

POLICY: FEES



QUALITY AREA 7: LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE MANAGEMENT

AIM

- The Yass Montessori Pre-School is committed to educating children aged three to six years using the Montessori philosophy.
- To enable our service to provide high quality early education and care for children we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times. Prompt payment of fees and fee structure planning allows us to plan with certainty.
- We have commitment to ensuring our fees are as affordable as possible and that all families have access to any subsidies that are available to reduce those fees. Our Committee will advocate with governments for all children's right to access early education and care regardless of the family's financial situation.
- Our Pre-School's financial health and access to our service will be maximized by ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment.

GOALS

Yass Montessori Pre-School will ensure:

- Families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolment and regularly throughout the year by invoicing and letters.
- Fees increases are kept to a minimum, and in accordance to the published fee structure at Attachment A.
- Cost of administering fee collection is minimised.
- The appropriate priority of access requirements set by the NSW Government are followed.
- All legal requirements required by our access to government funding are met.
- Fee collection to prevent or recover bad debts is pursued.
- Families are notified as far ahead as possible and no less than 14 days of any changes to fees or the way fees will be collected.
- Invoices are issued at the start of each term.

STRATEGIES

The Approved Provider will:

- Welcome children in the local community aged three to six years to attend the Yass Montessori Pre-School whilst ensuring priority of access rules, and diversity and equality principles are adhered to.
- Ensure vacant places are filled under the appropriate priority of access policy for the service type, so that access to the Pre-School is in line with legislative and regulatory guidelines.
- Ensure adequate records of attendance are kept for each child as required.
- Comply with Australian Government or NSW Government funding agreements as required.
- Ensure the service remains financially viable and can meet its debts and other obligations as they fall due.
- Only collect and disclose personal information about children and families to government agencies where the disclosure is legally required.
- Ensure confidentiality regarding all matters related to fees is recognized and practiced at the Pre-School.
- Discuss recommendations from the Director, Treasurer and Administrator on a case by case basis when issues arise such as genuine hardship, avoidance of fees and debt collection.
- Fees will be reviewed in line with any changes to the NSW funding agreement and the following year's Budget. Any increases in fees are made at Committee level and are kept to a minimum for the viable running of the school.
- In June each year the Pre-School Committee reviews the budget and there may be a possibility of a fee increase.
- A late collection of children fee will be applied to those families who arrive after 4 pm to collect their child/ren from the Pre-School.

The Nominated Supervisor / Administrator will:

- Ensure all families are made aware of service fees and any available subsidies on enrolment.
- Ensure all families are made aware of the procedure in relation to the late collection of children from the Pre-School.
- Ensure invoices of fees are given to all families at the start of each term.
- Consider joining in appropriate advocacy actions designed to reduce the cost of early education and care fees for families where ever possible.

- Ensure families are aware of all payment options.
- Ensure families are reminded of due dates for fees, and if fees remain outstanding, will send at least one formal reminder to the family before taking any recovery action (which is a last resort).
- Put up a notice outside the classroom to remind all parents that payment of fees are due.

In practice, at Yass Montessori Pre-School:

- The Director and Administrator will prepare a proposed budget in consultation with the Treasurer to enable the Committee to set fee levels for the following year or years.
- The Pre-School will aim to keep fees as low as possible while balancing the Pre-Schools viability.
- The fee structure will support access through subsidies for low income and indigenous families in line with NSW Government funding models.
- The Pre-School will inform families/parents of their financial responsibilities through the enrolment and orientation process so that all families are aware of their responsibilities before enrolling their child.
- Enrolling your child indicates acceptance of our Fees and Enrolment Policies
- Fee collection will be as simplified and considerate as possible, whilst still ensuring the ongoing viability of the Pre-School and equity for all families.
- The Director will ensure the Administrator issues invoices and monitors fee collection.
- The Administrator will raise any concerns about late payment or refusal to pay with the Director as soon as the issue arises.
- The Director or Administrator will bring fee issues to the attention of the Pre-School Committee for their consideration, without breaching confidentiality of families.
- Act upon Committee directions in regards to implementing variations to the fee structure, debt collection, providing subsidies for extreme hardship, etc.

