

## 10.4 Fee Policy

### 1. Purpose

My Place Family Day Care (FDC) is committed to delivering consistent fees to families within the community in which they operate, while strictly adhering to all legislative requirements. While Educators are deemed to be independent contractors, My Place FDC is responsible for over-seeing and approving each Educator's charging practices.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Parents/Guardians, Educators and staff of ICH.

### 3. Definition

**Approved Provider:** Inala Community House (ICH) has approval from the Federal Government to operate an approved FDC service.

**Service:** My Place Family Day Care whose Approved Provider is Inala Community House.

**Parent/Guardian:** the person responsible for the payment of fees and who may be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy. Herein after referred to as parents.

**Payment Advice:** Information from Centrelink via My Place FDC to the Educator regarding the breakdown of payments.

**Statement of Entitlement:** Information from Centrelink via My Place FDC to the Parent/Guardian regarding the breakdown of payments and hours of usage.

**CCS:** Child Care Subsidy is paid by the Federal Government. Its purpose is to assist families with the cost of childcare.

**Centrelink:** The Federal Government department which is responsible for the approval and calculation of CCS.

**CSF:** Child Service Fee is payable by parents to My Place Family Day Care and assists with the running of the Service.

**Redbourne:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Software Provider of My Place FDC whose software package (Harmony) allows the Service to claim subsidies from the Federal Government.

**Harmony:** The software package used by My Place FDC.

**PIN:** personal identification number or electronic signature.

**Intended Care:** Hours related to the parent's needs.

## 4. Policy

My Place Family Day Care administers the Child Care Subsidy in line with the guidelines set out in the Child Care Provider Handbook and by Family Assistance Law.

### a. Child Care Subsidy

Neither the Educator nor My Place FDC is directly involved in the calculation of the parent's Child Care Subsidy (CCS) entitlements. This is a matter between parents and Centrelink. Parents will co-contribute to their child care fees and pay the Educator the difference between the fee charged and the eligible Child Care Subsidy amount.

It is essential that parents provide information that is true and complete when enrolling their child with My Place FDC. Incorrect or missing information may result in the delay of CCS being applied by Centrelink, resulting in full fees for child care being charged to the parent.

### b. Educator Fee Setting

My Place FDC supports Educators in implementing independent fees within the parameters set by the Service. If an Educator wishes to charge beyond the parameters, this proposal needs to be discussed with and approved by a Nominated Supervisor.

My Place FDC does not permit the charging of a bond to parents.

Educators must provide parents with a current fee schedule.

Educators' fee schedules must detail all charges and conditions.

Parents must be advised of any changes in the Educator's fee schedule at least 28 working days before changes are implemented.

Fee setting by Educators must be equitable across all families for the same type of service provided by the same Educator. Private arrangements regarding fees or child care are not permitted.

Educators are free to choose when to increase their fees but must have My Place FDC approval of the fee rise and have given at least 28 working days' notice of fee variation to both parents and the Service.

## 4.1 Payment of Fees

Parent payments are as per the Educator's Fee Schedule which includes the CSF. Parent's fees must be paid promptly to the Educator either weekly or as otherwise agreed with the Educator.

The Federal Government pays the CCS to My Place FDC. The Service passes the CCS minus the CSF on to the Educator. The Parents pay the Educator the balance owing. This occurs weekly.

Early drop off/late pick up fees and Late Payment fees are not eligible for CCS.

If Parent fees are in arrears to the Educator, the Educator may choose to cancel care WITHOUT NOTICE and will notify My Place FDC. The Educator will notify the parents that care has ceased and may take further steps to recoup the outstanding fees. My Place FDC reserves the right to refuse care being used with any other My Place FDC Educator until the debt is cleared.

It is the Educator's responsibility to check their payment advice each week and to charge the parents the gap fee displayed.

Any irregularities should immediately be discussed with the Administration team.

Alternative care will not be provided until the overdue account is paid or arrangements have been made between ICH and parents.

## 4.2 Contracted Hours

A minimum of two weeks' notice is required for changes to the contracted hours by both parents and Educators, unless otherwise agreed by both parties.

The booked hours of care must be in line with the used hours of intended care.

Under school-age children's bookings are consistent with the agreed hours of care, including public holidays unless a change is required, or care is ceased.

School-age children's bookings are divided into two categories – school term bookings and vacation care bookings.

School term bookings are ongoing throughout the four (4) terms only and include public holidays unless a change is required, or care is ceased.

Vacation care bookings are separate to term bookings. Parents are under no obligation to book during vacation times and can choose only the days that they require. Once a vacation care booking has been made however, day booked must be paid for whether the child attends care or not. Parents should be mindful of public holidays when booking vacation care.

