

FEES – LONG DAY CARE & FREE KINDERGARTEN

QUALITY AREA 7 |



PURPOSE

In this policy document, Creative Minds Early Years Pty Ltd is referred to as Creative Minds Early Years.

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines for:

Long daycare:

- the setting, payment and collection of fees
- ensuring the viability of Creative Minds Early Years, by setting appropriate fees and charges
- the equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided by Creative Minds Early Years.

Free kindergarten:

- free kindergarten funding for funded sessional and integrated kindergarten programs
- reduced fees for children enrolled in a funded kindergarten program in a long day care centre
- the application of surplus funding within Creative Minds Early Years ensuring it is only used to ensure the quality of program delivery and development of children enrolled in the service
- the setting, payment and collection of long day-care parent fees minus the Free Kindergarten Funding.
- the equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided by Creative Minds Early Years



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Creative Minds Early Years is committed to:

- supporting the Victorian Government's Free Kindergarten initiative
- increasing access to quality kindergarten programs for all Victorian children
- ensuring there are no financial barriers for families wishing to access an early childhood program for their child/children
- providing responsible financial management of the service, including establishing fees that will result in a financially viable service, while keeping user fees at the lowest possible level
- providing a fair and manageable system for dealing with non-payment and/or inability to pay fees/outstanding debts
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians
- advising users of the service about program government funding and fees to be paid by parents/guardians
- advising users of the service about program funding, including government support and fees to be paid by parents/guardians
- providing equitable access for families eligible for Early Start Kindergarten

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and, parents/guardians attending Creative Minds Early Years.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students	
	R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
	Long daycare & Free Kindergarten					
	Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements	R	√			
	Implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the Nominated Supervisor and staff, and in line with the requirements of DE’s Free Kindergarten (refer to Definitions) initiative and long daycare	R	√	√	√	
Developing a fee policy that balances the parent’s/guardian’s capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability	R	√				
Communicating with families at enrolment about fees, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the amounts chargedpayment periods and methodshow the Child Care Subsidy or other government subsidy will be appliednotice periodshow they can access copies of statements/receiptsfinancial hardship considerations and payment plans	R	√				
Implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the nominated supervisor and staff, and in line with the requirements of the Commonwealth Governments Child Care Package (refer to Sources)	R	√				
Reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered	R	√				
Considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families	R	√				

Clearly communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally-sensitive way, and where possible in the family's first language	R	√			
Ensuring that the <i>Fees – Long daycare & free kindergarten Policy</i> is readily accessible at the service (<i>Regulation 171</i>)	R	√			
Taking reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, ECT/educators, staff and volunteers follow this policy and procedure (<i>Regulation 170</i>)	R	√	√		√
Providing all parents/guardians with fee information (<i>refer to Attachment 1 and 2</i>)	R	√			
Providing all parents/guardians with a statement of fees and charges upon enrolment of their child/ren	R	√			
Providing all parents/guardians with a Complying Written Arrangement (<i>refer to Definitions and Attachment 4</i>). All arrangements must be recorded, either on paper or electronically, and must be kept by the provider	R	√			
Ensuring that once the approved provider enters into a Complying Written Arrangement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) with a family, they must submit an enrolment notice within seven days of the end of the week in which the arrangement started	R	√			
Informing families that children who haven't attended a session of care in 26 consecutive weeks will no longer be eligible for Child Care Subsidy (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)	R	√			
Informing families if they are receiving Child Care Subsidy (<i>refer to Definitions</i>), the must update Centrelink on any changes to their income, activity and other circumstances via their Centrelink online account	R	√			
Providing all parents/guardians with a fee payment agreement (<i>refer to samples in Attachment 3</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring fees are collected and receipted	R	√			
Collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documentation regarding those with entitlement to concessions, where applicable	R	√		√	
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees	R	√			
Notifying parents/guardians a minimum of 14 days before any proposed changes that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected. (<i>Regulation 172(2)</i>)	R	√			
Addressing any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service in a timely manner with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Enrolment Officer.	R	√			

