Payment, Handling and Debt Collection of Fees – Policy

Rationale:

To implement a fair and practical system for the management and payment of fees for families and the Centre.

Definitions:

Permanent Care: - Children booked in by primary carer for permanent days every week

Extra Days Care: - Extra day of care that parents who have permanent bookings may require from time to time

Casual Care: - Parents ring the Centre to book their child in on occasions when care is required.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS): - Payment made to the Centre to subsidise the cost of families Child Care Fees

Fees at the HNS OOSH & Vacation Care are kept to a minimum. to cover operating costs. The Centre is a Community Based, Not-for-Profit Child Care Centre. After expenditure of operating costs, surplus funds are used at the Centre for equipment, resources and maintenance. The fee schedule and fees payment procedure will be fully explained to families during the enrolment process. Families will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any fee increase.

The Centre offers permanent bookings and when available casual care bookings. The Centre can only guarantee placements for permanent bookings but always will attempt to assist with casual bookings. Centre staff will notify any casual care users if numbers of permanent children are at a level that casual care is not available.

All fees are to be finalised by the end of Term or Vacation Care period if not setup with Debit Success. Families can access their accounts at any time through the Xplor App or by contacting the office. Under the Xplor software package fees are estimated two weeks in advance; by making regular fee payments or setting up a direct credit from your bank into our bank account (not the system offered by Xplor) you will be able to ensure all fees are finalised by the end of each term or Vacation Care period as required. **At a minimum one payment per calendar month must be made onto your Xplor account. An additional payment may be required at the end of each term to finalise any outstanding fees.** If payment has not been received or arrangements for payment made, families will receive an email / text message advising them that their child / children will be suspended from OOSH until the debt is paid in full.

If at anytime you are experiencing difficulties with your fee commitments, please contact the Coordinator as soon as possible on 65 84 2627, to make arrangements

for negotiating payment.

In the event of families incurring an outstanding debt the Centre will refer the debt to HNS Neighbourhood Centre who will commence debt collection procedures. On enrolment families sign a disclaimer detailing their responsibilities in relation to fee payments and debt collection recover costs. If necessary, the HNS Neighbourhood Centre will refer the debt to a Debt Collection Agency.

Enrolling parents are responsible for: -
“Any expenses, costs or disbursements incurred by HNS OOSH & Vacation Care in recovering any outstanding monies including debt collection fees and Solicitor costs shall be paid by the parent / applicant, providing that those fees do not exceed the scale charges as charged that Debt Collection Agency / Solicitor plus any out-of-pocket expenses.”

Debts listed with a Debt Collection Agency will remain on parent's credit file for a period of 5 years. This may affect any future credit application and access to child care service.

Details of an individual’s account and all completed forms kept by the service will be confidential and stored appropriately. Individual families may access their own account records by contacting the centre, particulars of fees will be made available to the families in writing as requested. Families may also view details about their childcare usage and total fees charged and the fee reductions calculated on the statements available on the Xplor App or by contacting the office.

Child Care Subsidy System (CCS) -Child Care Subsidy - Services Australia

The service will comply with the Australian Government requirements to be an approved education and care service for the purposes of CCS.

Families need to register for CCS through their online Centrelink / myGov account. See procedures for further information.

Families are entitled to 42 allowed absence days per child, per financial year, and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances (including illness of the child, a parent or sibling). In shared care arrangements, the allocation of 42 absences per financial year relates to the child, not each individual claimant.

Under the Child Care Subsidy system, when a child does not attend care on a day they are scheduled to attend, providers are able to claim an absence for the child up to 42 times in a financial year, so long as on the day the absence is claimed, Child Care Subsidy would have been claimed (i.e. the child would have otherwise been in care, and the family hasn't already reached their fortnightly entitlement of subsidised hours based on their activity test result).

Families need to be aware that Centrelink can reassess their CCS entitlements and that the CCS system has very strict guidelines in relation to attendance and CCS entitlements. If CCS adjusts a family’s CCS entitlement the amounts are then added

onto families Xplor accounts – even after they have finalised care and paid their final account. Amended statements will be emailed out to families to pay.

Families also need to understand their responsibilities when ceasing care or non-attendance at the Centre on the last booked Vacation Care session (Vacation Care only families). If your child does not attend care, you will not be eligible for CCS payments and will therefore have to pay full fees as detailed in the Enrolment & Orientation Procedures policy.

All documentation pertaining to CCS will be kept for the specified period and made available to Australian Government Officers on request.

Educators will have a basic knowledge of CCS requirements but will refer all specific queries to the authorised contact person for clarification. The Coordinator and administration staff will be trained in the implementation of the CCS.

Related Regulations and References:

National Education and Care Regulations	
158	Children's attendance record to be kept by approved provider
168 -2: n	Education and care services must have policies and procedures payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the education and care service.
172 (1&2)	Notification of change to policies or procedures.

