



Payment of Fees Policy

Policy Statement & Commitments

Brunswick East Primary School Outside School Hours Care Service (BEPS OSHC Service) operates as a non-profit organisation. Any surplus income will be expended on equipment and resources for the children's program, and minor upgrades and service improvements, as specified by the BEPS School Council and the annual OSHC budget proposal. BEPS OSHC aims to provide a quality service that is accessible and affordable to all families.

Fees for each component will be set each year by the OSHC Management Sub-committee, under the auspices of the Brunswick East Primary School Council, on completion of the annual budget and according to BEPS OSHC Service's required income in order to provide a quality and viable education and care service.

The setting and payment of fees takes into account all requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011)*, Australian Tax Office requirements, privacy legislation and the guidelines provided by the Australian Government Department of Education. BEPS OSHC Service understands the importance of maintaining accurate fee statements and providing clear information to families on fee payment processes.

The BEPS OSHC Service is funded by the Australian Government to provide family assistance to families through, the Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) and is approved to provide 106 places to children in each care component each day.

BEPS OSHC Service is committed to:

- ensuring that families are provided with information and advice about fee levels and the Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) application process, affordable fees, a fee payment process, regular and accurate fee payment statements and information about financial support.
- maintaining a process where a family's difficulties in maintaining their fee payments can be addressed in order to prevent any negative impact on the care provided to their child.
- having sufficient fee income to ensure the School Council, through the OSHC Management Sub-Committee, can maintain a quality viable service.
- ensuring fee payments are up to date and accurate collection records are maintained.

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All records held will be maintained in accordance with BEPS OSHC Service's Confidentiality & Management of Records Policy.

Definitions

CCSS – Child Care Subsidy System is a payment from the Australian Government to help families with the cost of child care.

CRN – Centrelink Customer Reference Number.

CWA – Complying Written Arrangement is an arrangement between the OSHC Service and the parent/guardian to provide childcare in return for fees – and must reflect the booking pattern

DHS – Department of Human Services

MyGov – an online application to access portal between parent/guardian and the government

Qikkids – The Computerised Administration System used by BEPS OSHC Service to manage CCSS payments using software called Qikkids.

Qkr! App – A online App downloadable onto iPhones/Ipads and Androids/tablets and used for making OSHC fee payments

Booking Options

Permanent bookings are the same days needed every week during school terms. This is a secure position held for a child during program times on those days; Aftercare: 3.30-6.00pm; Beforecare: 7.30-8.45am. If a child does not attend the program on their permanent days, a full fee is still charged.

Casual bookings are made when a day or days are required on a non-permanent basis. These bookings can be made at any time, but are subject to the availability of positions. Once booked, If a child does not attend the program on their casual day, a full fee will still be charged. Fees apply once the place is booked.

Casual and emergency care booking fees must be paid for on the day of care.

Responsibilities

The BEPS School Council has the responsibility to ensure that:

- fees will be reviewed on a regular basis by the BEPS School Council when establishing the budget parameters
- fees are charged on a per day/session basis per child.

The OSHC Coordinator has the responsibility to ensure that:

- families are invoiced fortnightly

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- School Council is informed of industry changes to fee requirements.

Parents/Guardians have a responsibility to ensure that:

- All families are required to pay fees for the care of their children on a regular fortnightly basis.
- All fees are paid in full at or before the end of each term.
- Families promptly discuss with the coordinator any difficulties they have with the regular fortnightly payment of their fees.

Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS)

'The Australian Government provides financial assistance to families, mainly as subsidies, under the Family Assistance Law.' *Childcare Provider Handbook V.1.0. 29 May 2018*