Reading the Creative Minds Early Years Fee information for families (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>), and complying with the Fee Payment Agreement (<i>refer to Attachments 3</i>)				√	
Notifying the approved provider if they are experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees				√	
Signing and complying with the terms and conditions regarding Fee Payment in enrolment form				√	
Informing the approved provider of any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service		√	√		
Referring parents'/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the approved provider.		√	√		
Providing the required documentation to enable the service to claim Early Start Kindergarten, if eligible (refer to Attachment 1).				√	
Free Kindergarten					
Reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered	R	√			
Considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at Creative Minds Early Years and removing those barriers wherever possible	R	√			
Ensuring families are not charged any compulsory out-of-pocket levies or maintenance fees	R	√			
Ensuring any non-funded positions are enrolled in accordance with the Funding Guidelines (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring families that attend both sessional kindergarten and a long day care service nominate and document which service the child will participate in the funded kindergarten program Providing communication to families explaining their access to one funded kindergarten program per child, per year at one service.	R	√		√	
Ensuring that any surplus funding is used for directly supporting the quality of the teaching and learning in the kindergarten program and/or attendance at the service, including vulnerable children and families not yet enrolled and/or towards the change management required for preparing for three-year-old expansion	R	√			
Ensuring any voluntary parent payments/donations are explicitly agreed to in writing and receipted	R	√			
Charging families only for an occasional special event/ excursions that occur outside the normal program/curriculum	R	√	√		
Ensuring that any child that is eligible for Early Start Kindergarten is still enrolled at the service and recorded on the KIM/Arrival system	R	√	√		

Collecting all relevant information regarding those with entitlement to concessions and recording it on the KIM system	R	✓	✓		
Providing all parents/guardians with information about Free Kindergarten (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)	R	✓			
Reading the Creative Minds Early Years Free Kindergarten information for families (<i>refer to Attachments 2</i>),				✓	
Providing agreement in writing if any additional payments are made to the Creative Minds Early Years				✓	
Providing the required documentation to enable the service to claim Early Start Kindergarten, if eligible (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>).				✓	



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Long daycare:

Regulation 168(2) (n) of Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 requires that Early Childhood Education and Care services have a comprehensive written fees policy, and the content of this policy must be communicated to families. The policy must include a written statement about the fees to be charged and the payment process. All families must be informed of applicable fees at the time of enrolment.

Childcare services providing approved child care (*refer to Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017* (*refer to Legislation and standards*). The Commonwealth Government supports working parents/guardians in making early childhood education and care more affordable and accessible through the Child Care Package (The Package). The Package includes the Child Care Subsidy (*refer to Definitions*) and Child Care Safety Net (*refer to Definitions*). Together, they enable parents/guardians to participate in the workforce by making early childhood education and care affordable and accessible.

The Child Care Subsidy helps by assisting families with their child care fees and provides greater assistance to low and middle-income families

The Child Care Safety Net provides families and services extra support if they are vulnerable and disadvantaged, or located in a regional or remote community. The Child Care Safety Net includes:

- **The Additional Child Care Subsidy:** which provides extra payment on top of the Child Care Subsidy for families who need more help. There are four different payments:
 - For families who need help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
 - For grandparents who care for their grandchildren
 - For families experiencing significant financial stress
 - For parents transitioning from welfare to work
- **The Community Child Care Fund:** which helps services stay open and available to children in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities.
- **The Inclusion Support Program:** which provides support to Early Childhood Education and Care services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs in mainstream services

- **Subsidised Care for Low Income Families:** who earn \$69,390 or less a year can access 24 hours of subsidised care per child per fortnight without having to meet the activity test.

Free Kindergarten:

The Best Start, Best Life reform will help all Victorian children dream even bigger through increased access to quality early childhood education and care. A critical part of the reform is Free Kindergarten, which will support access to two years of high-quality kindergarten programs for all Victorian children. All families with a child enrolled in a funded kindergarten program are eligible for Free Kindergarten, this includes both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs.

Free Kindergarten supports families to access a funded kindergarten program by:

- providing a free 15-hour program to four-year-old children enrolled at a sessional service
- providing a free 5-to-15-hour program to three-year-old children enrolled at a sessional service (subject to the length of funded program offered)
- offsetting the funded kindergarten program component of parent fees for three and four-year-old children enrolled at a long day care service

Free kindergarten supports every Victorian child to get the best start in life no matter where they live. Research shows that play-based learning is a powerful way to support children's learning and development. Two years of early learning is a crucial part of their educational journey, these benefits last into the school years and beyond.

Regulation 168(2) (n) of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 requires that funded services have a comprehensive written fees policy, and the content of this policy must be communicated to families. Any voluntary parent donations and/or fundraising must comply with the Free Kindergarten subsidy guidelines and be responsive to the local community.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic)
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017
- Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017
- National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

Approved child care: Approved child care services are services that have Australian Government approval to receive the Child Care Subsidy (*refer to Definitions*) on behalf of eligible parents. Approved child care includes centre-based day care, including long day care and occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care and in-home care.

