CCS.

## **Confidentiality**

Management will treat as confidential, information it receives relating to the parent/guardian's financial situations and the payment and/or non-payment of fees.

## **Procedures for overdue fees are as follows:**

In the case of fees falling in the rears of one month, a reminder statement will be issued. If there is no response the Licensee, Ms Kim Russell, will approach the parents personally with the concern of payment. If the parents are unable to pay the full amount an agreement will be made for payment until the account is up to date.

- If the full amount is not paid before or on the date agreed upon, the child's place in the centre will be forfeited immediately.
- If an account is a month in arrears, we will terminate the child's place at Pooh Bear's House.
- If fees have not been recouped the account will then be directed to the Debt Collector – Prushka. Any costs incurred by the centre for retrieval of outstanding debts will be added to the outstanding account.

**In circumstances of genuine hardship, cases may be assisted.**

## **Late Fees**

Management reserves the right to implement a late collection of children charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting child/ren. In these situations the following will apply:

An initial late fee of \$10 will be applied if parent/guardian are late to pick up their child.

- ✚ \$1 per minute will apply for anytime between 11-20 minutes and
- ✚ \$3 per minute will apply for anytime following 20 minutes.

**Late fees will be recorded on your next invoice.**

## **National Quality Standard (NQS)**

### Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

- |       |                                   |   |
|-------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 7.1   | <b>Governance</b>                 | Governance supports the operation of a quality service  |
| 7.1.2 | <b>Management Systems</b>         | Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service                        |
| 7.1.3 | <b>Roles and Responsibilities</b> | Roles and responsibilities are clearly defines, and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service |

## **National Education and Care Regulations**

### **Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management**

- 168** Education and care service must have policies and procedures

## **Review**

Reviewed: June 2016

Reviewed: January 2019

Next review: January 2021.

# Outstanding Fee – Final Reminder

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Date

Insert name

Insert address

## **RE: FINAL REMINDER - OUTSTANDING ACCOUNT**

Dear

We have recently sent you a number of letters to remind you that the balance of **amount** was overdue.

We ask again that if you have any queries or are not able to make full payment immediately, please contact us.

If neither of the above applies to your situation please organise for the settlement of the remaining balance by **date**.

Payment of your account has now well exceeded our normal credit facility, should your fees remain unpaid by the advised date your position at our service will be terminated and your account transferred to our Debt Collection Agency, who will implement strategies to recover the debt owed to the Service.

Regards

Kim Russell