- BEPS OSHC Service will comply with the Australian Government requirements to be an approved education and care service for the purposes of providing Childcare funding to families in the form of; Child Care Subsidy System.
- The BEPS OSHC Service will comply with the on-line Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering CCS.
- At enrolment all families will be provided with information on how to apply for funding or families can contact the DHS/Centrelink to ascertain their eligibility. Ph; 136150, www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/assistance-child-care-fees
- It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent/guardian to complete and lodge their CCSS application with DHS to receive their eligible fee reductions in a timely manner.
- All attendance fees are charged at the full rate and submitted weekly online to the DEEWR/CCMS office. Each family's eligibility for CCB is then calculated and BEPS OSHC Service is then forwarded these funds. Deductions are then made to each individual family's accounts, with the family paying the gap fee.
- Any changes in a family's financial circumstances may result in cancellation of CCB. It is the family's responsibility to contact the DHS/Centrelink via thye My Gov App if they wish to dispute this or discuss it further. Centrelink; 13 61 50. www.my.gov.au
- Families with children under seven years of age seeking CCSS for the first time will be required to meet the Australian Government's immunization requirements. BEPS OSHC Service will provide information to these families about this requirement in the family handbook.
- Families will only be eligible for CCSS if child-care attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the parent/guardian, and other eligibility requirements are met.
- All documentation pertaining to CCSS will be kept for the specified period of time and made available to authorized Australian Government Officers on request.
- Educators at BEPS OSHC Service have a basic knowledge of CCSS requirements, and will therefore refer all specific queries to the OSHC Coordinator.

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- The OSHC Coordinator will be trained in the implementation and administration of CCSS reporting and CCSS fee payment procedures.
- Parents/guardians must apply to the DHS Office/Centrelink via the My Gov App to determine their eligibility and receive financial assistance.
- The OSHC program must be provided with correct information for data matching including; CRN numbers for each child and parent, their date of birth and contact name details of the claiming parent, and correct booking patterns or Complying Written Arrangements (CWA). Missing or incorrect details will result in no CCSS being received until the mistakes are corrected.
- Families must notify the program in writing if they do not wish to receive government fee assistance – they will be paying the full day/session fee.
- If families are experiencing difficulties making their payment, they should advise the OSHC Coordinator as soon as possible.
- Families will be notified of upcoming changes in the Child Care Subsidy System via the OSHC communication; written notices posted on the OSHC noticeboards, newsletter and emails.
- **BEPS OSHC Service is not responsible for the calculations or allocation of CCSS to families. Families must liaise with the DHS/Centrelink for all of these matters.**

Absences

All absences will be charged for at the full cost for both permanent and casual places once booked. The service can re-sell the position if sufficient notice has been given, and there is a demand for the place.

Absence from the program can affect the CCSS entitlement received. For further details refer to the **BEPS OSHC Service Parent Handbook and the website; www.humanservices.gov.au**

- Families should contact BEPS OSHC Service to advise of their child’s inability to attend as soon as this is known and prior to the booked session of care.
- Families are entitled to 42 absence days for each registered child in each financial year. CCSS is paid for these days provided that the child would normally have attended on that day, and fees have been charged.
- Additional absences can be claimed when the first 42 days have been used. Supporting documentation may be required for approval of additional absences.
- Additional absence are permitted in the following situation:
 - an illness (with a medical certificate)
 - an outbreak of an infectious disease, when the child is not immunised
 - any other absences due to sickness of the child, a parent or sibling, supported by medical certificates
 - a parent being on a rotating shift or rostered day off
 - a temporary closure of BEPS OSHC Service or a pupil free day
 - shared custody arrangements due to a court order, consent order or parenting order

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- attendance at preschool
- exceptional circumstances.

- Cessation of Care; Two week’s notice of cancellation to permanent places must be given. The full fee will be charged for unattended bookings prior to a cessation of care – CCSS will not be paid.

Procedures for Fee Setting & Providing Accounts

- The OSHC Management Sub-committee’s recommendations on the required fee level to meet budget prediction for the next year will be presented to the School Council for final determination.
- The fee schedule and fees payment policy will be fully explained to families during the enrolment process.
- Fees payable will be based on either daily or weekly amounts.
- Invoices will be issued fortnightly in arrears.
- Families will be given a minimum of 14 days’ notice of any fee increase.
- The same fee will be charged to all families.
- Details of an individual’s account and all completed forms kept by BEPS OSHC Service will be confidential and stored appropriately. Individual families may access their own account records at any time. Particulars of fees will be available in writing to families upon request.

BEPS OSHC Service fees are as per the following table.

Before School Care	After School Care	Curriculum /Pupil Free Days
\$16.00	\$20.00	\$38.50 full day care
Per session/per child	Per session/per child	(Excursion/incursion extra cost)

Procedures for Payment of Fees

Program Invoice Statements are issued fortnightly for all Families who have charged bookings; permanent or casual for the last two weeks of care.