Centrelink: The agency that delivers payments and services to parents/guardians on behalf of the Australian Government

Child Care Safety Net: Child Care Safety Net provides families and services extra support if they are vulnerable and disadvantaged, or located in a regional or remote community. Supporting children to access quality early childhood education and care services

Child Care Subsidy (CCS): A Commonwealth Government means tested subsidy to assist eligible parents/guardians with the cost of child care. Payments are paid directly to approved child care providers. Further information can be found at: www.dese.gov.au/child-care-subsidy

CCC Preschool Exemption: The preschool category provides families who do not meet the activity test with up to 36 hours of subsidised care per fortnight to support their preschool-age child to attend a preschool program in the year before school, in a child care service. Further information can be found at: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/> Note: withdrawal policy does not apply to Victorian Funded Kindergarten.

Complying Written Arrangement: A written arrangement between a child care provider and an individual to provide child care in return for fees. The arrangement includes certain required information:

- the names and contact details of the provider and the individual(s)
- the date the arrangement starts
- the name and date of birth of the child (or children)
- if care will be provided on a routine basis and if so
 - details about the days on which sessions of care will usually occur
 - the usual start and end times for these sessions of care
 - whether care will be on a casual or flexible basis (in addition to, or instead of, a routine basis)
- details of fees charged under the arrangement (providers can reference a fee schedule or information available on their website), which the parties understand may vary from time to time.

Additional information can be included to support the individual's understanding of their payment obligations

Early Start Kindergarten: A funding program that enables three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection to attend a kindergarten program that is planned and delivered by an early childhood teacher for up to 15 hours per week. Details are available at: www.education.vic.gov.au. Children that are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) will continue to be enrolled, this ensure that service providers receive all funding entitlements and that these children have access to 15 funded hours of kindergarten across Victoria. ESK enrolments contribute to School Readiness Funding (SRF) calculations for service providers. It also allows the Department to continue to monitor efforts to engage the most vulnerable children in kindergarten across Victoria and provide additional targeted support where required through SRF or Early Childhood LOOKOUT.

Fees: A charge for program hours over and above the 15 funded hours per week (600 per year) and/or wrap around care.

Free Kindergarten: A Victorian Government initiative providing free kindergarten programs for four-year-old and three-year-old children in funded services

Excursion/service event charge: An additional charge required to meet the cost of special events or excursions that occur in response to emerging children's program needs. Events that are planned ahead and are included as an expenditure item in the service's budget do not incur this additional charge (*refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy*).

Fees: A charge for a place within a program at the service.

Holding fee: 2 weeks full fees in advance

Late collection fee: A charge that may be imposed by the approved provider when parents/guardians are late to collect their child/children from the program (*refer to Attachment 1*)

Voluntary parent/guardian payment/donation: A voluntary payment/donation for items not directly related to the provision of the children's program. Explicit and written agreement from a parent is required for any voluntary payments. Attendance at the service is not conditional on this payment.

Wrap around care: care that is provided by a kindergarten service to kindergarten children outside of the 15 hours per week program.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES



SOURCES

- Child Care Package: Commonwealth child care fee assistance including the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS): www.dese.gov.au
- Best Start Best Life: <https://www.vic.gov.au/give-your-child-the-best-start-in-life>
- The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Department of Education and Training): www.education.vic.gov.au
- Resources for Funded Kindergartens: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au>

RELATED POLICIES

- Compliments and Complaints
 - Delivery and Collection of Children
 - Enrolment and Orientation
 - Excursions and Service Events
 - Governance and Management of the Service
 - Inclusion and Equity
 - Privacy and Confidentiality
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EVALUATION



In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to affordability, flexibility of payment options and procedures for the collection of fees
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- monitor the number of families/children excluded from the service because of their inability to pay fees
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk

(Regulation 172 (2))



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Fee information for families
- Attachment 2: Free Kindergarten information for families
- Attachment 3: Fee payment agreement
- Attachment 4: Complying Written Arrangement
- Attachment 5: Example of Statement of fees and charges



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Creative Minds Early Years on 1st July 2025

REVIEW DATE: 1st July 2026

ATTACHMENT 1. FEE INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Creative Minds Early Years 2025

1. General information

Creative Minds Early Years abides by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017* (refer to *Legislation and standards*). The Child Care Subsidy helps by assisting families with their child care fees and provides greater assistance to low and middle-income families. The Child Care Safety Net provides families and services extra support if they are vulnerable and disadvantaged or located in a regional or remote community.

Hours of operation	Monday - Friday 6.30am – 6.00pm
Planned Closures	Public holidays and 22 December 2025 Clean-up Day. Professional Development days will be advised. Set up days 2026 to be advised
Long daycare daily Fee	\$141 per day (CCS/ACCS)

2. How fees are set

As part of the budget development process, Creative Minds Early Years sets fees each year for the programs of the service, taking into consideration:

- the financial viability of the service
- the level of government funding provided
- the availability of other income sources, such as grants
- the fees charged by similar services in the area
- the capacity of parents/guardians to pay fees
- reasonable expenditure in meeting agreed program quality and standards
- requirements of Child Care Package: www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package

Once fees are set for the year, they will only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if enrolments drop and the service is at risk of not being able to meet its expenses.