## 4.3 Absences

When a child is absent from care on a contracted day (whether the reason be sickness or holidays), the Educator must be notified, and normal fees will apply.

CCS is paid on up to 42 absent days per financial year, including public holidays and sick days/family vacations. Once a child has exceeded 42 funded absence days in the financial year, a full fee charge applies if no supporting documentation is provided for the absent day. (i.e. CCS will not reduce the cost of care for the day).

Supporting documentation includes:

- illness – a medical certificate for the child or any relative living in the child's household.
- rostered days off (RDO) or rotating shift – a written statement by the employer on company letterhead.
- periods of local emergency – a statutory declaration signed by the Parent, unless the local emergency is recognised by Government.
- court ordered shared custody – copies of legal documents.

Where a child does not attend any session of care with My Place FDC within a period of 14 weeks or more, Centrelink takes the enrolment to have ceased. If a child is going on a holiday that is 14 weeks or longer, an exit form must be submitted to My Place FDC and fees CANNOT be charged by the Educator. The same process applies to children who only use vacation care.

### **First/Last day of care absences**

In some instances, you can get CCS for up to 7 absence days:

- before your child attends their first day of care
- after their last day they physically attend care.

To use absences for this, your child must be enrolled in care and can't attend for an approved reason.

Approved reasons include:

- your child, you or someone your child lives with is unwell
- your child's enrolment ceased incorrectly
- a family tragedy.
- And any of the approved reasons in the above section.

Supporting documentation is required for first and last day of care absences.

### **Holidays and Extended Leave**

#### **Educators**

Educators cannot charge a parent while the Educator is on leave or not working due to illness, therefore no timesheets can be submitted for that period of time.

Educators can charge for a public holiday if

- they work the day before OR the day after; and
- the child has a regular booking for that day OR where the parent has made an extra booking for that day

Where an Educator is eligible to charge for a public holiday and no care is required, fees as per the booking will still apply.

Where care is provided on a public holiday, the Educator is entitled to charge a public holiday rate.

The Educator is not obliged to work on a public holiday but is still however entitled to receive payment. In the event of a redirect being needed, the parent will be liable to pay full fees to the alternate Educator.

## Parents

Holiday charges to parents are as per the Educator's fee schedule. If fees are not paid the continuation of the child's placement is not guaranteed. Fees must be paid in advance of holiday absences or an arrangement must be agreed upon by the parent and Educator.

Any changes to hours due to parental leave must be negotiated and agreed between the Educator and parents. The Educator is under no obligation to agree to lesser hours.

## 4.4 Cancellation of Care

Cancellation of care by any party requires two weeks' notice and My Place FDC must be advised. The child must attend the last day of care for CCS to be applied.

It is at the discretion of My Place FDC to override the two weeks' notice if it is deemed to not be in the best interests of all stakeholders.

## 4.5 Child Service Fee

CSF is payable by parents to My Place FDC and will be deducted from the CCS weekly by ICH prior to it being passed on to the Educator.

Any changes to the CSF will be notified in writing at least 28 days prior to the change.

#### 4.6 Electronic Timesheets

Unique PIN numbers are issued by ICH administration to the parents at the time of enrolment. ICH will rely on the PIN authorisation as proof of identity, consent as to a service being provided and agreement to pay any appropriate fees to the provision of the service, in full and without reservation.

My Place FDC must be contacted immediately regarding a dispute about the use of the PIN.

AT NO TIME SHOULD ANY STAKEHOLDER USE OR HAVE ACCESS TO ANOTHER PERSON'S PIN.

#### 4.7 Debt Recovery

My Place FDC works in conjunction with Educators to recover any debt incurred by parents.

### 5. Review

This policy remains in effect unless otherwise determined by resolution of the Board of Directors. This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner as required

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	09/2015	Reviewed
Revision 02	01/2016	Reviewed
Revision 03	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 04	12/2018	Reviewed
Revision 05	12/2019	Reviewed
Revision 06	01/2021	Reviewed

### 6. Related Documents

#### **Policies**

9.1 Enrolment and Orientation Policy

10.1 Governance and Management Policy

## Procedures

- 9.1 Enrolment and Orientation Procedure
- 10.10 Fee Procedure

## Forms

- Child Enrolment
- Contracted Hours/Harmony Web Booking Change Request
- My Place FDC Fee Schedule
- My Place FDC Parent Fee Schedule

## References

Australian Government, Department of Education, Child Care Services Handbook 2019  
retrieved 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019 from: <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0>

Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017

Education and Care Services National Law 2010

Family Law Act (parenting order) 1975 S,64B (1) and (parenting plan) 63C(I)

Education and Care National Regulation 2011 (July 2019)

R.158 Children's attendance record to be kept by approved provider

R.159 Children's attendance records to be kept by family day care educator

R.160 Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator