

Area – Finance

#### Document Control

Responsible Officer: CFO and Executive Manager Corporate Services	Policy Number: FIN08.02
Contact Officer: Accountant (Transactional Services)	Policy Area: Finance
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#### Scope

This policy provides a framework to guide all actions for The Crèche and Kindergarten Association Limited (C&K) and relevant stakeholders. This includes, but is not limited to, the C&K board, C&K staff, C&K central, C&K branch centres, C&K subsidiaries, children, guardians, volunteers, contractors, Community Advisory Group members and any visitors to C&K centres.

This policy excludes C&K affiliate members.

Account holders include guardians, third parties and government agencies for example Child Safety.

#### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide transparency in the application and administration of fees.

C&K aims to provide the highest quality education and care for children and to do this C&K rely on account holders paying fees promptly to remain financially viable and sustainable.

#### Policy Statement

##### **1.0 General**

C&K is a not for profit organisation that reinvests any surplus made back into centres and programs for children.

Fees are based on operational and financial considerations to ensure sustainability of our centres. Due to changes in economic, political, or legislative conditions, the C&K executive team reserves the right to amend fees at any time.

##### **2.0 Waitlist fee**

C&K do not charge a fee to place a child's name on the waitlist of a C&K branch centre.

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### **3.0 Enrolment fee**

Confirmation of a child's enrolment is either; upon an online enrolment offer being made and accepted by the guardian; or by receipt of a completed and signed copy of an enrolment form.

On confirmation of enrolment a non-refundable, enrolment fee is charged (where applicable) and becomes payable even if that enrolment is cancelled later.

Enrolment fees are transferable if a child is moving from one C&K branch centre to another C&K branch centre where bookings remain continuous (Adjustments are not made where the amount of the enrolment fee is different in the new centre to the amount already paid).

Enrolment fees paid to an affiliate are non-transferable, as they are separate legal entities.

### **4.0 Bookings**

Once the enrolment is confirmed, a child is booked in and the account holder is charged and payment must be made whether the child attends the centre or not, until appropriate notice is given to end the enrolment.

#### **4.1 Permanent**

A child is enrolled as per the Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) confirmed by the account holder. A child is enrolled on a continuous basis until appropriate notice is given to change days or end the enrolment.

It is important to note that if (1) a child is enrolled in the kindergarten program of a child care centre and (2) they are of eligible age and (3) they have nominated this centre for claiming Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme (QKFS), that their bookings meet the required hours per week to be eligible for QKFS subsidies to be claimed. This is to maximise the appropriate subsidies that can be claimed from the Government to cover the cost of providing the kindergarten program at the centre.

#### **4.2 Casual**

Account holders who have paid the enrolment fee (where applicable) and whose accounts are paid up to date, may make casual bookings in advance. The centre director will determine if a casual booking can be accommodated.

Casual bookings can be made via the KindyNow App up to 14 days in advance. Bookings cancelled up to 24 hours prior to the date of the booking will not be charged for, otherwise the account holder is charged, and payment must be made whether the child attends the centre or not.

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Where accounts are overdue; directors will not accept additional casual bookings until the account is brought up to date.

**5.0 Public holidays and other closures**

C&K centres are closed on public holidays. If a child's permanent booking falls on public holidays, fees are charged for those days.

Where a fee is charged for a public holiday then the Child Care Subsidy can be paid as an absence day.

If for any other reason C&K decides to close centres, then account holders will not be charged for those days.

**6.0 Absences**

Fees are payable on days when the child is absent for reasons; including but not limited to; illness or exclusion due to an infection and/or vaccine preventable disease or illness.

Under the Child Care Subsidy legislation (CCS); CCS will be paid for up to 42 absence days per child per financial year. Once a child's initial 42 absence days have been exhausted, CCS can only be paid for additional absence days where they are taken for a reason as defined in the Family Assistance Law. Refer, [Fact Sheet 6. absences from child care](#)

Should the CCS not be applicable, the account holder is responsible for the payment of full fees for the days the child is absent.

If a child is absent for an explainable reason such as they are ill, the individual who cares for the child, the individuals' partner or another person with whom the child lives is ill and a medical certificate is provided to the centre then such absences will not count towards the 42 absence days.

