PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021).

Quality early education and care provides the foundation for children's development and social engagement whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our Family Day Care (FDC) Service is committed to supporting our approved educators provide quality education and care to all children at affordable fees for families.

As an approved childcare service, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to reduce fees to eligible families. Fees are based on our ability to provide the requirements of the Education and Care National Law and National Regulations, Family Assistance Law, the Australian Taxation Office and guidelines contained in the Child Care Provider Handbook.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017	Family Law Act 1975
Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017	A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation as identified within the Child Care Provider Handbook in https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook	

PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of all fees including educator fee structures and administration fees and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains the process of fee payment and the necessity of ensuring children's fees are paid on time and consequences for failure to pay fees on time. NextGen Family Day Care acknowledges that approved educators operate in a contractual arrangement with our Service and provide a fee schedule to families upon enrolment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, support coordinators, FDC educators, families, students and volunteers and visitors of the FDC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

NextGen Family Day Care aims to ensure families understand the fee schedules and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to maintaining financial integrity and ensuring compliance with all obligations under the *Family Assistance Law*, including Section 201B and Section 204F of the *Administration Act 1999*, and the recordkeeping and financial reporting requirements under the *Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017*. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately and our approved educators adhere to their responsibilities as '*fit and proper persons*' under Family Assistance Law. Our FDC Service and educators ensure the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

GENERAL FEES

Approved educators operate as self-employed small business owners and set their own fees, days of operation and minimum hours for provision of education and care under NextGen Family Day Care.

In accordance with Section 201B of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*, and guidance in the *Child Care Provider Handbook*, educators must not engage in fee-setting practices that exploit special circumstances or apply discriminatory fee structures.

Educators must not charge a different fee to families receiving ACCS or during declared emergencies (as per the *Child Care Provider Handbook*, pp. 90–91).

Educators are advised they must meet their obligations under the Family Assistance Law and *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* regarding setting of fees, ensuring the following:

- educators do not charge an individual more than the usual CCS hourly session fee who may be eligible for ACCS or who receives a prescribed payment
- educators do not change fees during a particular event or circumstance (for example during Covid or a service closure)

Prior to a child commencing care, families will be provided with a Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) which clearly outlines the agreed sessions of care, approved fees, payment arrangements and the family's liability to pay for care. The CWA must be completed, reviewed and signed by both the Approved Provider and the family before care commences or any Child Care Subsidy (CCS) claim is submitted. Please refer to the Enrolment Governance Process table below. Approved fees may vary based on a range of factors, including the educator's qualifications and experience, geographical location, hours and type of care provided (including permanent, casual, overnight and weekend care), and the age or specific needs of the child where applicable. Some educators may also offer additional services, such as the provision of food, nappies or transport. Where these additional charges are applicable, they will be clearly identified within the approved fee schedule and will not attract Child Care Subsidy (CCS), unless permitted under Family Assistance Law.

Any applicable late collection fees will also be clearly detailed within the approved fee schedule and are payable by the family as an out-of-pocket expense. Late fees do not attract CCS.

Enrolment Governance Process

This workflow outlines the governance process followed by NextGen Family Day Care to ensure all enrolments comply with the Family Assistance Law, including the establishment of a valid Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) before care commences.

STEP 1	Family enquires about care
STEP 2	Approved provider determines availability with an approved educator
STEP 3	Approved provider: • Sends Enrolment form link, Booking form link, Authorisation and Agreement form link to family and family handbook
STEP 4	Family fills out and signs all required enrolment documents electronically
STEP 5	• Family fills out and signs all required enrolment documents electronically • Once Booking form is received by NextGen Family Day Care the approved provider prepares and sends a Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) to the family
STEP 6	Admin Manager Verifies: • CWA is complete and filed • Liability to pay fees exists (direct debit info is filled out on the enrolment form) request from family if needed • Checks all enrolment details are correct • Completes any medical forms as needed in conjunction with the parent and educator
STEP 7	The approved provider Authorises the enrolment and verifies the CWA ensuring hte session times from the CWA match Hubhello and parent details match CCS records
STEP 8	Enrolment is submitted through the CCS system
STEP 9	Family confirms the enrolment through their MyGov account verifying sessions of care are correctly entered
STEP 10	Care commences only after the enrolment has been confirmed and all compliance documents have been met
STEP 10	Quarterly Compliance audits confirm: • CWA matches current booking form request • Session reports match enrolment details • No Changes have occurred without a new CWA being issued