3. Other charges

Other charges levied by Creative Minds Early Years include:

- **Holding Fee:** At beginning of enrolment a holding fee will be charged to parent/guardian account. The amount will be one-week full fee of the child's booking, refunded at the end of the booking enrolment to assist with finalising fees.
- **Excursion/service event charge:** At times throughout the year an additional excursion(s) or event(s) may be arranged where it is considered relevant to the service's program and the children's interests. At this time any additional costs to families are taken into consideration before a decision is made (*refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy*).
- **Late collection fee:** Creative Minds Early Years reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from the service. Arriving late to collect a child is not acceptable behaviour, as this means we are operating outside the licensing hours and your place may be at risk if this behaviour is continued. A minimum of 2 staff members must stay behind until the parent (or their nominated emergency contact) is able to collect the child. A late fee (for any reason) will be charged \$30 in 15-minute blocks for each child collected later than Creative Minds Early Years closing time. Parent picking up one child at 6:30 will be charged in 15 minutes blocks thereafter. I.e. \$60 for 30 minutes.

Parents/guardians acknowledge the fees will be applied when they have arrived late and signed out via Kidsoft, when they have collected their child/children. A staff member (Person in Charge) will also validate this, and the fees will be added to your account.

4. Statement of fees and charges

A statement of fees and charges will be provided to families on enrolment (*refer to Attachment 3*).

5. Payment of fees

Creative Minds Early Years will regularly review payment options and procedures to ensure that they are inclusive and sensitive to families' cultural and financial situations.

Fees will be invoiced on a fortnightly basis. Invoices will show any childcare subsidy payments made by the Commonwealth Government and the remaining gap fee is to be paid by parents/carers by the date indicated on the invoice. Families are expected to pay the gap fee shown on the invoice each fortnight and not allow fees to fall more than two weeks into arrears.

Fees will be invoiced to parents/guardians directly and must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. Each invoice will be accompanied by payment instructions. Receipts will be provided for all fee payments. Fees are paid by direct debit. Regular scheduled payments are processed through our enrolment software.

Parents/guardians experiencing difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor or Enrolment Officer to arrange a suitable alternative payment plan. The [Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#) of the service will be complied with at all times in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances.

6. Cancellation of booking

Families are asked to provide two weeks' written notice of the cancellation of a booking. Fees will continue to apply for the two weeks' notice period unless cancellation of booking is due to an illness and a medical certificate is provided.

7. Unpaid fees

If fees are not paid by the due date, the following steps will be taken:

- An initial reminder letter will be sent to parents/guardians with a specified payment date and will include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- Where payment is still not received, families will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the range of support options available and establish a payment plan.
- Failure to attend the meeting and continued non-payment may result in a second and final letter notifying parents/guardians that the child's place at the service may be withdrawn unless payment is made or a payment plan is entered into within a specified period of time. This letter will also include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- Creative Minds Early Years will continue to offer support and will reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector.
- If a decision is made to withdraw the child's place at the service, the parents/guardians will be provided with 14 days' notice in writing.
- No further enrolments of children from the parents/guardians will be accepted until all outstanding fees have been paid.
- A late fee of 15% per week is applied to any overdue fees.

7. Refund of fees

Fees are non-refundable (exceptional circumstances may apply – these are at the discretion of the approved provider. There will be no refund of fees in the following circumstances:

- a child's short-term illness
- family holiday during operational times

- closure of the service for one or more days when a qualified educator is absent, and a qualified reliever is not available
- closure of the service for staff training days
- closure of the service due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances.

In addition, there will be no refund where a family chooses not to send their child to the program for the maximum number of hours for which they are enrolled.

8. Fundraising

Fundraising activities are an opportunity for families and communities to come together to raise money for a community need. **Participation in fundraising is voluntary.**

9. Support services

Families experiencing financial hardship often require access to family support services. Information on these services may be available from Creative Minds Early Years or alternatively families may contact the local council.

10. Notification of fee changes during the year

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget 'break even' point. Parents/guardians will be notified one term in advance of any required fee increase and will be offered the option to request a payment plan.

11. Non collection of children

If 30 minutes after closing time, a child has not been collected and the centre has been unable to make contact with or had no contact from family or the emergency contacts, the staff will have no other option but to contact the child family services and/or the police to collect the child. Staff are not authorised to, under any circumstances, to drive the children home to the parent, put a child into a taxi or hand the child over to any person deemed not fit to care for the child e.g. parent under the influence of drugs or alcohol in which case the staff (Person in Charge) will call the police immediately for assistance and advice.

