



# Enrolment & Fees Policy

## Document Control

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# 1 Introduction

Our aim is to provide an equitable and accurate enrolment system for all children at Little Owls Preschool. We will ensure we have relevant information to care for each child, and keep them safe while they attend the early childhood centre. Fees and funding are linked to child attendance. The administration of attendances and absences requires accurate documentation of which the Ministry of Education carries out regular audits. Little Owls Preschool has chosen to be a provider of the 20 hours ECE funding programme. It is our aim as a community based centre, to ensure budgeted income covers all expenditure while operating within the government's regulations and recommendations and adhering to our financial policy. We value the loyalty of the families using Little Owls Preschool and have a commitment to keep fees affordable

# 2 Key Definitions

**Enrolment information** means the information we collect about a child from the family/whānau using the enrolment form.

**Fees** means the dollar amount charged per hour when the child is enrolled in the preschool.

# 3 Scope

This policy applies to St John of God Hauora Trust, Community Youth and Child Services, Little Owls Preschool.

# 4 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework for collecting information about a child to ensure we have accurate information to keep them safe while they attend the preschool. It defines how we keep these records up to date and how we collect funding and fees to ensure we operate the preschool within budget. The policy also clarifies the expectations and responsibilities of family/whānau in providing current information about their child and updating this when needed.

# 5 Policy

Little Owls Preschool will review the fees each year in accordance with the senior management and Chief Executive Officer.

Compliance with legislated fee requirements and to the rules of attendance and absences will be carried out efficiently.

The enrolment form will comply with the Ministry of Education requirements to collect accurate information as per the Early Childhood Regulations 2008.

## **6 Enrolment Requirements**

### **6.1 Enrolment Form**

On enrolment, parents/whānau will be asked to complete enrolment forms for their child/ren which will include details on parent/guardian details, emergency contacts, medical details, collection of children, and fee payments etc.

Parents must agree that their child is not enrolled in any other childcare centre/preschool service on the same day as attending this preschool (as per the Little Owls Preschool enrolment form).

### **6.2 Parent Permissions**

As part of enrolment parents/guardians will also; give permission for their child to be photographed for planning purposes, permission for their child to participate in small walks from the centre and have sunscreen, arnica or sticking plasters applied if required.

### **6.3 Immunisation**

The Ministry of Health requires all licensed early childhood centres to sight and record every child's immunisation history on enrolment, or in the case of a child under 15 months old, once that child reaches the required age. An Immunisation Register will be kept in the preschool recording these details. The Register will be regularly updated and recorded on Infocare.

### **6.4 Message System**

On enrolment, families will be orientated around the centre and shown where messages/information is kept. Invoices will sent out via email weekly, and newsletters will be provided in the foyer. FaceBook will also be used as a way to communicate with whānau.

### **6.5 Special Custody Arrangements**

If a parent or guardian requests special custody arrangements (i.e. anybody who is legally prevented from picking up or having contact with a child), they will be requested to bring in the custody forms for sighting and noting on the enrolment form.

### **6.6 Priority for Enrolment**

Existing families will have precedent for enrolments. Children moving from the Under Two room to the Over Two classroom will be given spaces on the same days where possible or other days negotiated until a space becomes available.

### **6.7 Parent Information**

All families will be given an Information Sheet / Parent Handbook on the operation of the preschool. Families will be orientated to the Sign-in and Out Sheet at reception and will need to complete this daily.

## 6.8 Potential Enrolments

If families are not enrolling immediately, the Visitor's Book must be completed before showing the family around the centre.

## 7 Child Absences

To meet legislative requirements daily rolls are maintained and attendance / absences recorded.

The Ministry of Education has strict criteria relating to absences and funding which we adhere to: The application of Ministry of Education 3-week absence rule. After 3 weeks absence, full fees will apply if a family wishes to retain the child's position on the roll.

Ten absences will be granted per child per year after which full fees will apply. Notification of unexpected absences must be given on the day and normal fees will apply after ten absences have been used.

## 8 Fees Requirements

### 8.1 Fee Schedule

A fee schedule will be made available on enrolment, and displayed in the Centre.

### 8.2 Fee Review

Fees will be reviewed annually on 1 April each year.

### 8.3 Payment Methods

On enrolment, information about weekly payment of fees will be given to parents / whānau. Parents / whānau will be made aware of the methods available to pay accounts. Automatic payment is the preferred method and an automatic payment form will be provided to the family with fee amount and bank account filled in. The family will be advised to give this to their bank. Cash payment can be made at the main reception. Internet banking is also acceptable.

### 8.4 Fees and Payments Management

The management of fees and payments will be managed by the Finance and Procurement Officer and overseen by the Manager Early Childhood Education (Canterbury).

Appropriate computer software will be used to keep accurate data on families accounts and information.

Details from the daily rolls are used for both Ministry of Education purposes and calculation of fees. These are entered weekly and any discrepancies corrected.

Fees are to be paid weekly in advance and all fees are GST inclusive.

Fees will be paid 50 weeks of the year. The preschool closes down for up to 2 weeks at Christmas and families will not be charged a fee during that time.

## 8.5 Fee Discounts

When teachers and St John of God Hauora Trust caregivers enrol their children at Preschool, they will be charged at 50% of the normal rate.

## 8.6 Work and Income Subsidies

Assistance will be given to support parents with completing the relevant Work and Income forms to access subsidies. These forms must be sighted as being stamped or a letter provided from Work and Income stating that the childcare subsidy is going to be paid. Until this occurs the child cannot attend the preschool unless the family is going to pay the weekly fee in advance. The child's space will be held for 1 week to give the family time to apply for the childcare subsidy. The childcare subsidy can be applied for online as an alternative and is subject to the family meeting Work and Income criteria.

## 8.7 Early Childhood Education Services

In order to receive 20 hours early childhood education (ECE) services, parents / whānau must provide evidence of their child's birth date and complete the Ministry of Education Attestation in the enrolment form.

## 8.8 Invoices

Invoices must be provided to families on a weekly basis via email. Invoices will be issued with any outstanding amounts noted on the bottom of the invoice.

Families must ensure that their invoice is paid in full on a weekly basis or alternatively, they need to contact the Finance person to discuss a payment plan.

## 8.9 Overdue Fees

In the case of non-payment, or where the amount of \$200.00 or more is owed, or there has been no payment for 2 weeks, dialogue will be initiated. If this discussion produces no response, then a letter will be written to the debtor advising them of what action will be taken. Debts under \$200 will be pursued internally. Automatic payment through direct debiting will be encouraged to make it easier for managing payment by the debtor. If this elicits no response, then the account will be referred to a debt collection agency.

## 8.10 Late Fees

A late fee of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes will be charged when a parent or family member is late to collect their child. Late fees may be cancelled in the event of an emergency at the manager's discretion.

## 8.11 Notice of Fee Increase

At least 1 months' notice will be given in the event of a fee increase.

## 8.12 Leavers' Accounts

The preschool reserves the right to request 2 weeks' notice before a child can be withdrawn.

Leavers' accounts are given to families upon departure from centre. Accounts are to be settled within 7 days. An account is sent after the first full month following the child leaving preschool with a letter attached stating that accounts are held for one month and then passed on to management and then a debt collection agency. There will be no reimbursement of any Government subsidies funding.

### **8.13 Forced Closure**

No fees will be charged for public holidays that fall during term-time, term-breaks or any other forced full day closures such as snow days (fees will be charged for actual hours opened).

## **9 References**

- Ministry of Education: Funding Handbook.
- Ministry of Education: Regulations 2008.

## **10 Related Documents**

St John of God Little Owls Preschool: Enrolment Information.