

## A-4

## FEES

### POLICY STATEMENT

TWOOSH is a not-for-profit organisation. TWOOSH sets fees in accordance with its annual budget in order to meet the income required to develop and maintain a quality service for children and families. We strive to ensure that our service is affordable and accessible to families in our community. The Management Committee (Approved Provider) ratifies the budget annually, or as necessary, and monitors it carefully throughout the year.

### CONSIDERATIONS:

- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011 (168,172,173)
- National Quality Standard: Quality area 7.3.
- Child Care Service Handbook (CCMS) 2013 - 2014
- Family information Handbook 2018-2019
- Survey Monkey Parent survey 2019
- A-12 Privacy and confidentiality policy
- A-10 Roles of management policy
- A-5 Delivery and collection of children, non-custodial parent access policy
- A-3 Enrolment and orientation policy

### PROCEDURES

#### 1. Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Some Australian families are eligible to receive CCS. Families who are eligible will only be required to pay the daily gap fee applicable to their financial circumstances. To have CCS applied to their account, families must first register with the Family Assistance Office and then notify the service of theirs and their child's customer reference number (CRN). Full fees are payable until the service has received all CRNs. It is the parent's responsibility to supply CRNs to the service.

#### 2. Bookings and cancellations

Families are required to make bookings in advance. Bookings will only be accepted when families have completed the service's current Enrolment Form in full and all aspects of the Comply Written Arrangement (CWA) are fulfilled. Families will then be notified whether a place is available, or they are on a waiting list.

Families wishing to cancel their child's place at the service are required to provide a minimum two (2) weeks written notice to the Director, or they are liable to pay the equivalent of two weeks' fees to the service. Cancellations during Term 4 may mean loss of those places for the following year. When a family provides written notice to cancel a child's place completely from the service, if the child does not attend during the notice period the family will be liable to pay full fees as CCS cannot be applied for these absences.

If a parent wishes to book in casual days in advance, this can be done in writing to the Director. If a family wishes to cancel or change any casual bookings made, 2 weeks' notice must be given in writing to amend or cancel the booking, or they are liable to pay the fees for those days, and children will be marked as an absentee.

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### 3. Absences

If a child is absent from after school care and OOSH is not notified of the absence before 3pm, a search fee of \$5.00 per instance will apply and be charged to the family's account.

If a child is booked into the service on specific days, fees are still payable if a child is absent for whatever reason, including:

- sickness
- family holidays
- overnight school excursions
- teacher strike days.

OOSH adheres to the Child Care Management System (CCMS) in relation to absences. CCS is paid for up to 42 absence days for each child per financial year across all approved children's services. Absence days are referred to as 'Initial 42 days absence' in the family assistance law. Supporting documentation is required for most additional absence types.

- Each child receives a new set of initial 42 absence days at the beginning of the financial year.
- These absence days can be taken for any reason (provided the day being reported as an absence is a day on which care would have otherwise been provided).
- These absence days cannot be reported before a child has begun care or after a child has left care. If a child is booked in to start at TWOOSH on a particular date, and does not start on that day due to an absence, the family will not receive CCS for the days the child was expected to attend, initial 42 days absences may not be claimed for these days. Similarly, if the family has advised that their child will leave your service on a particular day, but that child does not attend their last session(s) of care, the family will not receive CCS for the days the child was expected to attend. Initial 42 days absences may not be claimed for these days.

### 4. Service closure and fees

No fee is charged while the service is closed over the Christmas/New Year period. However, fees are still payable for closure due to a public holiday within a school term if it falls on a day the child is normally booked into the service. This includes public holidays which fall on the first day back after school holidays.

Normal Before & After school care fees are NOT PAYABLE during school holidays or on pupil free days. These days are determined as per the NSW Schools calendar. Separate fees will apply if the child is booked in for vacation care.

### 5. Payment of fees

Parents must complete a direct debit form on enrolment to the centre. Fees must be paid once invoiced within the stated due date. Families will be provided with a statement of fees charged by the service (regulation 168).

1. Parents will receive a statement of fees two working days prior to the fees being automatically deducted from their account. Any changes to fees will be shown on the following statement.
2. Fees will be deducted from your nominated account on the Friday of your nominated schedule (eg weekly or fortnightly) but may take up to 5 working days to exit accounts.
3. Fees are only payable weekly or fortnightly through Direct Debit via DebitSuccess. Fees for credit card or debit cards are outlined on the direct debit forms and charged by the debit company.

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4. The service does not accept any cash or cheque payments.
5. Families will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any changes to the way in which fees are collected (Regulation 172).
6. Vacation Care and Pupil free days must be paid via direct deposit or electronic transfer by the advertised due date.
7. If parents have any issues about the fees that they have been charged, they should contact the Director in writing.
8. If a family is over charged for any reason, a refund into the family's bank account will be arranged. This may take up to 7 business days to be fully processed.

### **6. Debt recovery**

The Management Committee (Approved Provider) reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the service.

Where a family owes any overdue fees to the service, the child's place may be suspended until all outstanding fees are paid, or both parties agree to a payment plan. Fees not paid by the due date will be followed up as below:

1. An initial letter stating that fees are overdue will be sent 7 days after the due date, giving 10 working days for payment.
2. If payment is not received, families will be required to attend a meeting with the Director (Nominated Supervisor) and Committee President within 7 days to discuss a payment plan.
3. Failure to attend the meeting and continued non-payment for a period of 5 working days will result in a second and final letter notifying the family that unless payment is made within 5 working days, or a payment plan entered into, the child will be unable to attend the service.
4. If a signed payment plan is not adhered to, a follow-up process will commence at point 2.

OOSH reserves the right to employ the services of a debt collection agency and the family will be responsible for all fees associated with recovering their debt.

### **7. Late collection fee**

The hours and days of operation of the service will be displayed prominently within the service (Regulation 173) at the front of the building and in the parent area.

If children are not collected by the closing time of 6.15 pm, a late fee of \$14 per every 10 mins or part thereof will apply.

Families who are continually late collecting their children without a valid reason may jeopardise their child's place at the service. Should this be the case, the Director will meet with the family to discuss this.

If families are late due to circumstances that are beyond their control, for example extreme weather conditions, accident affecting multiple families or public transport issues, the Nominated supervisor will have discretion to decide if families will be charged the late fee. In some circumstances the late fee may be split among multiple families.

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### 8. Confidentiality

All information in relation to fees will be kept in strict confidence. Members of staff, management or the Approved Provider will not discuss individual names and details openly. Information will only be available to the nominated persons required to take action. Families may request to access their own account records or particulars of fees at any time.

### 9. Fee increase

The fees are set by the TWOOSH management Committee (Approved Provider) in order to meet the budget for each financial year. The budget is monitored continuously and should it be necessary to amend fees, families will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any fee increase (Regulation 172).

### 10. Acknowledgement of responsibility to pay fees

Upon initial enrolment and each year when completing the service's Enrolment form, families are required to read and sign any required authorisations and approvals, and fee agreements.

#### Session fees (effective January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020)

Before School Care	\$15.50 per session (permanent booking) \$17.50 per session (casual booking)
After School Care	\$25.50 per session (permanent booking) \$27.50 per session (casual booking)
Vacation Care/Pupil free	\$59 to \$88 per day (in centre, incursions, excursions)
Search Fee for non-notification	\$5 per occasion
Late Collection fee	\$14 for every 10 minutes or part thereof

#### REVISIONS

04.07.17	Approved in committee meeting
26.11.18	Approved in committee meeting
23.09.19	Approved in committee meeting
Date for review	September 2020