ATTACHMENT 2. FREE KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Creative Minds Early Years 2025

1. General information

Kindergarten programs for four-year-old and eligible three-year-old children in Victorian Government funded services will be free as part of the Best Start, Best Life reform.

This investment will save families up to \$2,627 for each child enrolled in a participating sessional funded kindergarten (non CCS rebate) program. Children attending integrated funded kindergarten in long daycare (accessing CCS rebates) will save families up to \$2,101 for each child. \$50 is deducted off fees weekly over 40 weeks.

DET also provides funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs.

Creative Minds Early Years provides a range of support options to parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with payment of fees (see below).

Operation hours	
Term 1 – 28 January 2025 – 19 December 2025	Monday – Friday 6.30am – 6.00pm
	<p>Funded Kindergarten hours are 8.30am – 4.00pm daily with wrap around care in long daycare available before and after.</p> <p>Funded Kindergarten is during term time (40 weeks of the year). Each child is eligible for two funded days (15 hours) of kindergarten per week.</p> <p>Bookings will continue throughout the year operating as long daycare during school holidays.</p> <p>Example 1:</p> <p>Child attends Wednesday and Thursday in kindergarten – can attend same days in long daycare during school holidays. Fees apply even if child is absent. Booking holds the place.</p> <p>Example 2:</p> <p>Child can access 2 funded days and up to 3 long daycare days if vacancies allow.</p>
Planned Closures (VECTEA conditions)	28 th January, 2025, set up day. 19 th December 2025 clean-up Day. Professional Development days will be advised.
Additional Hours account for closure	Public Holidays
Long daycare daily Fee (3 year old kindergarten and 4 year old kindergarten):	\$141 per day (CCS/ACCS) and free kindergarten credit (40 weeks/600 hours over year) will be applied to reduce the cost

Free kindergarten:	Sessional kindergarten accessing only kindergarten hours will be able to access free kindergarten
	<p>Funded Kindergarten sessional and integrated 3 and 4 year old, long day care kindergarten program days and times-</p> <p>Monday - 8.30am – 4pm</p> <p>Tuesday - 8.30am – 4pm</p> <p>Wednesday - 8.30am – 4pm</p> <p>Thursday - 8.30am – 4pm</p> <p>Friday – 8.30am – 4pm</p>

2. What free kindergarten means at our service

Creative Minds Early Years has opted in to the Free Kindergarten initiative. Applicable parent fees are outlined below:

- Funded sessional kindergarten for 3-year-old children (up to 15 hours per week) – no parent fee
- Funded sessional kindergarten for 4-year-old children (15 hours per week) - no parent fee
- Kindergarten in long day care for 3 and 4 -year-old children – parent fee will be reduced by the Free Kindergarten Funding

3. Other charges:

Other charges levied by Creative Minds Early Years are included on the Statement of Fees and Charges, that will be provided to families upon enrolment.

These include:

- **Holding Fee:** At beginning of enrolment a holding fee will be charged to parent/guardian account. The amount will be one-week full fee of the child's booking, refunded at the end of the booking enrolment to assist with finalising fees. *(applicable only to integrated 3 and 4 year old long day care funded kindergarten)*
- **Excursion/service event charge (outside of the 15 hours per week program):** At times throughout the year an additional excursion(s) or event(s) may be arranged where it is considered relevant to the service's program and the children's interests. At this time any additional costs to families are taken into consideration before a decision is made *(refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy)*.
- **Late collection charge:** The approved provider reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from the service. This charge will be set at a level determined by the approved provider. wrap around care fees

Creative Minds Early Years offers wrap around care outside of the 15 hours per week (600 hours per year) sessional kindergarten program. This fee is applicable to all families that require care before and after the kindergarten session.

4. Fundraising and voluntary parent payment/donations

Fundraising activities are an opportunity for families and communities to come together to raise money for a community need. **Participation in fundraising is voluntary.**

4.1 Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is an Australian Government subsidy that can assist eligible families with the costs of childcare at an approved child care provider.

Approved child care are providers that meet certain standards and requirements, and are approved by the Australian Government. Approved child care providers must:

- hold the required approvals or licences to provide child care in the state or territory that the service/s operate in
- ensure the provider and any individual who is or will be a Person with Management or Control of the Provider is fit and a proper person to administer the CCS (requirements set out in Section 194E of A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999.
- be financially viable and is likely to remain so
- ensure that required fit and proper checks are carried out for each Person with Management or Control of the Provider, Persons with Responsibility for Day-to-Day Operation of the Service and In-Home Care and Family Day Care Educators

The amount of subsidy received is determined by the circumstances of the applicant's including the family income, the hourly rate cap and the hours of activity undertaken by the parents. Further information for parents can be found here: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>

Long day care providers that offer funded kindergarten as part of the long day care program are required to directly offset the full payment of the Free Kindergarten initiative from parents' out of pocket fees (after CCS is applied). Fee reductions will be made proportionally across the year to families' bills, i.e. fortnightly or monthly. Only children receiving a funded kindergarten place at Creative Minds Early Years, led by a qualified teacher, are eligible under this initiative.

