

GREY WARD CHILDREN'S CENTRE

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FEES POLICY

RATIONALE

The Grey Ward Children's Centre is a not for profit organisation and relies 100% on fees to meet expenses. When fees are not paid, the centre still has an obligation to pay staff and other bills. This policy is designed to help avoid any confusion or embarrassment.

PROCEDURE

Fee Payment

- The Centre bills weekly in arrears and requires payment on the issue of the account. Accounts will be emailed or upon your request, placed in your child's pocket.
- All fees can be paid by direct debit, (bank account details are on tax invoice), bank transfer or by cash.
- Accounts not paid by when the next notice is issued will be **overdue** and marked as such. All accounts are required to be paid in **full**.
- If payment is still not received by the next account, a **cancellation of care** notice will be given. This will require full payment by the Thursday of that week.
- If full payment is not received by the required date, care will be cancelled. Retrieval of payment and any costs incurred (including solicitors fees) will be sought through a professional debt collector.
- The account holder will be liable for any extra costs incurred should the services of a debt collector be required.

Bond

- To safeguard against future bad debts the Centre requires a bond of \$50 per family, **for all new child care families**. The bond will be payable upon enrolment.
- The bond will be refunded when your child leaves the care of the Centre and you have finalised all outstanding accounts.

- If all outstanding accounts are not finalised within seven (7) days of ceasing care, the bond **will be forfeited**.

Fees

- Families will be charged according to the sessions that their child is booked into the Centre. There are two sessions for long day care each day:

Morning Session: 7.45am - 1.00pm - fee includes lunch.

Afternoon Session 1.00pm - 5.45pm

- Fees for care are charged per booking. Permanent bookings attract a fee regardless of whether your child has been in that week or not, as staff rosters are worked out according to bookings.
- Requests for swapping booked sessions can only be made in conjunction with the Director and the Clerical Officer.
- Requests for changes to permanent bookings can be made on the 'Blue Form' found near the sign-in book, by email or in person with the Director or Clerical Officer.
- Requests for extra sessions are best made on the 'Blue Form', by email or in person with the Director or Clerical Officer at least one day before care is needed.

Please see the Director if temporary financial difficulty is experienced so that a payment plan may be negotiated. This negotiation is at the Management Committee's discretion.

Kindy Sessions

- Kindergarten sessions are from Monday to Thursday (Friday as this is programming time for the teachers and staff) from 8.45am-4.15pm.
- Universal Access 15hrs/wk can be accessed by utilising 2 days, strictly within the Kindergarten sessions of 8.45am-4.15pm. Any attendance outside of these times will convert to long day care fees. Child Care Subsidy may also apply for eligible families.
- Fees for Kindy are charged per booking. Permanent bookings attract a fee regardless of whether your child has been in that week or not.

Illness

- Normal fees will be charged where children are unwell and cannot attend. With a Medical Certificate, a half fee sick day will apply depending on the number of days your child's permanent booking is for,
 - eg 1 day/wk = 2 days @ 50% reduced fee for the calendar year.
 - 2 days/wk = 4 days @ 50%
 - 3 days/wk = 6 days @ 50%
 - 4 days/wk = 8 days @ 50% and
 - 5 days/wk = 10 days @ 50 %

This section of the policy may be varied at the sole discretion of the Director upon application.

Public Holidays

- Normal fees will be charged, as permanent staff still require payment.

Closure Days

- No charge will be made for the times when the centre is closed, such as over the Christmas/New Year's break and any staff development days.

Holidays

- To hold your booking while you are on holidays, a 50% Holding Fee (discount) will be given for a maximum (4) weeks worth of your permanent booking, per calendar year (January - December). Normal fees will be charged for holidays taken once the discount has been used. To take advantage of this discount, notification of holidays must be made at least **two weeks prior** to your holidays on the 'Blue Form' or by email.

Entitlements For Absence Days

- If you are eligible for Child Care Subsidy, the rebates will continue to be allocated for the first 42 absences of the financial year (January-December).

Leaving the Centre

- Two weeks notice or two weeks fees in lieu of notice are required prior to your child leaving the Centre. Please notify the Centre on the 'Notification of Changes' or by email. If applicable, the bond will be refunded upon finalisation of account, (refer Fee Payment above).

Late Fee

- The Centre closes at 5.45pm daily and children are expected to be picked up by this time. Please refer to the Centre's Late Fee Policy.

Bad Debt Policy

Those covered under this policy include:

- All who are currently using the Centre;
- All who have previously used the Centre and have incurred a Bad Debt, regardless of the age;
- All new families.

What is a Bad Debt?

- The term 'Bad Debt' refers to any outstanding money that is owed to the centre for care received or bookings made without notification of cancellation. The debt is associated with the

- child and all siblings attending the centre, regardless of which adults may have care for that/those child/ren, as guardianship often changes.
- In order to reduce Bad Debts, the Centre has developed a "no nonsense" fees policy to encourage regular payments and prevent outstanding accounts from ballooning. The Fee Policy should be read in conjunction with this Bad Debt Policy.

Legal Action

The Management Committee will endeavour to retrieve any money owing to the Centre. If personal reminders via verbal conferences, telephone conversations, letters etc. fail to retrieve the outstanding money, legal action will be pursued. This will be at the Management and Debt Collector's discretion. All fees incurred by the Centre as a result of pursuing a 'Bad Debt' will be added to the original debt and will also be payable.

For those families who have incurred a Bad Debt, and wish to reuse the Centre the following procedure will need to be adhered to:

- 1) Pay the total outstanding money up front.
- 2) Pay new bond.
- 3) Pay weekly in **advance** for the care that is used.

Care will be cancelled immediately if money is not paid in advance. Future care will then be refused.

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
July 2015	Minor wording altered	July 2016
April 2016	Format updated	April 2017
July 2018	Wording altered	July 2019
Dec 2018	Added the new review table to comply with National Quality Standards. Altered Kindy Fee Structure and Illness allocation of 50%	Dec 2019

EVALUATION

This policy will be implemented and monitored by staff and the Management Committee. Policies will be regularly reviewed by staff and the Management Committee and may be altered due to changes in legislation and practices.