- Statements are issued fortnightly after usage. Families wishing to pay in advance may do so. This will show as a credit on the invoice. Statements are emailed to families.
- Families are required to pay fees in arrears for the previous two weeks of care. A dated receipt, in accordance with Australian Government guidelines, will be provided for each payment.
- Receipts are issued by email on receipt of payments viewed via the QKR! App transaction reports.
- Families pay for a place and may elect to book permanent or casual places. Fee payment will be

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recorded according to Australian Government guidelines.

- Fees are payable from the agreed commencement date.
- Payment can be made in full.
- Part payments can also be made, weekly or fortnightly.
- Fees must be paid by the due date, as stated at the bottom of your statement.
- Payments are made by online payment system via the *Qkr! For mastercard* App only.
- Cash or cheques will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and only if this has been discussed with the Coordinator prior to payment. In the event of a cheque payment being dishonored any associated charges incurred (such as bank dishonor fee) will be redirected to the family concerned.

Procedure for Dealing with Overdue Fees

Families with overdue fees will be encouraged by the OSHC Coordinator to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay, including the option of a payment plan.

If there is no settlement of the account after two requests, the account will then be handed to the School Principal to be followed up. Families who use the programs on a casual basis are required to keep their accounts up to date.

Should agreed payment arrangements or plans not be kept, the following procedure will apply.

After payments are two weeks overdue	A written reminder/email will be forwarded to the family member nominated on the enrolment form as the person responsible for the payment of fees.
After payments are four weeks overdue	Another letter/email will be sent and include a reminder that family members nominated on the enrolment form as the person responsible for the payment of fees are encouraged to discuss payment difficulties and make suitable arrangements to pay with the OSHC Coordinator. This letter will be followed up with a phone call from the OSHC Coordinator.
After payments are six weeks overdue	A letter will be issued advising that the place may be cancelled if the account should become seven weeks overdue. This letter will be followed up by a phone call from the OSHC Coordinator.

<p>After payments are eight weeks overdue</p>	<p>If no arrangements to pay have been made or kept, the place will be cancelled.</p> <p>A letter to the family member nominated on the enrolment form as the person responsible for the payment of fees, will be sent from the School Council advising the family of this, and will include a copy of BEPS OSHC Services grievance and complaints procedure.</p>
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Procedure for Administering Late Collection Fees

- Whenever possible, if a parent/guardian will be late to collect their child, they should ring BEPS OSHC Service. Refer to BEPS OSHC Service Delivery & Collection of Children Policy.
- A late collection fee will be charged to families not collected from BEPS OSHC Service by closing time at a rate of \$3.50 per five minutes (or part thereof) after 6pm.
- The fee charged for late collections is determined by:
 - the need to cover the cost of paying overtime wages to staff
 - the need to deter families from making a habit of late collections
 - any special circumstances (i.e. traffic accident or vehicle breakdown).
- When a family is continually and regularly late arriving at BEPS OSHC Service to collect their child, the OSHC Coordinator will discuss other child-care options with the family. (See the Delivery & Collection of Children policy.)
- The childcare subsidy does not apply to Late fees, and will be charged to family statements as a separate fee.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Delivery & Collection of Children
- Financial Management
- General Service Information
- Record Keeping & Confidentiality Policy
- Enrolment, Re-enrolment & Orientation Policy
- Grievance Policy

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Sources & Legislative References

Centrelink; www.centrelink.gov.au

Department of Human Services; www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/assistance-child-care-fees

Info for families; www.education.gov.au/childCarePackage

My Gov; www.my.gov.au

National Professional Support Coordinator Alliance 2012, *Getting started with policies for the NQF: Policies in Practice template – Payment of Fees*, www.pscalliance.org.au

<i>Education & Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic) – Sections 3(3)(c) & 175</i>
<i>Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations 75, 158 & 168 (2)(n)</i>
<i>National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care (2010) – Standard 7.3, Elements 6.1.1, 6.1.3, 7.3.1 & 7.3.5</i>
<i>Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) – Information Privacy Principles</i>
<i>A New tax System Act 2000 (Cwlth) – Family Assistance Law</i>
<i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth) – National Privacy Principles</i>

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