BOND PAYMENT

- A bond consisting of $100 full fee is to be paid to hold a child's position at the FDC Service
- The bond payment will be refunded to families if all accounts are paid in full and no amount is outstanding when the child leaves the FDC Service.

GENERAL FEES

- Fees are charged at various rates for each individual educator. Fee schedules are sent to each family to sign digitally prior to enrolment/increase of fees
- CCS is paid directly to the FDC Service and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's statement)
- Families are required to pay Nextgen Family Day Care the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount- the 'gap' amount
- 'Gap Fees' must be paid via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

- Fees are to be paid weekly through a direct debit system or EFT directly into NextGen Fami;y Day Care's nominated Bank account. If families wish to pay fees fortnightly or monthly basis, it is a requirement that the family pay in advance and are not in arrears.
- Families are requested to contact the educator if their child is unable to attend a particular session
- Fees are payable for every session that a child is enrolled at the FDC Service. This includes pupil free days, sick days, and family holidays but excludes periods when the educator is closed. The FDC educator may close their service due to periods of local emergency such as bushfire or flood or pandemic
- If a session of care falls on a public holiday, families are required to pay normal fees. CCS will be paid for sessions that fall on public holidays
- Casual days may be offered to families if available.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (CCS)

These conditions are legislated under the *Family Assistance Law* and detailed in Section 67CC of the *Family Assistance Act 1999*

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their myGov account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment
- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy. The child must:
- Parents must:
    - care for their child at least 2 nights per fortnight or have 14% share of care
    - be liable for child care fees at an approved early childhood education care service
    - meet residency requirements
- The child must:
    - be 13 or under
    - not attending secondary school (unless an exemption applies)
    - meet immunisation requirements
- Child care must be provided by an approved provider
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
    - family income estimate
    - activity level
    - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

  - number of children in care
  - type of early learning and childcare Service
- Child Care Subsidy will be provided directly to the Service and this amount deducted from the parent/family account
- Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstance to Centrelink- (family income, activity levels, relationship changes or any other changes to their circumstances)
- Any disputes with CCS payments are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments
- Child care discounts for early childhood workforce will only be offered as outlined in the CCS Handbook.

PAYMENT OF FEES

- Fees are to be paid directly to the FDC Service by families
- Families are required to pay fees using the FDC Service's (iPay) direct debit system or EFT into Next Gen Family Day Care's nominated bank account. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account
- Fees and charges associated with direct debit system are outlined upon enrolment in the fee schedule signed electronically by families
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees
- Families will be issued with a *Statement of Entitlement* on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements
- The *Statement of Entitlement* will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts
- The *Statement of Entitlement* is generated using our CCS Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

This is a requirement under Section 201A and 201B of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* and must include a clear breakdown of fee reductions and gap amounts, as specified in the *Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017*, Part 3.