If a child is booked to start at a centre on a date, and does not start on that day, no Child Care Subsidy will be paid (full fees are payable) until the child physically attends a session of care.

Similarly, a child care centre is taken to have permanently ceased providing care for a child on the day the child last physically attends a session of care. This means that Child Care Subsidy will not be paid for absences submitted after a child last physically attends a session of care.

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If a guardian has confirmed their child's last day at a centre or does not give the agreed period of notice and that child does not attend their last booked sessions of care, no Child Care Subsidy will be paid for any days after the child's last physical attendance at the centre.

It is important for families to consult the Department of Human Services website for further information regarding the Child Care Subsidy that may or may not be applicable for their individual circumstance.

**7.0 Daily fees**

C&K aims to keep fees affordable for account holders and has developed a fee system to maximise access to C&K centres.

For child care centres offering a kindergarten program the fees are displayed and explained to account holders at C&K centers; this statement of fees can be accessed via the C&K website ([www.candk.asn.au](http://www.candk.asn.au)).

For information on all other room fees contact the centre directly.

Fees are calculated daily and charged per week. A Customer Account Statement / Tax Invoice will be provided to the account holder each week.

C&K reserves the right to change fees when necessary. C&K will provide account holders with as much notice as possible regarding fee amendments and will give a minimum of fourteen days' notice in advance of any changes to fee structure and payment processes. Account holders will be notified by email or letter of any fee changes.

**8.0 Other chargeable fees**

Additional fees may be charged for incursions, excursions, fundraising activities and purchases of items such as hats and water bottles.

Casual day fees may apply.

Exceeding a booked session of care will incur an Additional Session charge.

Additional fees may be charged for late collection of children.

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### **9.0 Fee subsidies**

Government subsidies may be applicable to assist with reducing the cost of fees.

Account holders are responsible for understanding and notifying C&K about the subsidies for which they may be eligible. At enrolment, C&K will assist guardians by providing information about available subsidies, however where the calculation of a subsidy is dependent on an account holder's unique situation, C&K may refer the account holder to the appropriate Government department for more information.

Any applicable Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme (QKFS) subsidies that account holders may be eligible for are applied to accounts as a fee reduction and shown on the Customer Account Statement / Tax Invoice.

Account holders must comply with C&K requests for supporting documentation, should it be required, to verify and validate an account holder's entitlement to receive a fee subsidy.

Account holders are responsible for updating details if their eligibility lapses. If the eligibility has lapsed, the fee reduction will no longer apply and full fees will be payable.

If full fees have been paid and documentation later provided, which enables C&K to claim relevant subsidies, these will be applied to the account and a refund may be requested where accounts are in credit.

Fee subsidies are subject to change. Should a fee subsidy be reduced or removed, or if the required documentation is not provided to enable C&K to claim relevant subsidies, the account holder will be responsible for payment of full fees.

### **10.0 Fee waivers**

Fee assistance may be available for instances of one-off events leading to genuine hardship or adversity. Refer to the centre director for more information on eligibility.

### **11.0 Fee payment methods**

A fee payment agreement is included in the enrolment form along with information on available payment options.

C&K's preferred method of payment is by Direct Debit via completion of an 'iDebitPro' DDR form which will deduct fees due from the nominated bank account or credit card.

Payment may also be made by BPay using the details printed on the bottom of the Customer Account Statement issued to account holders.

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Centrelink customers can choose to pay using Centrepay which is a free voluntary bill-paying service. Through Centrepay, account holders can authorise for regular amounts to be paid direct to C&K from their nominated welfare payments by completing a deduction authority.

Account holders that are registered for iParentPortal can make a one-off credit card or Direct Debit payment and update their payment details using this application.

<https://parentslogin.kidsoft.com.au/>

Cash is not an acceptable method of payment.

### **12.0 Frequency of payments**

Fees are set by C&K and are required to be paid in advance, on or before commencement.