Exclusions and exceptions: Not available for providers that primarily provide an early educational program to children in the year that is two years before grade one of school (preschool or kindergarten).

4.2 Early Start Kindergarten

Early Start Kindergarten gives eligible children 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten a week for two years before starting school.

To be eligible, the child must be three by 30 April in the year they start kindergarten and meet one of the following criteria:

- be from a refugee or asylum seeker background
- identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- your family has had contact with Child Protection.

Children can also access free or low cost Four-Year-Old Kindergarten through the Early Start Kindergarten Extension Grant. Contact the service for further information.

5. Payment of fees for wrap around care

Fees are payable for hours over and above 15 hours per week (600 hours per year) and/or wrap around care.

The approved provider will regularly review payment options and procedures to ensure that they are inclusive and sensitive to families' cultural and financial situations.

Fees will be invoiced fortnightly to parents/guardians directly and must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. Each invoice will be accompanied by payment instructions. Receipts will be provided for all fee payments.

Families are expected to pay the gap fee shown on the invoice each fortnight and not allow fees to fall more than two weeks into arrears.

Parents/guardians experiencing difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor or Enrolment Officer to arrange a suitable alternative payment plan. The [Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#) of the service will be complied with at all times in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances.

6. Unpaid fees for extended hours/wrap around care

If fees are not paid by the due date, the following steps will be taken.

- An initial reminder letter will be sent to parents/guardians with a specified payment date, and will include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- Where payment is still not received, families will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the range of support options available and establish a payment plan.
- Failure to attend the meeting and continued non-payment may result in a second and final letter notifying parents/guardians that the child's place at the service may be withdrawn unless payment is made or a payment plan is entered into within a specified period of time. This letter will also include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- The approved provider continues to offer support and will reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector.
- If a decision is made to withdraw the child's place at the service, the parents/guardians will be provided with 14 days' notice in writing.
- No further enrolments of children from the parents/guardians will be accepted until all outstanding fees have been paid.
- A late fee of 15% per week is applied to any overdue fees.

7. Refund of fees

Fees are non-refundable (exceptional circumstances may apply – these are at the discretion of the Approved Provider)

There will be no refund of these fees in the following circumstances:

- a child's short-term illness
- family holiday during operational times
- closure of the service for one or more days when a qualified educator is absent, and a qualified reliever is not available
- closure of the service for staff training days
- closure of the service due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances.

In addition, there will be no refund where a family chooses not to send their child to the program for the maximum number of hours for which they are enrolled.

8. Support services

Families experiencing financial hardship often require access to family support services. Information on these services may be available from Creative Minds Early Years or alternatively families can contact the local council.

9. Notification of fee changes during the year for wrap around care

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget 'break even' point. Parents/guardians will be notified one term in advance of any required fee increase and will be offered the option to request a payment plan.

10. Late collection fee:

Creative Minds Early Years reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from the service.

Arriving late to collect a child is not acceptable behaviour, as this means we are operating outside the licensing hours and your place may be at risk if this behaviour is continued. A minimum of 2 staff members must stay behind until the parent (or their nominated emergency contact) is able to collect the child.

A late fee (for any reason) will be charged \$30 in 15-minute blocks for each child collected later than Creative Minds Early Years closing time. Parent picking up one child at 6:30 will be charged in 15 minutes blocks thereafter. I.e. \$60 for 30 minutes.

11. Non collection of children

If after 30 minutes after closing time, a child has not been collected and the centre has been unable to make contact with or had no contact from family or the emergency contacts, the staff will have no other option but to contact the child family services and/or the police to collect the child. Staff are not authorised to, under any circumstances, to drive the children home to the parent, put a child into a taxi or hand the child over to any person deemed not fit to care for the child e.g. parent under the influence of drugs or alcohol in which case the staff (Person in Charge) will call the police immediately for assistance and advice.

