

FEES AND DEBT POLICY

Links

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 168
National Quality Standard: 7.1.2

Policy statement

The purpose of this policy is to provide framework under which the financial viability of Outside School Care NT can be protected, by ensuring the prompt payment of family fees, and the successful collection of any outstanding monies.

Outside School Care NT strives to provide affordable education and care and is committed to keeping fees as low as possible, while providing a safe and nurturing environment for children.

The Service defines 'fees' as all monies charged to families for the care of their children at the Service, any booking fees and bonds. We define 'debt' as all monies owed to the service by families.

It is a condition of enrolment in the service that families accept the service's *Fees Policy*.

Related Policies

Enrolment, Orientation and Transition
 Governance and Leadership
 Privacy Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Implementation

Setting of Fees

- Fees are set by the Approved Provider and charged to all families whose children are booked to attend the Service.

Service	Fee per daily session
After School Care	\$32.00 per child
After School Care (Wednesday Preschool Half Day)	\$44.00 per child
After School Care – Bus Service	\$40.00 per child
Un-notified absence off bus collection	\$20.00 per child
Vacation Care / Pupil Free Days	\$68.00 per child
Vacation Care Excursion and Incursion Days	\$76.00 per child
Before School Care	\$19.50 per child
Before School Care – Bus Service	\$25.50 per child
Refundable Bond Payment	\$250 per family. Must be paid – before bookings can be confirmed.

Discount or Fee	Flat rate or Percentage applied
Holiday Discount	50% (conditions apply)
Late Collection / Pick up Fee	\$50 for first 15 minutes and additional \$50 per additional 15-minute period or part thereof.

Full-time Bookings

- Full –time Bookings are bookings made for care on a continuous basis throughout the school term. Full-time bookings for five (5) days of care per week.
- If an OSC-NT school site is reaching capacity level, the Director will reserve the right to give preference in offering care to families with full-time bookings. Full-time bookings guarantee a place for your child at our service.
- Booking Conditions and Fees: An Overview and completed and signed Fee Agreement is required to enrol your child at any of our services .

OUTSIDE SCHOOL CARE NT – BOOKING CONDITIONS AND FEE AGREEMENT

Full-time bookings have the following conditions:

- Accounts are up to date and paid fourteen (14) days in advance
- Families required to pay their fees if a child is absent unless 24 hours notice is given (for any reason), unless medical certificate is submitted as outlined (below)
- Families must provide the Service Director with 14 days written notice of their intention to remove their child from the Service.

Part Time Bookings

- Part –time Bookings are bookings made for care on an ad-hoc basis throughout the school term. Part-time bookings may be for one (1) or up to five (5) days of care per week.
- Part-time Bookings are made at the service’s discretion and are not guaranteed. A Part-time booking will be subject to availability.
- At such times when capacity is limited at a site, the director will advise parents whether part-time bookings are available.

Absences (medical and holiday)

- Absences owing to illness (or other medical) will not be charged if 24 hours’ notice is not given and the site receives a copy of a valid medical certificate/s relating to the specific absence.
- 24 hours notice is required for an absences for charges to not occur.

Absences

If you require any bookings to be cancelled, please advise your site director with a minimum of 24 hours’ notice in writing otherwise you will be charged for any absent days.

Late Collection

Parents are required to contact the service by phone to advise that they will be late to collect their child.

A late collection / pick up fee may be charged – refer to fees above.

Please refer to our policy on the delivery and collection of children.

Fees Paid Two Weeks in Advance

- Booking fees are outlined in the weekly customer statement and reflect care from the current period and two (2) weeks in advance.
- The booked session fee is charged not the actual hours used. When a parent/s pays fees, the amount is recorded and entered into the Outside School Care NT childcare management system .

Late Pick Up Fees*

- Collection of children after 6pm **ASC** or after 6.00pm **VAC**, will incur a **\$50.00** late pick up fee (for the first 15 minutes) A further \$50.00 will be charged for each 15 minute period in which the parent is late to collect the child/ren aftwr 6:30pm. If late fees are incurred on three occasions within one school term the families' ongoing enrolment will be reviewed and possibly cancelled.
- The Director reserves the right to waive the late pick up fee in exceptional circumstances.

Payment of Fees

- Weekly statements are issued on a Wednesday. Customer statements will include a statement of attendances per child for the previous one (1) week and the next two (2) weeks. Parents have the option to receive their weekly statement via email or through registration to the web based Outside School Care NT Parent Portal.

Overdue Accounts

- All past debt or overdue accounts will be directed to a Debt Collector. Outside School Care NT uses the services of E- Collect. We will make several attempts to contact you before referring a debt to our debt collection agency. Our policy is to always offer a payment plan and work with families to help assist reduce an overdue account before the step is taken to use the services of a debt collection agency. If you have difficulty paying your account, please contact your Director as early as possible. We are here to help families.

BPAY or **bank transfer** - If you wish to make payments by **BPAY**, please advise your Director and you will be issued with your unique customer reference number and our BPAY Account code.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

It is the child's parent/guardian responsibility to ensure:

- The account of each child booked at the service is/are paid 14 days in advance
- Each parent must sign and agree to abide by the terms of the OSC NT Fee Agreement
- Each parent must provide the Service Director with 24 hours written notice of their intention to remove their child from the service.

Child Care Subsidy

Most families are entitled to receive federally funded child care assistance through Servicelink's Child Care Subsidy Schemes.

Most families will receive assistance with the childcare costs via Child Care Subsidy.

In order for any CCS, to process you must ensure that your correct details are provided upon enrolment and that both your Parent and Child Customer Reference Numbers (CRN) and Dates of Birth (DOB) and are valid and correct. You will need to then confirm your enrolment on MYGov, once this has been completed you will see your CCS reflect on your customer account statement.

Outside School Care NT will advise you of issues when processing your claims, however it is not our responsibility to ensure that the correct details are held in our systems.

Your weekly customer statement will automatically reflect your benefit or rebate entitlement. This is achieved through a direct connection between our CCS software provider and the Family Assistance Office (FAO). However, we have no part in this process. Therefore, in case of queries with regard to your benefit entitlement, please address the matter to the FAO.

PLEASE NOTE: Families may also elect to have their Child Care Subsidy paid directly to OSC – NT to offset their fees.

Late Payments

For families whose accounts are in arrears – the following **five (5) point procedure** will be followed:

- Contact will be made after **seven (7) days** including an initial reminder letter (or email) advising that fees are overdue, and need to be paid immediately.
- If payment is not received within **ten (10) days**, a second letter (or email) will be sent notifying parents that their child's place may be withdrawn.
- If payment is not received within **fourteen (14) days**, a third letter (or email) will be sent notifying parent that their child's place has been withdrawn.
- Once the child is excluded from the service the account will be referred to a debt collection agency (**ECollect**) where legal action may be taken to recover monies owing.
- If ECollect is unsuccessful at recovering the monies owed to the service, a statement of claim will be served in the Darwin Small Claims Court.

Other

OSC – NT will not operate any all services during the Christmas period for two (2) weeks - During closure of the service, no fees will be charged. One OSC NT site may stay open at the discretion of the provider, children from all sites will have the opportunity to attend this one site.

OSC-NT will provide a minimum of two (2) weeks notice in writing of of changes to the fee structure

Sources: Bryant, L. (2009). Managing a Child Care Service: A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers; Community Childcare Co-operative; Education and Care Services national Law and regulations; Family Assistance Law

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