Payments can be made on a weekly or fortnightly basis and accounts must be paid in advance as follows:

- Weekly billing cycle – payment due 1 week in advance (i.e. payment due every Friday paying for the following week);
- Fortnightly billing cycle – payment due 2 weeks in advance (i.e. payment due alternating Friday paying for the following two weeks);

### **13.0 Late collection of children**

Licensing dictates the centre opening and closing hours and staff are employed to work specific shifts and are entitled to leave upon completion of that shift. Guardians must notify the centre if there is a delay beyond the normal booking. It is the guardians' responsibility to ensure that a child is collected on time.

At the scheduled closing time if the centre has not heard from the guardian staff will attempt to contact them, and the emergency contacts nominated on the enrolment form. Guardians who are late collecting children after closing time will be charged the prescribed late fees. Account holders are unable to claim any Government subsidies for late fee charges.

Guardians with children booked into sessional care that are due to be collected before the centre closing time that exceed their booked session hours will be charged an additional session fee per child. This will be applied to their account and will be payable in their next scheduled payment. Account holders may be able to claim Government subsidies for sessional care late fee charges.

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**14.0 Late payment of fees**

Account holders are responsible for their account payment obligations and must ensure payment of their account when due, accounts that are not paid in advance; are overdue.

If the account holder becomes aware that they will be unable to meet their payment obligation, they must contact their centre director immediately to discuss payment options.

The centre director will work with the account holder and the C&K accounts receivable team to determine alternative payment options such as developing an approved payment plan agreement.

Additional fees may be charged to accounts for dishonoured payments. The account holder is not eligible to claim any Government subsidies on any fee charges.

The cost of recovering any fees owed to C&K (including legal or collection fees) will be added to the amount of fees outstanding and will become payable to C&K by the account holder.

The C&K policy on fee collection will be followed for the collection of all overdue amounts.

**15.0 Suspension or cancellation of enrolment**

Children are unable to attend a C&K branch center where an account remains overdue for a period of 21 days or more except where special arrangements for payment have been made for example in an approved payment plan agreement.

During a period of suspension bookings will remain on the account and daily fees will continue to be charged to the account holder.

If after a week (7 calendar days) of suspension the account holder has not brought their account up to date, or entered into an approved payment plan agreement, C&K will end the child's enrolment on that date without further notice and offer the place to another child on the waitlist. Full fees may apply if an enrolment is ended after a suspension period.

**16.0 Account holder cancellation of enrolment**

Once an enrolment has been confirmed; should an account holder choose to leave or cancel their enrolment; the enrolment fee is non-refundable and a minimum of two weeks' (14 calendar days) notice in writing, is required.

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Notice in writing can be provided by email, or by message using iParentPortal, or by completing a termination of enrolment form. If a phone call is made to cancel an enrolment notice in writing is still required.

Where less than two weeks' notice in writing is provided, two weeks fees in lieu of notice will be applied to accounts except for when a child is transferring from one C&K branch centre to another and where bookings remain continuous.

Two weeks' notice in writing is applicable to all account holders, whether a child has commenced with C&K or not.

If a guardian has confirmed their child's last day at a centre or does not give the agreed period of notice and that child does not attend their last booked sessions of care, no Child Care Subsidy will be paid for any days after the child's last physical attendance at the centre, full fees will apply.

**17.0 Refunds**

C&K will transfer any cleared funds payable to the account holder to their nominated bank account as shown on the enrolment form or most up to date DDR form.

The account holder is responsible for the accuracy of bank account details and any consequences arising from the failure to provide accurate bank details or failure to notify C&K of any changes to those bank details. Where bank account details are not already available they will be requested to be provided in writing by the account holder. Refunds cannot be made to credit cards.

Where overpayments have been made by account holders paying by Centrepay these will be returned if the information is available to do so otherwise the Department of Human Resources will be contacted to advise on the process to return the funds.

Associated Documents	
FIN05	Policy Fee Collection
FIN05.04	Procedure Fee Payment Plan Agreement
FIN05.04.F1	Form Fee Payment Plan Agreement
FIN05.06	Procedure Fee Collection
FIN08.03	Procedure Fee Waiver
FIN08.03.F1	Form Fee Waiver Application
SO:01.17.F3	Late Fee Charge Form
SO:05.01.F4	Termination of Enrolment Form

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**Policy FIN08.02  
Fees - Child Care and Outside  
School Hours Care**



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