ATTACHMENT 3. FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT

Please complete this form and return to Creative Minds Early Years by [Date]

Fee payment contract

Child/ren full name: _____

Parent's/guardian's full name: _____

- I/we acknowledge that the childcare service is funded by fees paid by parents/guardians. The service cannot operate without the fees paid by parents/guardians.
- I/we agree to pay "[enter amount]" fees in full in advance prior to commencing at Creative Minds Early Years and remain "[enter amount]" in advance at all times
- I/we acknowledge having received and read the attached summary of Creative Minds Early Years fees policy, which sets out the procedure for fee payment
- I/we understand that fees are non-refundable.
- I/we agree that if our activity and financial circumstances change, we will immediately notify Centrelink to ensure our Child Care Subsidy entitlements are up to date
- I/we acknowledge that if fees are not paid by the due date, Creative Minds Early Years will implement the late payment of fees procedures, as outlined in the Fee Information for Families, which could result in the withdrawal of my/our child's place at the service and no further enrolments until the outstanding fees are paid.
- I/we agree that if my/our financial circumstances change and I/we am/are unable to pay as agreed, I/we will immediately notify the [responsible position] to discuss alternative payment options.
- I/we acknowledge that I/we have received and read the service's Fee information for families, which outlines the procedure for payment of fees.
- I/we Agree to pay fees while the child is absent. Examples include annual leave, public holidays, illness, closure due to unforeseen circumstances etc.
- I/we acknowledge a late fee of [enter amount] will be charged to families for late payment of their account.
- I/we agree to collect my child/ren from Creative Minds Early Years prior to closing time.
- I/we agree to give [enter amount] written notice of when my child/children will be leaving Creative Minds Early Years.

Signature (parent/guardian): _____ Date: _____

Note: invoices, receipts and collection of fees will be in accordance with the Creative Minds Early Years [Fees Policy](#).

Fee amounts are confirmed upon enrolment in our enrolment software and viewable at any time.

ATTACHMENT 4. COMPLYING WRITTEN ARRANGEMENT.

Please complete this form and return to Creative Minds Early Years by [Date]

Parent Name			
Parent CRN			
Address			
Mobile		Email	

Child's Name:			Start Date		
Date of Birth			Child CRN		
Care Arrangements Type:					
Routine Sessions Only <input type="checkbox"/>			Casual Sessions Only <input type="checkbox"/>		
Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Please include the Start & Finish Times for all booked days					
Week 1					
Week 2 (if Different)					

- I/we acknowledge that the childcare service is funded by fees paid by parents/guardians. The service cannot operate without the fees paid by parents/guardians.
- I/we agree to pay "[enter amount]" fees in full in advance prior to commencing at Creative Minds Early Years and remain "[enter amount]" in advance at all times
- I/we acknowledge having received and read the attached summary of Creative Minds Early Years fees policy, which sets out the procedure for fee payment
- I/we understand that fees are non-refundable.
- I/we agree that if our activity and financial circumstances change, we will immediately notify Centrelink to ensure our Child Care Subsidy entitlements are up to date
- I/we acknowledge that if fees are not paid by the due date, Creative Minds Early Years will implement the late payment of fees procedures, as outlined in the Fee Information for Families, which could result in the withdrawal of my/our child's place at the service and no further enrolments until the outstanding fees are paid.
- I/we agree that if my/our financial circumstances change and I/we am/are unable to pay as agreed, I/we will immediately notify the [responsible position] to discuss alternative payment options.
- I/we acknowledge that I/we have received and read the service's Fee information for families, which outlines the procedure for payment of fees.
- I/we Agree to pay fees while the child is absent. Examples include annual leave, public holidays, illness, closure due to unforeseen circumstances etc.
- I/we acknowledge a late fee of [enter amount] will be charged to families for late payment of their account.
- I/we agree to collect my child/ren from Creative Minds Early Years prior to closing time.
- I/we agree to give [enter amount] written notice of when my child/children will be leaving Creative Minds Early Years.

Signature (parent/guardian): _____ Date: _____

Note: invoices, receipts and collection of fees will be in accordance with the Creative Minds Early Years [Fees Policy](#)

ATTACHMENT 5. EXAMPLE OF STATEMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES

Customer Account Statement/Tax Invoice/ Statement of Entitlement Guide



Customer Account Statement Tax Invoice Statement of Entitlement

Dasha Li-Wah
Po Box 699
Miami, QLD 4220

Burleigh Waters Early Learning Centre.

Burleigh Waters ELC
Provider Pty Ltd

Provider ABN: 17349353404
124 Preschool Lane
Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220
p. 075 548 451
e. burleighwaters@hotmail.com

Issued: 03-SEP-2019
Statement Period: 26-AUG-2019 to 08-SEP-2019

In Credit: 697.74

1 Account Financial Summary

Enrolment	Session Fee	Discount	CCS	ACCS	GAP
ALBURY, REMY (E3001301400)	790.00	0.00	536.95	0.00	223.05
	790.00	0.00	536.95	0.00	223.05

2 Account Attendance Summary

Enrolment	Attendance Days	Attendance YTD	Absences	Absences YTD
ALBURY, REMY (E3001301400)	8	39	0	2
	8	39	0	2