ABSENCES FROM THE SERVICE

Allowable and additional absences are regulated under Section 10 of the *Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017*, and further defined in the *Child Care Provider Handbook* (pp. 86–89). Records must be retained to justify additional absences where evidence is required

- Families are requested to contact the FDC educator if their child is unable to attend a particular session
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the Service is their child is unable to attend
- Under the Child Care Subsidy families are allowed 42 absence days per child, per financial year
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason. Families do not have to provide evidence
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law
- Records and evidence will be kept by the Service for each additional absence, where required
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via myGov
- In a period of emergency (declared by the Australian Government), such as bushfire or flood, extra allowable absences for the duration of the emergency will be automatically applied in the CCS system
- In accordance with Family Assistance Law, educators cannot charge for, or record a session of care where provision of care is not available. Educators are not able to charge a different rate for the same type of care provision. Therefore, if the educator is unable to provide care due to illness or leave, they are unable to charge for that particular session of care

ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) provides extra help with the cost of early education and care
- There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:
    - Child wellbeing to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect. The approved provider is involved in determining children who may require additional support who are at risk of harm
    - Grandparents—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
    - Temporary financial hardship—to help families experiencing financial hardship. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment

    - Transition to work—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the approved provider

RECOVERY OF OUTSTANDING FEES AND DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURE

In the event of a notification that a direct debit payment for family fees has been rejected, the service will follow the outlined procedure to recover all outstanding fees:

The accounts manager will contact the family both by email and in person notifying them that their fees have rejected. Communication will typically be on a Thursday.

- The Accounts Manager will contact the family via email and in person via phone to inform them of the rejected payment. Communication will typically occur on a Thursday.
- The educator providing care to the family will be informed of the fee rejection and the potential termination of care if the family fails to make a manual payment by the specified deadline.
- The Accounts Manager will request that the family makes a manual payment to the NextGen Family Day Care PTY LTD account by no later than 4:00 PM Friday.
- At any point during the fee recovery process, the family will be encouraged to enter into a debt agreement with the FDC Service to repay the outstanding fees.
- A written repayment contract will be provided, outlining the repayment plan details, including the duration, repayment amounts, and steps to be taken if the plan is not adhered to.
- If payment is not made by the requested day and time, the child's position will be terminated. The family will receive a final letter confirming the termination of care.
- he FDC Service will initiate its debt collection process, ensuring compliance with privacy and conditional requirements.

OVERPAID FEES

Nextgen Family Day Care will reconcile all fees upon the cancellation of care. Any overpaid amounts will be refunded to the family using the provided banking details. A new invoice or statement reflecting a $0 balance will be issued to the family.

LATE FEES

- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from an educator's residence/venue. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time the late fee is an out of pocket cost and does not attract CCS
- The family will also be charged the fee rate for the duration the parent is late to collect the child these will; be charged to the nearest 15 minute time increment (eg 11 minutes late = an extra 15 minutes charged)
- In addition to the above extra increment charge the parent will be charged the educators late fee rate per minute this fee does not attract CCS and is an full fee cost.
- A review of the child's booked times will occur where families are consistently late with fee payment.

CHANGE OF FEES

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of four weeks written notice is given to all families (Regulation 172 requires a minimum of 14 days' notice)
- CCS hourly rate caps may be increased by the CPI at the commencement of each financial year Any CCS hourly rate increases are governed by CCS and are automatically adjusted through our CCS Software.

TERMINATION OF ENROLMENT

- Parents/guardians are to provide **four weeks** written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from care
- If termination from the FDC Service is required without notification, families can lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law

RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT

The Approved Provider and Support Coordination Unit/Nominated Supervisor are responsible for:

- ensuring that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* are met
- ensuring the service and all persons with management and control (PMC) comply with the rules under Family Assistance Law (FAL)
- ensuring persons with management and control (PMC) are consider 'fit and proper' persons

- taking reasonable steps to ensure all educators, staff and volunteers follow the *Payment of Fees Policy*
- ensure educators set affordable fees by cross referencing fees charged in their local area through Care For Kids and Starting Blocks
- will ensure it is up to date with fees set by other services in each educators local area through websites such as Care For Kids and Starting Blocks
- ensuring all families are aware of our *Payment of Fees Policy*
- providing families with educator fee agreement (these may be different for each educator due to education qualifications, hours and days of care provided, overnight fees etc. (a template of the fee structure is provided below page 10)
- ensuring enrolment information are submitted correctly with appropriate enrolment information
- providing families with regular statement of fees payable
- notifying families of any overdue fees
- providing families with reminder letters as required
- terminating enrolment of children should fees not be paid
- discussing fee payment with families if required
- providing at least 4 weeks written notice to families of any fee increases or changes to the way fees are collected
- will communicate with educators via email and phone to address any outstanding family fees
- provide the educator with a weekly income statement via email