National Quality Standard (NQS)		
Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
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 defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service

Related Centre Policies & Procedures

- Parent Handbook
- Privacy & Confidentiality Policy & Procedures
- Collection of Children Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Procedures Policy

References

- Child Care Services Handbook
- PSCA Policies in Practice
- Child Care Centre Desktop
- Child Care Subsidy Calculator https://www.childcaresubsidycalculator.com.au/

- Department of Human Services website https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy

Policy Endorsed:	10/5/2005
Date Reviewed & Evaluated:	06/08/2025
Amendments & Changes Made:	21/08/2025
Policy provided to Families:	

Payment, Handling and Debt Collection of Fees Procedure

Before & After School and Vacation Care

PAYMENTS

OOSH – Before & After School Care
Permanent Bookings

1. ***Bookings: -*** *are made on a term basis. All fees are payable for the entire term regardless of your attendance. Fees are to be paid for 41 weeks of the year. This includes all Public Holidays during school terms. No charge is incurred on Pupil Free Days your child does not attend care.*

2. ***Holidays: -*** *With one week's notice of holidays, half of a family's usual weekly fee is to be paid (up to a maximum of 2 weeks per annum). These days count as Allowable Absences*

3. ***Extra Days of Care (if available): -*** *will be billed to your account as used, Extra Days can only be provided when a vacancy exists on the day. Contact Centre via email request or book in XPLOR App*

4. ***Cancellation of a Permanent booking: -*** *must be completed in writing. The family must give 2 weeks' notice if they wish to terminate all of their child's booking. To maintain CCS payments for this, the child must attend care on the final day of the booking, or the family will not be eligible for Child Care Subsidy and will be charged full fees back to the last day of attendance. The family must give 2 weeks' notice if they wish to change their child's permanent booking.*

Casual Care

1. *The Centre cannot guarantee placement of children on the day care is required. If places are available, the child will be placed – The Centre cannot exceed approved places.*

2. *Casual / Extra Care is only available when there are vacancies. Families can book in Xplor App ,ring or email the Centre to enquire if care is available for a period of up to 1 week in advance. Once the children have been placed for the day the booking cannot be cancelled.*

Vacation Care Bookings

1. *Bookings are made prior to each Vacation Care program. Fees are to be paid for all days booked.*

2. *Cancellation or change to Vacation Care booking must be completed in writing. Cancellations or changes will only be accepted if received 1*

week prior to the commencement of the Vacation Care program. Families can email their request to cancel / change a booking after this date and if we can replace their bookings from children on the Waiting List we will do so.

3. ***NO REFUNDS** will be available once the program has commenced*

4. *Vacation Care should be paid in full on the booking request to secure the child/children's place in the program.*

5. *New enrolments must pay Registration Fee on booking in (Enrolment will not be accepted until Registration fee is paid)*

Illnesses

Fees must be paid for absences due to illness. Please inform the Centre concerning your child's absence.

Pupil Free Day (PFD) Care Bookings – when offered by our Service

1. *Bookings are made prior to each Pupil Free Day program. Fees will be charged to the families Xplor Account.*

2. *For schools having a PFD, all permanent BSC and ASC bookings are marked absent which is an allowable absence.*

3. *Once a PFD booking is confirmed, No Cancellation of booking – all places must be paid for.*

4. *The Centre has a minimum number of children required to operate and a maximum of 60 places available per PFD. OOSH & Vacation Care families will have priority bookings.*

5. *New enrolments must pay the Registration Fee on booking in (Enrolment will not be accepted until Registration fee is paid)*

6. *Where a school offers supervision on a PFD our service may (discretion of numbers) provide transport for drop off or collection. The family can bring their child to ASC if prior arrangements have been made with the Coordinator or Team Leader. Normal ASC Fees will be charged to the families Xplor account, if we are running a PFD all day.*

CCS Entitlements and Adjustments

1. *Centrelink is responsible for assessing and distributing entitlements for families. Centrelink will only discuss CCS entitlements directly with families not the service.*

2. *Centrelink can amend and adjust families CCS entitlements and deduct*

payments made to the Centre, these adjustments are then added to the families Xplor account. The Centre is not advised of the adjustments, families need to monitor their Xplor accounts and if they have any queries of concerns contact the Centre for clarification. The Centre will be able to provide information about their booking, however any queries in relation to the family's entitlement will need to be made directly with Centrelink.

