

## POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy details the procedures set by the Board of Gosford Regional Community Services Inc. (GRCS) in relation to fees, methods of payment, booking procedures and associated provisions applicable to the Wyoming Community Out of School Hours Care Service (the Service). For the purpose of this policy, the term “parents” also refers to Guardians or other persons who are responsible for the care of the child/ren enrolled in the Service.

## STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

- The Service’s Fee Policy is explained to parents at enrolment, and the necessary paperwork relating to fees is discussed and completed.
- The Service ensures that, wherever possible, parents of children enrolled at the Service are notified at least 14 days in advance of any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.
- The current fee schedule is published on the website and parents are notified of any changes via email.

## CHILD CARE SOFTWARE AND PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- GRCS uses HUBWORKS software to interact with the Child Care Subsidy system. <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/list-registered-ccms-software>
- Parents can log in to their Hubworks accounts to:
  - Check account balances
  - Change contact details
  - Update medical information
  - Download or print payment or usage information
- Accounts are paid via Direct Debit using “I-Pay” which is managed through Hubworks.
- Parents have a choice of a weekly or fortnightly schedule on a Thursday or a monthly schedule on the week day of their choice. Fees are calculated to the end of the current week of attendance, according to the agreed schedule and uploaded to the nominated financial institution via the direct debit system.
- The Service pays the costs of transactions except for Credit Cards. Any fees incurred for dishonoured payments will be added to the account.
- A system generated receipt is available for all payments. This receipt will show the child’s name, the period of time for which the receipt is issued, the amount paid, and all other details required by regulations. Credit balances are offset against future use unless the child is not using the Service on a regular basis. In this case a request for refund will be accepted.
- Fee reminders are sent if accounts are one or more weeks overdue for any reason. If the fees are not paid within the following week or an arrangement not entered into, the child’s place at the Service is at risk. A late fee is applied to any overdue fees. Fees more than 4 weeks overdue may be referred to a debt collection agency and any costs associated with recovery will be added to the account.
- If not paying by direct debit, fees are to be kept two weeks in advance at all times. Late fees will apply if accounts are in arrears. A manual processing fee applies to accounts not paid via direct debit.

## LEVIES AND SURCHARGES

The Service charges a small Equipment Levy each term for all children attending Before and/or After School Care. These funds are used to purchase equipment and materials. Where applicable, the following surcharges are levied to offset the administrative costs incurred by the Service. Unless otherwise stated, they are levied per occurrence, per family.

- No Show Fee  
*If no notice is given for non-attendance at ASC, when booked in to attend.*
- Late Fee  
*For collection of children later than Service closing time.*
- Casual Fee  
*Flat weekly fee applicable to casual bookings (per week, per child)*
- Overdue Accounts  
*If accounts are more than 2 weeks in arrears. (per week, per family)*
- Manual Processing Fee  
*For payments made by any other method than direct debit.*

## BOOKINGS

- Parents are advised to contact Services Australia directly to determine their eligibility for CCS before their child commences at the Service.  
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>
- Parents are responsible for booking their child into the Service and for notifying the Service if a child is going to be absent. For After School Care the absence should be notified by no later than 1 pm or a no-show fee will be incurred.
- Bookings for Vacation Care must be made on the approved booking form.
- If a Before or After School Care booking is permanent, fees are payable for absences. A permanent booking is one where the child attends for the same session each week during a term. Permanent bookings are entered for the full school term and notice periods apply to any changes.
- Fees are payable for absences for all permanent bookings including sick days, family holidays, school excursions and any other absence. Child Care Subsidy is paid for a child's absences up to 42 days per child each financial year.
- Fees are charged for all days of the week where a permanent booking is made including where Public Holidays or Pupil Free days fall within the term. However, where a Public Holiday or Pupil Free day falls on the Monday of the first day of term, or the Friday of the last day of term, no fees will be charged.
- Casual bookings are accepted up to 2pm on the day of attendance if spaces are available. Families are advised to provide as much notice as possible to ensure a place is available.
- The Service does not exchange days of care and does not arrange make up days.
- Casual bookings will not be accepted if fees are in arrears.
- If emergency care is required and no notice was possible, every effort will be made to accommodate the request within current legislative requirements.