[Please note: Reg. 172 states a minimum of at least 14 days notice regarding changes to policies must be provided to families]

RESPONSIBILITY OF FAMILIES

- provide the FDC Service with the correct enrolment details to facilitate the CCS claim, if required, including:
    - Centrelink Reference Numbers for child and CCS claimant
    - Date of Birth for child and CCS claimant
- ensure payment of fees as per policy
- notify Centrelink of any changes that may affect their CCS entitlement
- confirm their child's enrolment through the parents myGov account.

THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS

Parents are generally liable to pay the co-contribution for childcare fees. Only state and territory governments (and their agencies) can contribute to the cost, in part of full, of childcare fees for families.

Where an agreement has been made between an employer or charity to assist in the contribution of fees the fees must be reduced accordingly before CCS has been applied.

Our FDC Service will record all documentation regarding any third-party payments.

COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Support Coordination Unit/Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Support Coordination Unit/Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.

Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone or email:

Phone: 1800 664 231

Email: tipoffline@education.gov.au

Resources and information for families

Child Care Subsidy

Centrelink Customer Reference Number

Absences from childcare- Australian Government

LEGAL FOUNDATION ADDENDUM

This policy is governed by the *Family Assistance Law*, which includes:

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*
    - Section 195D – Working With Children Card compliance
    - Section 201A–204F – Financial obligations, recordkeeping, and notifications
- *Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017*
- *Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017*
    - Part 3 – Statements of Entitlement and recordkeeping
    - Part 5 – Provider responsibilities

- *Child Care Provider Handbook* (2023 edition), which explains the application of these laws

All CCS-related operations must comply with these laws, including fee setting, notification timeframes, absence recording, statement issuance, and gap fee collection.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Payment of Fees Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCE

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Guide to the National Quality Framework.*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2021). Policy and procedure guidelines. *Payment of Service Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Service.*
Australian Government Department of Education Child care discount for early childhood workforce
Australian Government Department of Education Child Care Provider Handbook 2025
https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook
Australian Government Department of Education *Early Childhood and Care*
https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood
Australian Government Department of Education (2024). *Help in an emergency*
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).
Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Rebecca Woods	Director	3.5.25
	Rebecca Woods	Director	13.5.26
POLICY REVIEWED	MAY 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	May 2027

APPROVED FEE SCHEDULE		
Standard Fees (Includes NextGen FDC Educator Levy of $2.30)	**Charges**	
	PER HOUR	**PER DAY**
Core hours (8am to 6pm Monday to Friday)	$	$
Non-Standard Fees (Includes NextGen FDC Educator Levy $2.30)	**Charges**	
	PER HOUR	**PER DAY**
Non-core hours (6pm to 8am Monday to Friday)	$	$
Before & After school care	$	$

Weekend care – Saturday & Sunday	$	$
Casual Fees (Includes NextGen FDC Educator Levy $2.30)	**Charges**	
Core hours (8am to 6pm Monday to Friday)	$	$
Before & After school care	$	$
Non-core hours (6pm to 8am Monday to Friday)	$	$
Weekend care – Saturday & Sunday	$	$
Public holiday	$	$
Additional Fees	**Charges**	
Food		per day
Transport		Per trip/ Each way/per KM
Nappies		each
Sun Protection		per day
Early arrival fee: *This fee does NOT attract CCS*	$	Per minute
Late Pick-up Fee: *This fee does NOT attract CCS*	$	per minute