3. *Families are responsible to pay any adjustments made by Centrelink to the Centre, these adjustments will be made to their Xplor accounts – even after they have finalised care and paid final accounts.*

4. *Children must attend care on their last booked session to be entitled to receive CCS.* Child Care Subsidy - Services Australia

Termination of Booking

When you wish to discontinue and terminate your childcare at the service you are required to provide two (2) weeks notice and complete the Termination of Care paperwork or you are liable to pay the equivalent of two weeks child care fees – AT FULL FEE RATE to the service

ACCOUNTS

The Centre uses the Xplor Software program to manage families care used and accounts. Each family has one account that will include Before and After School Care – OOSH, Vacation Care and Pupil Free Day Care. The following procedures apply.

Families can access their accounts at any time through the Xplor App or by contacting the office for an account to be emailed out.

OOSH

1. *Xplor accounts are updated automatically with Debit Success in the Xplor app when care has been used. The statements show an estimate of care for 2 week in advance to ensure families meet the requirement of finalising all Term fees prior to the end of Term.*

2. *Term fees must be finalised by Friday of Week 10/11.*

3. *Families are required to make regular payments and manage their accounts by regularly checking their statements via the Xplor App. Families can contact the Centre at any time Mon – Fri 8am to 4pm to have a payment plan put in place to assist families with payments that has fallen behind to ensure the continued care of their child/children.*

4. *Families are required to make at least one payment to the Xplor*

account per calendar month. An additional payment may be required at the end of each term to ensure all fees are paid.

5. *Families who are not making regular payments and are incurring an outstanding debt will be emailed a statement with a due date for payment. If fees remain unpaid a verbal or written reminder will be sent.*

6. *A phone call will be made to any families with outstanding fees at the commencement of each term for payment or to arrange a payment schedule.*

7. *Children cannot continue care the following term until outstanding fees are finalised*

Vacation Care

1. *A Fee estimation will be provided to families as a guide to fees owing based on bookings made – detailing deposit amount required to secure the booking and a due date prior to the commencement of the program.*

2. *Vacation Care fees and charges are added directly onto the families Xplor account accessed via the App. All Vacation Care charges must be finalised 1 week after the end of the program as agreed to on the booking form.*

3. *Fees must be finalised by the due date indicated on the statement*

Pupil Free Days (PFD)

1. *Fees for PFD's will be included in the weekly Xplor Accounts.*

INVOICE/STATEMENT RECEIPTING

Invoice/statements receipting of Internet and Fee book payments will be carried out weekly for both OOSH & Vacation Care. The receipts appear directly on the families Xplor statement.

Fee Payment Options

1. *Fee payments can be made by Debit Success in the Xplor App using the Fee Payment process described above. Debit Success is a mandatory Government requirement.*

2. *If Fee payments cannot be made by Debit Success in the Xplor App for*

various reasons, Families can arrange a payment plan by contacting the Coordinator in writing via email. Regardless the primary carer must accept the terms & conditions for Debit Success on the Xplor App..

DEBT COLLECTION

If at any time you are experiencing difficulties with your fee commitments, please contact the coordinator as soon as possible on 65 84 2627 or via email, to make arrangements for negotiating payment.

If payments have not been finalised by the due date or arrangements for payment made, care will be suspended until the debt is paid in full. If the debt remains unpaid the debt will be referred to theHNS Neighbourhood Centre and/or Debt Collection Agency

Terminated enrolments – accounts of fees owing will be sent after processing the last day of care. These fees must be paid within 2 weeks of the account date or payment arrangements made. If the debt remains unpaid the debt will be referred to HNS Neighbourhood Centre and/or Debt Collection Agency

Information that will be supplied to the debt collection agency will be: -

- *~ Name of enrolling parent (responsible for fee payments)*
- *~ Home, workplace and mobile phone numbers*
- *~ Email address*
- *~ Outstanding fee amount to be collected*
- *~ Date of enrolment and last date of care.*

APPLYING FOR CCS (Child Care Subsidy)

For families enrolling in OOSH / Vacation Care for the first time – apply for CCS via myGov.

When logged into your myGov account, you see Centrelink listed under "Your Services" – click on Centrelink. Use the box at the bottom of the screen which says, "Complete your Child Care Subsidy assessment".

Complete:

1. *Family income assessment*
2. *Activity test*
3. *Confirm enrolment.*

After you have completed your enrolment at the Centre and have bookings in the Xplor system we will advise you to go onto your Xplor App – Account – Finance to electronically sign the CWA (Complying Written Agreement). Once completed a CCS Agreement will be generated on your MyGov account. You will access this on MyGov via notifications. When both online agreements have been electronically signed your CCS% will be allocated to your Xplor account. Until such time as the CCS% is allocated to your Xplor account you childcare bookings will be charged at

the full fee rate

Fee Schedule as of 1 July 2019

Full fees per session: -	
Before School Care	**$18.50**
After School Care	**$26.50**
Vacation Care	**$65.00 + any excursion costs**
Pupil Free Day Care	**$65.00 + any excursion costs**
Registration fee	**$20.00per child per year**
Administration fee	**$20.00 per non complaint absences**