**Fees**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Abbotsford Community Centre sets before care, after care and vacation care fees in its annual budget to ensure sufficient revenue to develop and maintain a quality service for children and families. As a community based centre, we strive to ensure that our service is affordable and accessible to families in our community. The Approved Provider ratifies the budget annually, or as necessary, and monitors it carefully throughout the year.

Our fees are currently:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Permanent booking** | **Casual booking** |
| Before Care | $13 | $18 |
| After Care | $22 | $27 |
| Vacation Care – first child  – Second child | $40  $35 | $45 (or if booked late) |

Abbotsford Community Centre also levies a number of annual charges detailed below which facilitate the efficient running of the Centre.

**PROCEDURES**

1. **Bond**

Upon placement at the service, the family is required to pay two weeks full fees not inclusive of CCB or CCR reductions as a security bond.

The bond secures a child’s placement at the service, and is refundable at the termination of the child’s place, provided that two weeks’ notice in writing is given. The bond may be used to cover and/or settle your final account.

1. **Membership of Association**

The service is an Incorporated Association and as such, families enrolling their child in the service are bound by the rules of the Association for the period of the child’s enrolment.

As a member of the Incorporated Association, one representative of the child’s family is entitled to voting rights at any General Meeting held by the service and may be nominated (with consent) for a position on the Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting.  
  
A membership fee of $25.00 is payable on an annual basis[[1]](#footnote-1). For Vacation Care and casual users of the service you may opt to pay $10 per visit.

1. **Fundraising levy**

We rely on grants and fundraising as a source of income to help maintain and better run the Centre. The Centre charges families an annual fundraising levy of $20 which will be charged at time of enrolment, and at the beginning of every school year thereafter[[2]](#footnote-2).

1. **Working Bee contribution**

The Centre provides two opportunities a year for families that have permanent bookings to attend our working bee. One representative from each family is asked to attend one of the working bees or they can opt to pay a contribution of $150 which will be charged after the second working bee date has passed2.

1. **Extra-curricular lessons levy**

A levy of $5 per child per week will be charged for escorting children to and from lessons. This is payable by term at the beginning of each term2.

1. **Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate**

Many Australian families are eligible to receive Child Care Benefit (CCB). Families who are eligible for the Federal Government’s Child Care Assistance subsidy will only be required to pay the daily gap fee applicable to their financial circumstances. To have CCB applied to their account, families must first register with the Family Assistance Office.

In addition, the government provides a 50% tax rebate to families for out of pocket child care expenses via the Child Care Rebate (CCR). CCR is paid fortnightly either to the family or the service. The service encourages families to authorise the CCR to be paid directly to the service. To receive the child care rebate families must register for the child care benefit.

The service will provide families with information relating to Special Child Care Benefit, Jobs Education and Training, and Grandparents Child Care Benefit.

1. **Late collection fee**

The service operates from 7am – 6.30pm. Educators are unable to accept children in the service outside of these hours. Should children be present after the closing time, a late fee of $5 per minute will apply.

The hours and days of operation of the service will be displayed prominently within the service (Regulation 173).

Wherever possible parents or care givers should advise the Centre when they will be late to collect their child.

In circumstances that are beyond the control of families, for example, weather and traffic accidents, which may result in them arriving late to collect their child, the Nominated Supervisor will have discretion to decide if families will be charged the late fee.

Families who are continually late collecting their children, without a valid reason, may jeopardise their child’s place at the service. Should this be the case, the Nominated Supervisor will meet with the family to discuss this.

If a child has not been collected by 7pm and the parents or caregivers are unable to be contacted, the child will be accompanied by two educator to Five Dock police station in a Taxi. A note will be left on the Centre door with details of child’s whereabouts and parents or caregivers will be charged for the return taxi fare and the late fee.

1. **Bookings and cancellations**

Each family is expected to make bookings in advance, for the care sessions required. Bookings will only be accepted when families have completed the service’s Enrolment Form in full.

Families wishing to cancel their child’s place at the service are required to provide two (2) weeks written notice to the Nominated Supervisor, or they are liable to pay the equivalent of two weeks full child care fees to the service, without CCB being applied.

1. **Absences**

Fees are payable for family holidays and sick days if two (2) weeks written notice has not been given to the Nominated Supervisor.

The service will provide families with information about approved and allowable absences and will adhere to the Child Care Management System in relation to absences.

1. **Service closure**

No fee is charged while the service is closed over the Christmas/New Year period.

1. **Payment of fees**

Fees must be paid once invoiced.

Families will be provided with access to their accounts once enrolled in the service. (Regulation 168).

Failure to pay unpaid fees may result in debt recovery action being taken and discontinuation of care for the child unless the family has initiated a repayment schedule for the unpaid fees with the Nominated Supervisor.

1. **Debt recovery**

All accounts must be kept up to date. If you are having difficulties paying your account, please contact the Centre Co-ordinator to discuss alternate arrangements. Any accounts over 2 weeks in arrears may result in cancellation or suspension of care for your child/ren until overdue monies is received or both parties agree to a payment plan.

The Approved Provider reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the service. This can include the engagement of debt collectors to recover the monies owed.

1. **Methods of Payment**

The Centre has implemented direct debit to facilitate prompt payment of fees.

You can elect to have the direct debit from your bank account (no cost) or your credit card (additional transaction charges apply: 1.87% (MasterCard and Visa). Invoices will be issued weekly by email. Funds will be debited 2 days after issue of invoice (or if you have elected to pay fortnightly, funds will be debited on a fortnightly basis). A direct debit request form will be provided as part of enrolment.

Direct debit is our payment method.

Families will be given a minimum of fourteen days’ notice of any changes to the way in which fees are collected (Regulation 172).

1. **Confidentiality**

All information in relation to fees will be kept in strict confidence. Members of staff, management or the Approved Provider will not discuss individual names and details openly. Information will only be available to the nominated persons required to take action, for example, to initiate debt recovery.

1. **Increase of fees**

The fees are set by the Approved Provider in order to meet the budget for each financial year. There will be ongoing monitoring of the budget and, should it be necessary to amend fees, families will be given a minimum of fourteen days’ notice of any fee increase (Regulation 172).

1. **Acknowledgement of responsibility to pay fees**

Families are required to read and sign Section 9, *Payment of Fees* and Section 10, *Disclaimer/Informed Consent* of the service’s Enrolment Form.

**CONSIDERATIONS:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Education and Care Services National Regulations** | **National Quality Standard** | **Other Service policies/documentation** | **Other** |
| 168, 172, 173 | 7.3 | * Enrolment Form * Enrolment & Orientation Policy * Delivery & Collection of Children Policy * Confidentiality Policy * Governance & Management Policy * Parent Handbook | * Child Care Management System |

**ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:**

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| --- |
| **Approval date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Date for Review: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

1. Where separate parents / care givers request the Centre register one membership in the name of both parents or care givers, the membership fee would be charged in equal shares to each parent/care giver. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The fundraising levy, any extra-curricular lessons levies and any working bee contribution will be charged on a pro rata basis where child care fees are paid by more than one parent or caregiver for the child/ren, unless the Centre is otherwise advised in writing. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)