Families will:

- Receive a rebate under the Start Strong Funding if their child is 4 years of age before 31 July and is enrolled for at least two days per week.
- Record the arrival and departure times of their child or children attending care.
- Collect their children from the Pre-School no later than 4 pm. A late collection of children fee may be incurred.

- Ensure all fees are kept up to date and paid in full. Fees not paid in full or without appropriate approved repayment arrangements being made (with the Administrator or Director) will be need to be paid before 31 October each year before re-enrolment will be considered (see Enrolment Policy).
- Speak to the Administrator or Director as soon as possible if having difficulty paying fees. All conversations will be in private and confidentiality maintained for families.
- Provide two week's notice of withdrawal from the Pre-School. Fees will still need to be paid even if the child does not attend for the two week's. The Director may review this in exceptional cases and if the place can be filled immediately, the Director has full discretion to waive this requirement.

IN THE EVENT OF NON-PAYMENT OF FEES:

If fees are not paid according to the agreed interval on the payment plan and special payment arrangements have not been agreed to by the Pre-School, an overdue statement and/or letter will be issued requesting fees to be paid within a further specified period of time.

A range of attempts, over periods of time, will be made by the Pre-School to make contact with families who do not respond to letters, SMS, emails, phone calls or other approaches made by the Pre-School to address the issue of outstanding fees. The Director is informed of progress.

If satisfactory payment of fees still cannot be negotiated, the debt may be referred to a debt collection agency with the approval of the Director. All legal costs incurred will be payable by the family.

Links to other policies/procedures

- ◇ Enrolment
- ◇ Arrival and Departure

Sources:

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – the Regulations
- National Quality Standards (NQS) – the Standards
- National Quality Improvement Plan (NQIP)

Developed: 2011

Reviewed: May 2013, May 2014, May 2015, Nov 2015, Feb 2017, May 2017, Jan 2018, Dec 2018, Sep 2019

FEE STRUCTURE

ATTACHMENT A

The Yass Montessori Pre-school fee structure is as follows:

- A one off non-refundable enrolment fee of \$50 is payable upon lodgment of Enrolment Form, or your child's enrolment form will not be processed.
- A fee per day is payable for each child attending the Pre-school. Fees are reviewed and set by the Committee and families will be given as much notice as possible about fee increases. Families are invoiced each term.

FEES FOR 2020 ARE:

| Eligibility | Fee |
|---|--------------------------|
| Funded 4 and 5 year old children (2 days minimum) | \$35.00 per day |
| Funded 3 year old children (2 days minimum) | \$35.00 per day |
| Health care card / ATSI | \$20.00 per day |
| Casual Day * (no discounts apply) | \$40.00 per day |
| 3, 4 and 5 year old children attending one day | \$45.00 per day |
| Fundraising Levy | \$30 per family per term |

All fees must be paid when they are due. Invoices will generally be sent out by week two of each school term, and full payment is required by the end of week four, or as indicated by the **due date** on the account itself (unless prior arrangements have been made with the Administrator). The Administrator will issue all relevant receipts upon request. Fees are not refundable if the child is absent (for example, personal holidays, if injured or ill, staff development days, public holidays or if the child is unimmunised).

After due consultation with the family, the Pre-School may reject the attendance of any child whose fees have not been paid. Enrolment for the following term or the following year may be rejected by the Pre-School if fees remain outstanding and appropriate arrangements have not already been made and adhered to.

The full day fee is payable regardless of how long the child attends on a particular day. The hours a child may attend are 8.30 am to 4 pm each day. Children must be collected from the premises by 4 pm as the Pre-School is not licensed to hold children after that time. A late collection fee may apply.

***Casual days** – Parents may request that a child attend on a day they are not normally enrolled if the Administrator knows another child will be away or a temporary (day) vacancy happens to become available.