## NOTICE PERIODS

All cancellations are to be confirmed in writing to [leigh-anne@gosfordcommuniy.org.au](mailto:leigh-anne@gosfordcommuniy.org.au) but initial advice may be made by phone to the office on 43237483. Please note: Text messages to the service mobile are not accepted as notice and staff at the Service are not authorised to accept cancellations or other changes.

- Before and After School Care:
  - Two weeks' notice is required for ongoing changes to, or cancellations of, permanent bookings, as separate from absences.
  - 24 Hours notice is required to cancel a casual booking.
  - Notification by 1 pm for one-off absences for After School Care
- Vacation Care
  - Five (5) working days notice is required to cancel a Vacation Care booking.
  - Refund of surcharges for activities and excursions is dependant on whether costs can be recovered from the provider or if the place is taken up by another child.

**NOTE:** The Centre is closed each year for up to two weeks over the Christmas New Year Period, generally from Christmas Eve. Notice of changes to the first week of January bookings are required by COB on the last working day in December.

It is important to note that Government Policy means that CCS is only payable for one week after the last day of attendance in defined circumstances. It is not payable if a child does not attend during a notice period and does not return to the service. In that case the parent is responsible for the full fee for the notice period.

## ABSENCES

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is payable for up to 42 absences per annum. Additional absences may also be approved in special circumstances. The following Allowable Absence provisions apply from 13 July 2020.

- Families can receive CCS for absences up to seven days before a child's first, and after a child's last physical attendance at a service, where they have been booked in for care, for any of the following
- The child, the individual who cares for the child, the individual's partner or another person with whom the child lives is ill (no medical certificate required if the child has not used 42 absence days)
- The usual service is closed and the child is attending a different service under the same provider
- A family tragedy (a major event including the death of an immediate family member) has occurred, or
- The enrolment ceased incorrectly.

## LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Attendance Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

- To ensure bank account details are accurate and sufficient funds are available for direct debit payments.
- To keep the Service informed of any changes in attendance (e.g. family holidays, other absences)
- To keep the Service informed of any changes in contact details including email addresses, phone numbers and emergency contacts.
- To respond promptly to communications from relevant Government agencies.

## POLICY REVIEW

GRCS encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, GRCS will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Centre's commitment to quality improvement. GRCS consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

**Date(s) reviewed:** 26 February 2018, 1 July 2018, 1 December 2018, 1 July 2019, 1 June 2020

**Next policy review Date:** 1 June 2021 and annually thereafter or whenever fees are amended.

## CURRENT FEE SCHEDULE AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

*As approved by the Board of Management of Gosford Regional Community Services Inc.*

Fees shown are the full fee per session per child – the total amount charged is reduced by the approved amount of Child Care Subsidy.

Fee Type	Amount	Comments
Before School Care	\$20.00	Per session
After School Care	\$32.00	Per session
Vacation Care*	\$67.00*	Per Day. Additional fees may apply for excursions/activities
Equipment Levy	\$5.00	Per Child, Per Term
No Show Fee ASC	\$20.00	Per Occurrence, per Family
Late Pick-up Fee	\$15.00	Per Occurrence, per Family, per 10 minute intervals
Casual Booking Fee	\$5.00	Per child per week
Overdue Accounts Fee	\$10.00	Per week per family
Manual Payment Processing	\$4.50	Added to each attendance

### **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES DUE TO COVID-19**

***The Australian Government has confirmed the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package will be extended until 12 July 2020. From 13 July 2020, Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy will recommence with the introduction of a number of new measures to support providers and families through this period.***

***The 62 initial absence days per child cease on 30 June 2020. There will be 42 initial absence days in the 2020/21 financial year.***

***With Child Care Subsidy recommencing from 13 July 2020, providers are obliged to recover gap fees as usual.***

***Additional absence days to be claimed for COVID-19 related reasons without the need for medical evidence - ceases on 31 December 2020.***