

Payment of Fees Policy

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).

We are committed to providing all families the opportunity to enroll their children at our service, with a clear, transparent, fair and inclusive fee structure.

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

National Education and Care Regulations

Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012	
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017 A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999	Family Law Act 1975 Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix G https://www.dese.gov.au/resources-child-care-providers/resources/child-care-provider-handbook
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Related Policies

Arrival and Departure Policy Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Governance Policy	Fraud Prevention Policy Managing Complaints Policy	Enrolment Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
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PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of REED's fee structure, payment requirements and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains the 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.

SCOPE

This policy applies to families and management of REED Services.

IMPLEMENTATION

REED 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 meeting 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. REED ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to us about the enrolled child and family.

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The fee structure of REED includes:

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 REED.

- Fees must be paid at minimum of two weeks in advance of a child's attendance.
- Fees are to be paid weekly or fortnightly through a direct debit system. If families wish to pay fees on a monthly basis, they must ensure the amount paid remains two weeks in advance.
- Fees are payable for every day that a child is enrolled at a REED Service. This includes pupil free days, sick days, public holidays and family holidays but excludes periods when the Approved Provider has closed the Service.
- Fees are charged as full sessions only (no matter what the attendance hours are)
- Casual days may be offered to families if available within the Service's license.

Change of Fees

- The REED Board will determine and set the fees annually to meet the sustainability and viability of the organisation.
- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of two weeks written notice is given to all families.

Payment of fees

- Fees are set up using REED's direct debit system.
- Families will be issued with a fee statement that includes details of sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts, on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements.
- A dishonour fee of \$19.95 will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees, this is deducted via the direct debit system..

Financial Difficulties

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the General Manager.

Failure to Pay

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, they will receive a reminder phone call from our admin team along with an email. If no contact is made with the family or the fees are still outstanding, they will continue to be contacted by phone and email each week until fees have been paid.

- If payment is not received after three weeks, all care will cease, and the family will receive a final letter terminating their child's position within all REED services.
- Any families that have had care terminated due to an outstanding fee amount, will not be offered future care within any REED service until the amount is paid in full.
- At this time REED will initiate its debt collection procedure, following privacy and conditional requirements.

Late Fees

- REED Services are not licensed or insured to have children on the premises after hours. This is a breach of the Education and Care Regulations.
- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the Service. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up by closing time. Currently, a fee of \$15.00 per 10 minutes block per child and part thereof will occur.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late.

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
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
 - combined family income
 - activity test of parents
 - type of early learning and childcare Service.

- Child Care Subsidy will be provided directly to the Service 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 are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments.

Additional Child Care Subsidy

- 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 transition from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment.

Complaints relating to the administration of Child Care Subsidy

- Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.
- Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Offline either via phone or email:

- Phone: 1800 664 231
- Email: tipoffline@dese.gov.au

Absences from Service

- Families are requested to contact the Service/admin if their child is unable to attend a particular session.
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the Service 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 Service for each additional absence, where required
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via [myGov](#).
- In a period of local emergency, such as bushfire or pandemic, and our Service is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families *may* be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

Termination of Enrolment

- Parents are to provide two weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from a REED Service.
- If termination from the Service is required without notification, families will lose their Child Care Subsidy resulting in the payment of full fees to be charged.

Responsibility of Management

- The Corporate Services Manager is responsible for the billing of fees and management of outstanding debts.
- Should families wish to discuss fees, they will need to speak to the Corporate services e Manager who can be contacted by phone: (08) 6832 3825 or email: admin@reedwa.org.au

Source

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2021). Policy and procedure guidelines. *Payment of Service Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Service*.

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment 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.dese.gov.au/early-childhood>

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment *Information for childcare 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)

Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
September 2023		September 2025
August 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minor reformatting and structure - Additional content 	August 2023
December 2021	Sources updated	December 2022
February 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minor reformatting - Sources updated 	February 2021
January 2019	Policy developed by REED management	January 2020