

FEES POLICY

Quality Area 7



This policy provides a clear set of guidelines for:

- the setting, payment and collection of fees
- ensuring the viability of St Francis of Assisi OSHC, by setting appropriate fees and charges
- the equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided by St Francis of Assisi OSHC.

PURPOSE



POLICY STATEMENT

St Francis of Assisi OSHC is committed to:

- 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
- ensuring there are no financial barriers for families wishing to access an early childhood program for their child/children
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians
- advising users of the service about program funding, including government support and fees to be paid by parents/guardians

VALUES

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 St Francis of Assisi OSHC.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
	Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements				

Developing a fee policy that balances the parent's/guardian's capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability	?	?			
Implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the nominated supervisor and staff	?	?			
Considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at St Francis of Assisi OSHC and removing those barriers wherever possible	?	?			
Reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered	?	?			
Considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families	?	?			
In OSHC settings, where Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy is applicable, ensure that all subsidies a child is eligible for are applied to reduce cost to families (CCS and ACCS can be accessed	?	?			
Ensuring that the Fees Policy is readily accessible at the service (Regulation 171)	?	?			
Providing all parents/guardians with fee information (refer to Attachment 1)	?	?			
Providing all parents/guardians with a statement of fees and charges (refer to samples in Attachments 2 and 3) upon enrolment of their child	?	?			
Ensuring fees are collected and receipted	?	?			
Collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documentation (refer to Definitions)	?	?			
Complying with the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees	?	?			
Notifying parents/guardians a minimum of 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected (Regulation 172(2)), and ideally providing one term's notice.	?	?			
Addressing any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service in a timely manner	?	?			
Reading the St Francis of Assisi OSHC Fee information for families (refer to Attachment 1)				?	
Notifying the approved provider if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees				?	
BOLD tick ✓ indicates legislation requirement					

Background

St Francis of Assisi, OSHC operates on a non-profit basis. Any surplus will be allocated to purchase equipment and resources for the children's program, minor upgrades and service improvements as specified by the Committee of Management. Fees will be set by the Committee of Management and are subject to change. Fees are charged on a per session basis, per child, for all booked sessions. Fees are set to cover the cost of the service and to meet the projected budget for the service.

Permanent and Booked Care

Fees for permanent and booked care will be charged weekly in arrears. Invoices are issued immediately when they are processed and returned from Services Australia (Centrelink). Accounts must be finalised by the due date on the invoice. Due to delay in processing from Services Australia (Centrelink), occasionally invoices may not be issued weekly. However, it is expected that families continue to make weekly payments. Fees for casual or emergency care are required to be paid on the day of care.

It is under the discretion of the Committee of Management that if a child does not fulfill their permanent position they will be asked to go casual.

Casual and Emergency Care

Fees must be paid for on the day of care.

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic)
- 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)
- National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership



The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage (in relation to this policy): children are vulnerable if the capacity of parents and family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Some factors which may contribute to a child experiencing vulnerability include: a child with a disability; living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; known to child protection; in statutory out-of-home care; Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability

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.

Late collection charge: 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*)

DEFINITIONS



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

RELATED POLICIES



- Complaints and Grievances
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Excursions and Service Events
- Inclusion and Equity
- Privacy and Confidentiality

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
- investigating what measures can be taken to reduce any barriers to access the program, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- 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 \(2\)](#))

EVALUATION



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Fee information for families

WHY FEES ARE NECESSARY

The St Francis of Assisi OSHC fees are developed to maintain the service's financial viability.

ADDITIONAL CHARGES:

Additional charges levied by St Francis of Assisi OSHC are included on the Statement of Fees and Charges. These include:

- **Registration:** An annual registration fee of \$70 per family applies (prices are subject to change). The registration process can be lengthy; therefore, it is essential that registrations are received 14 days prior to care required. When the process is complete, an invoice is generated and the fee must be paid by the date detailed on the invoice. Failure to do so will result in the registration being cancelled. Children cannot attend the program until a registration is received and approved by the service.
- **Change of Care Fee:** Families must notify the service of any changes to booking arrangements. Seven days notice is required, in writing, for change of permanent booked care. Families who wish to cancel for one week (or more) must email the service and a \$5 change-of-care fee per family will apply. Families who do not notify the service of their intention to cancel permanent care will be charged the full session fee for a one-week period. CCS does not apply to this fee.
- Please note: Families who continually cancel permanent care bookings will be required to transfer their booking arrangement to casual care.
- **Cancellation of Care:** Full session fees will be incurred for any cancellation of care not received via email or phone 24 hours prior to the commencement of the session for which care is booked. Cancellation of care received after 6pm on Friday will not be considered 24 hours' notice for Monday bookings.
- **Activity and Excursion Fee:** To enhance the educational value of the program, special activities and excursions may be available. In some instances, these special events may incur additional charges for the family. Families will be notified in advance of any additional charges. These additional charges may not attract CCS. Families will be invoiced for these additional activities within the normal billing period.
- **Late Pick-up Fee:** The After School Care Program closes at 6 pm each evening. Care provided after the advertised closing time will incur \$2 per minute per child. This late pick-up fee is added to the child's weekly invoice for care. This additional charge does not attract CCS.
- **Failure to log child in/out of the service fee:** A \$5 administration fee is charged (per family) on every occasion the parent/guardian omits to log their child in or out of the program. CCS does not apply to this fee.
- **Failure to log child in/out of the service using SmartCentral portal:** A \$5 administration fee (per family) is charged on every occasion the parent/guardian elects to log the child in/out of the service utilising a paper document. This administration fee is incurred to compensate for the additional administration tasks resulting from this practice. CCS does not apply to this fee.
- **Late Payment/Non Payment of fees:** All fees for care must be paid by the due date which appears on the weekly statement. If payment is not received by the due date, a \$10 late fee (per family) will be charged. CCS does not apply to this fee.
- **Late/Same Day Booking:** The fee structure includes an additional tier for bookings not received 24 hours prior to the commencement of the session for which care is required or bookings received on the same day of care required.
- **Vacation Care/In-Service Day Bookings** received after the due date nominated on the information sheet (calendar) will incur an extra cost. Once applications are received, no changes can be made. Cancellations will incur full fee.
- **Administration Fee:** An Administration Fee is incurred for supplementary administration duties encountered to achieve requests from parents/guardians. These tasks can include (and are not limited to):
 - Transfer of attendances/information to an alternative parent
 - Re-issuing invoices

The fee payable is determined by the timeframe and complexity of tasks. CCS does not apply to this fee.

- **Children who do not attend Fee:** If parents/guardians have failed to notify the service that their child will not be attending the session for which they are booked, educators will follow practices to learn the child's whereabouts. A \$5.00 administration fee will apply for this practice. CCS does not apply to this fee.

OVERDUE ACCOUNTS

- If you are experiencing financial difficulties, it is important for families to contact the service to organize an agreed payment arrangement.
- If you are experiencing financial difficulties, you may be entitled to access Additional Child Care Subsidy.
- Families excluded from the service due to non-payment of fees will be provided with information regarding Family Support and/or Financial Advising Services available in the local community.
- If accounts fall more than 3 weeks in arrears for any timeframe during the school term, children may be excluded from care until payment is received. When payment has been received, the exclusion of care will be lifted.
- All accounts must be finalized at the conclusion of each term. Failure to do so will result in a suspension of care the following term until payment is received.
- If late payment of accounts continues, a member of the Leadership Team and/or the Approved Provider reserve the right to suspend children indefinitely. The account will then be forwarded to the school bursar who will take necessary steps to recover funds.
- Bookings for Vacation Care can only be accepted if accounts are at a nil balance prior to the conclusion of the preceding term.

IMPORTANT NOTE

If a child is registered with the service and they have not been collected from the school at the conclusion of the day, the School Principal or Teacher will accompany the child to the service. Families are responsible for payment of associated fees for this care.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Direct Deposit	Bank:	National Australia Bank
	BSB:	083-363
	Account Number:	507 652 657
	Account Name:	St Francis of Assisi OSHC Service
	Reference:	Child's Name

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is an additional aspect to the financial management of the service. All fundraising activities will have a specific purpose for which stakeholders will be notified. No family will be placed under pressure to participate in the fundraising activities of the service. All fundraising income is used in the way it is advertised to families.