

Parent Fees Policy



Licensing Criteria: Governance, Management and Administration

Rationale

The Redwoods Country Kindergarten is a private, fee charging educational service for tamariki predominantly aged between 3-6 years. Parent/whānau fees and optional charges make a necessary contribution towards our operational costs and ensure that our kindergarten remains sustainable and financially viable.

Objectives

- To provide written information outlining fees for whānau in alignment with the Ministry of Education Licensing Criteria GMA3
- To ensure whānau are kept informed in line with our Communication Policy

Procedures

Schedule of Fees:

- Our kindergarten will produce a schedule of current fees charged.
- Our Fee Schedule and Payment Procedures will be discussed as part of the whānau induction into kindergarten, available to view on our website and displayed on our kindergarten office wall. Additional copies of this information will be available on request.

20 Hours ECE:

- The Government subsidizes Early Childhood Education services for up to six hours per day and up to a maximum of 20 hours per week. This 20 hours ECE funding is available for all tamariki aged 3-5 years old. Hours of attendance over the 20 hours ECE will be charged at the Kindergarten hourly rate.
- If a child is attending more than one ECE service, parents/whānau must advise the kindergarten where they intend to use their 20 hours ECE funding as the Government subsidy can only be allocated to one service for each hour per child

WINZ Subsidies

- WINZ subsidies are available to those who qualify and entitlement is calculated on your annual income.
- You cannot claim both the 20 hours ECE subsidy and the Childcare Subsidy for the same hours of attendance but you can claim both for different hours of attendance.
- The Childcare subsidy, if applicable, will be paid directly into The Redwoods Country Kindergarten bank account.
- For advice about entitlement go to www.workandincome.govt.nz - childcare subsidy.

Enrolments:

- Information about fees charged by the kindergarten will be clearly communicated with parents/ whānau at the time of enrolment to avoid confusion, late payments or non-payment. Whānau should be fully aware of all costs and late penalties that management have the right to charge for not paying fees or collecting tamariki on time. Clear communication and transparency will support a positive relationship between Kaiako and whanau.
- Spaces will be allocated on a first in first served basis for tamariki around 3 years of age within the child's age group.. However, siblings of tamariki already attending will take precedence.
- The Redwoods Country Kindergarten requires a minimum of six hours attendance, two days a week for all tamariki. We believe this will support their sense of belonging and well-being and enable them to form meaningful relationships with both their peers and kaiako
- We believe that transition into kindergarten should be a positive experience for everyone and that tamariki settle in at their own pace. Whānau are therefore invited to support their tamariki during transition visits prior to enrolment commencing and then continue to support them until such time as it is agreed that the child is ready to stay at kindergarten without them.
- Parents/whānau who wish to cancel their enrolment are required to give the kindergarten at least two weeks' notice in advance by completing and signing a new attestation form.. If such notice is not given you are required to pay the fees for these two weeks.
- Parents/whānau who wish to change their hours of attendance, either temporarily or permanently, are required to give The Redwoods appropriate notice to ensure spaces are available and details will be recorded on the internal waiting list for existing children.
- If your child is sick, they must not attend kindergarten. This will minimize the risk of illness spreading to other tamariki and kaiako. In the event of your child being unwell and not being able to attend, we request that you notify us at the beginning of the day either by phone, text or email giving the specific reason for your child's absence.

Fees Structure:

- We have aligned our Kindergarten calendar with the Primary School sector because we believe our youngest children deserve a rest from their busy lives as much as their school aged siblings do. Fees are therefore payable for approximately 41 weeks of the year.
- Our fees include provision for the kindergarten to meet its employer obligations to staff for any statutory holidays that occur during the working week and when the kindergarten is closed during term breaks. This fee also includes provision for many of the services provided to ensure tamariki receive a high quality ECE experience.
- We do not require a holding fee for the remaining weeks that we are closed during the term breaks and this is reflected in our fees and optional charges.
- A late collection fee of \$7.50 for every additional 15 minutes may be charged for tamariki collected outside of their enrolled hours of attendance if this occurs more frequently than three times per term. The fee may be applied in the event of the third occurrence.
- In extraordinary circumstances when late collection is regular and unavoidable and no other option can be found, parents/whanau are invited to discuss this with management for re-consideration of the late collection fee on a case by case basis.
- If the kindergarten is forced to close at the instruction of the Ministry of Health, Civil Defence, an act of nature or the New Zealand Police, we will inform you of this immediately. You will not be charged any fees for the duration of the forced closure.

Optional Charges:

- An optional charge of \$2 per hour or \$12 per day may be applied for every hour that a child attends our service up to a maximum of \$36 pw.
- It is not compulsory to pay this charge, however the income generated from it ensures that your child will receive a high-quality early childhood education within a small group size, with a 3 kaiako to 24 children or 1:8 ratio and quality resources (see optional charge information for more details).
- The optional charge also includes provision for sunscreen and frequent real-life experiences such as cooking and gardening. We also offer e-portfolios and a paper copy for your child to access.
- The optional charge usually covers excursions into the wider community or special visitors to kindergarten who will enhance our learning programme. On rare occasions we may travel further afield and in these cases a donation may be requested to assist with the cost of travel.

- Information pertaining to our optional charges can be found on our enrolment form and in our Fee Schedule.

Holidays and Absences:

- Fees are required and must be paid in full regardless of illness or family vacation times.
- The 3 Week Absence Rule- The Ministry of Education funding criteria states that we are unable to claim funding if your child is absent for more than 3 weeks. A permanently booked space will be cancelled after 3 weeks if no contact or other arrangements have been made and approved by management.
- Please discuss any planned extended absences with management. A 50% holding fee may apply if absences exceed this length of time

Review of Fees and Charges:

- We reserve the right to review our fees annually in January and any adjustment will apply from the beginning of the next financial year on the 1st April. You will be given 3 months' notice in writing of any impending adjustment from the date that management have notified you.

Payment of fees

- Invoices will be issued on the first Tuesday of the week that your child's enrolment commences and every Tuesday thereafter until the end of the enrolment period. . Your invoice will itemize your child's hours booked, 20 Hours ECE (if applicable), WINZ subsidy entitlement (if applicable) and any other charges incurred. All information will be clearly shown on our invoices.
- Fees will be invoiced weekly for the current week and may be paid either weekly, fortnightly, monthly or termly in advance by automatic payment directly into our Kindergarten bank account. We do not accept cash or cheques for security reasons.
- Flexible payment plans, alternative payment methods or extensions for payment are to be discussed with management and approved on a case-by-case basis.
- Receipts can be issued at the end of each financial year or as requested when an enrolment is terminated.

Failure to Pay Fees on Time

- The parent/whānau who signs the enrolment form is liable for all fee payments. If another party is paying the fees, it is the enrolling parent's/ whanau's responsibility to ensure payments are being made.

- In the event of three (3) overdue payments, management will contact the parent/whanau to discuss this issue and to agree on an alternative option for payment.
- Payment plans, when in place, are expected to cover the full payment of weekly fees plus some additional payment towards reducing the accumulated fee debt.
- Failure to pay our fees may result in suspension of the child's enrolment at our kindergarten, referral to a debt collection agency and additional legal costs and charges being incurred.

Review

Policy will be reviewed annually as per our review schedule or when a change is required.

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| Ratified | Yes |
| Date | February 2024 |
| Review Date | February 2025 |
| Consultation undertaken | Yes |

References

- Education (Early Childhood services) Regulations 2008
Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood and Care Services 2008
- For WINZ assistance - www.workandincome.govt.nz - childcare subsidy
- ECE Funding Handbook - www.education.govt.nz