

FEES AND BOOKINGS POLICY

Policy Statement

Highgate School Outside School Hours Care (Highgate OSHC) aims to provide a quality Out of School Hours Care service at an affordable price to parents who have children eligible to attend under the Commonwealth Government Priority of Access Guidelines. The Highgate School Governing Council will be ultimately responsible for setting and reviewing fees, based on advice from the OSHC Advisory Committee on completion of the annual budget and according to Highgate OSHC's required income in order to provide a quality and viable education and care service. The setting and payment of fees considers 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.

Highgate OSHC 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 Highgate School Governing Council and the annual OSHC budget proposal.

Highgate OSHC understands the importance of maintaining accurate fee statements and providing clear information to families on fee payment processes. Highgate OSHC is funded by the Australian Government to provide family assistance to families through the Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) and is approved to provide 105 places to children in each care component each day.

Highgate OSHC 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 making 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 Highgate School Governing Council, through the OSHC Advisory Committee, can maintain a quality viable service.
- Ensuring fee payments are up to date and accurate collection records are maintained.
- All records held will be maintained in accordance with Highgate OSHC's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.

Definitions

CCS: The Child Care Subsidy 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 Highgate OSHC and the parent/guardian to provide childcare in return for fees. This is completed electronically on the Xplor software.

DHS: Department of Human Services.

MyGov: An online application to access portal between parent/guardian and the government.

Xplor: The Computerised Administration System used by Highgate OSHC to manage CCS payments.

Xplor Home App: An online application downloadable onto iPhones/iPads and Androids/tablets and used for OSHC account management by families.

Responsibilities

The Highgate School Governing Council has the responsibility to ensure that:

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

The Director has the responsibility to ensure that:

- Families are invoiced weekly
- Highgate School Governing 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 weekly basis.
- Families promptly discuss with the Director any difficulties they have with the regular weekly payment of their fees.

Booking Options

Permanent bookings are the same days needed every week/fortnight during school terms. This is a secure position held for a child during program times on those days. If a child does not attend the program on their permanent days, a full fee is still charged unless a medical certificate is provided.

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 unless a medical certificate is provided. Fees apply once the place is booked.

Cancellation Policy

Session	Policy
Vacation Care	2 weeks from the day of session for cancellation* without charge
Before and After School Care Pupil Free Days	48 hours notice from the beginning of the session for cancellation* without charge e.g. 7:00am for BSC and 3:15pm for ASC (this applies to all permanent and casual bookings)

*Cancellation means that you no longer require your booking (vacation care, permanent or casual booking). The position will then be allocated to others on the waiting list.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) System

- Highgate OSHC will comply with the Australian Government requirements to be an approved education and care service for the purposes of providing child care funding to families in the form of Child Care Subsidy.
- Highgate OSHC will comply with the online Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering CCS.
- It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent/guardian to provide all information needed for CCS to be received. Missing or incorrect details will result in no CCSS being received until the mistakes are corrected.
- All attendance fees are charged at the full rate and submitted weekly online to the CCMS office. Each family's eligibility for CCS is then calculated and Highgate OSHC is then forwarded these funds. Deductions are then made to each individual family's accounts, with the family paying the gap fee.
- Account statements are sent on a Monday after the CCS has been received.
- All documentation pertaining to CCS will be kept for the specified period and made available to authorized Australian Government Officers on request.
- Educators at Highgate OSHC have a basic knowledge of CCSS requirements and will therefore refer all specific queries to the Director or Assistant Director.
- The Director and Assistant Director will be trained in the implementation and administration of CCSS reporting and CCSS fee payment procedures.
- 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 Director as soon as possible to develop a payment plan.
- Highgate OSHC is not responsible for the calculations or allocation of CCS to families. Families must liaise with the DHS/Centrelink for all these matters.

Procedure for Setting of Fees & Providing Accounts

The OSHC Advisory Committee will recommend a proposed fee structure to meet the budget for the next year. The OSHC Advisory Committee's recommendation will be presented to the Governing Council for approval.

The fee structure will be reviewed each year in line with budgetary requirements.

Parents will be given as much notice as possible of fee increases (minimum 2 weeks).

Fees will be issued weekly in arrears.

Highgate OSHC Fees are as per the following table:

Session	Session Time	Fee
Before School Care	7:00am – 9:00am <i>Children go to classes between 8:30am-8:55am</i>	Casual \$14.00 Permanent \$12.00
After School Care	3:15pm – 6:15pm	Casual \$23.00 Permanent \$25.00
Early Finish After School Care	2:15pm – 6:15pm	\$32.00
Pupil Free Day	7:00am – 6:15pm	\$50.00
Vacation Care In house	7:00am – 6:15pm	\$50.00
Vacation Care Incursion	7:00am – 6:15pm	\$65.00
Vacation Care Excursion	7:00am – 6:15pm	\$65.00

Additional Fees

Each additional fee is charged per family except for the drink bottle and hat fees.

- A **late booking fee of \$10.00** will apply when a booking is made for After School Care after 2:00pm on the day of the session and for Vacation Care when a booking is made within 24 hours of the session beginning (7:00am).
- A **non-notification fee of \$10.00** will apply when a booking is not attended and the service is not notified of the absence.
- A **fee of \$5.00** will apply when a sun safe hat is not provided for a child during Vacation Care. They will be provided with a plain green bucket hat which they can keep.
- A **fee of \$5.00** will apply when a drink bottle is not provided for a child during Vacation Care. They will be provided with a plain green reusable drink bottle which they can keep.
- A **late collection fee of \$10.00 and \$1.00 per minute** will apply after the service has closed at 6:15pm (see *Delivery and Collection of Children policy*).

Any additional fees incurred will not attract CCS and are charged at the full rate.

Procedure for Payment of Fees

Account statements are issued weekly for all families who have charged bookings for the previous week of care.

- Families wishing to pay in advance may do so. This will show as a credit on the statement.

- Statements are emailed to families via Xplor.
- Statements are also viewable at any time via the Xplor Home app or on Xplor Home web.
- Fees must be paid in advance or by the due date, as stated at the bottom of your statement. This date is 7 days following the issuance of the statement.
- Payments are to be made via direct debit (set up via Xplor), 'Pay Now' on the Xplor Home app or EFTPOS in the OSHC office.
- Bank transfer will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and only if this has been discussed with the Director prior to payment.

Procedure for Dealing with Overdue Fees

At **3 weeks** overdue, the Director will send a reminder email to the family.

At **5 weeks** overdue, the Director will send a reminder email and text to the family.

At **7 weeks** overdue, the Director will send a reminder email and text to the family notifying them that service will be suspending in two weeks if the balance is not paid.

At **9 weeks** overdue, the Director will send an email and follow up with a phone call notifying them that their account with the service will be suspended until the balance has been paid or a payment plan has been set up.

Following this, debts will be referred to the OSHC Advisory Committee for further action, including debt recovery services.

Approved by Highgate School Governing Council 6th April 2021

DATE OF EFFECT: 26th April 2021

REVIEWED: 2nd November 2022

TO BE REVIEWED: 2nd November 2023

Related Documents

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

Education & Care Services National Law Act 2010 - Sections 3(3)(c) & 175

Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations 75, 158 & 168 (2)(n)

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