3 Account Transactions

Day	Date	Description	Fees	Discount	CCS	ACCS	Debit	Credit	Balance	Status
	25-AUG	Previous balance carried forward	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.01	
TUE	27-AUG	Daily Fees 9HR LD	95.00	0.00	67.14	0.00	27.86	0.00	-27.87	
TUE	27-AUG	Direct Debit Gap Fee	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	111.53	83.66	
TUE	03-SEP	Daily Fees 9HR LD	95.00	0.00	67.12	0.00	27.88	0.00	-27.89	Estimated
TUE	03-SEP	Direct Debit Gap Fee	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	111.53	83.64	Processing
			190.00	0.00	134.26	0.00	55.74	223.06	0.00	

5 Weekly CCS Summary

Date	Sess. Hrs	CCS Reported	CCS Reported	Applied	Fee	Hourly Fee	CCS %	CCS	ACCS	Gap
27-AUG-2019	09:00	09:00	95.00	10.56	74.39	87.12	0.00	27.88		
28-AUG-2019	09:00	09:00	95.00	10.56	74.39	87.12	0.00	27.88		
01-SEP-2019	10:00	10:00	190.00			134.24	0.00	55.76		

6 CCS Session Attendance Summary

Date	Sess. Start	Sess. End	Sess. Hrs	Attendance Start	Attendance End	Attendance Hours	Status
27-AUG-2019	07:30	16:30	09:00	07:54	15:00	07:14	
28-AUG-2019	07:30	16:30	09:00	07:53	16:34	08:41	
01-SEP-2019			10:00			10:00	
03-SEP-2019	07:30	16:30	09:00				Estimated
04-SEP-2019	07:30	16:30	09:00				Estimated
08-SEP-2019			10:00			00:00	

7 Bond Summary

Date	Account	Description	Refund	Payment	Charge
2019-06-17	Bond	Refundable Adjustment Bond Charge			250.00
2019-06-17	Bond	Bond payment Credit Card Bond Payment		250.00	
				Held	Outstanding
				250.00	0.00

1 Account Financial Summary

Provides a total where applicable of the Session Fee / Discount / Child Care Subsidy (CCS)/ Additional Child Care Subsidy - Child Wellbeing (ACCS) and Gap Fee for the statement period date range.

2 Account Attendance Summary

Provides a total of Attendance Days, Attendance Year to Date (YTD), Absences and Absences YTD for the statement period date range.

3 Account Transactions

Provides the most up to date account of all transactions incurred over the statement period, including the Session Fees charged, Additional Charges applied e.g. Late pick up fee, Payments made, and CCS, ACCS subsidies where applicable applied to your account. Each account transaction entry represents a change that may affect the balance owing.

4 Payments

Taken via the payment gateway "iDebitPro" will show as "Direct Debit Gap Fee" and will display as "processing" until the payment is processed by the bank. If the word "direct debit reversal" appears in the account transactions description, it means that the payment gateway was unsuccessful in taking the payment.

5 Weekly CCS Summary

(Statement of Entitlement) Shows the number of Actual Session hours, the CCS hours applied to that Session, the Session fee reported to CCS, the hourly fee per actual Session hours, CCS % applied as at that point in time, CCS subsidy \$, ACCS subsidy \$ and Gap fee owing for each session of care during the weeks in the statement period. This information is displayed and reported on as received by your service from the Government.

Customer Account Statement/Tax Invoice/ Statement of Entitlement Guide

STATUS

Estimated: Indicates Gap fee and Subsidy amounts are estimated. Once the transactions have been processed by the Government these will no longer show as estimated.

Processing: Payment has been submitted to the bank and is waiting to be processed.

Processed: Payment which has cleared by the bank.

Reversed: Payment which has been deleted.

Failed: Payment which has failed to clear.

Reversal: Payment correction of a Failed or Reversed Payment.

In Credit: The amount of credit the account is in as per the statement period date range.

Outstanding Balance: How much is owing on the account as per the statement period date range.

6 CCS Session Attendance Summary

Displays the session Start and End times, total session hours, and the actual reported attendance start and end times for your child's session (sign in and sign out times). This information is reported to the Government.

7 Bond Summary

Shows all bond payments charged to your account, this will display as Outstanding until paid, once paid this will display as Held. If your bond is refunded to you this will also display here. Bond transactions do not appear on your account transaction summary.

TERMINOLOGY

Session Fee: Fee charged per booking by your service.

Discount: Refers to a deduction applied by the service.

CCS Subsidy: Child Care Subsidy (CCS) paid by the Government to assist families with their child care fees.

ACCS: Additional Child Care Subsidy – Child Wellbeing is an additional top up payment paid by the Government to assist families with their child care fees.

Gap Fee: The Gap Fee is the difference between the amount you are charged, less discounts and the amount you receive from the Government.

Absence YTD: This provides a total of year to date absences for all services your child attends as reported by the Government for the current financial year.