

FEES - FAMILY DAY CARE

QUALITY AREA 7 | VERSION 2.0

Adopted by Approved Provider of Golden Plains Shire Council Children’s Services		Month / Year
Date revised		December 2023
Next revision due		December 2025

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to:



- Ensure that the Golden Plains Shire Family Day Care service meets all accountability requirements regarding the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees that are charged by the education and care service.

POLICY STATEMENT



VALUES

Golden Plains Shire is committed to:

- ensuring that Family Day Care Educators who are self-employed business operators conduct their business operations in a fair and transparent manner.
- Providing responsible financial management of the service, including establishing fees that will result in a financially viable service, while keeping user fees at the lowest possible level.
- Providing a fair and manageable system for dealing with non-payment and/or ability to pay fees/outstanding debts.
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances or parents/guardians
- Advising users of the service about government funding and fees to be by parents/guardians.

Family Day Care Educators are authorised to collect fees on behalf of Golden Plains Shire Family Day Care. Educators do not have the legal right to independently enter into a care agreement.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, Family Day Care educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Golden Plains Shire Council Family Day Care Service.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Family Day Care Educators	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Discuss and agree on individual Educator fees and charges during Council's annual budget review process.	R	√	√		
Provide reason and/or evidence to validate fee increases above CPI.			√		
Work in partnership with the service to set fees for agreed core hours of care, non-core hours of care and late pickup fees.			√		
Determine a fees and charges schedule as part of the budget process.	R	√	√		
Implement annual administration fee increase in-line with CPI. [Golden Plains Shire Council charges an administration fee which supports the operation of the Co-ordination Unit. This fee forms part of the hourly fee charged to enrolled families.]	R	√			
Developing a fee policy that balances the parent's/guardians capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability.	R	√			
Implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parent's/guardians, the nominated supervisor and educators in line with the requirements of the Commonwealth Governments Child Care Package.	R	√	√	√	
Provide the fees and charges schedule to users of the service as part of the Enrolment process.	R	√	√		
Ensure transport charges associated with regular outings and excursions are clearly detailed within the fee agreement.		√			
<p>Ensure that the parent/guardian of each child enrolled at the service has received, completed and signed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enrolment form ● Booked hours form and Complying Written Agreement ● Fee Agreement ● Statement of Fees & Conditions of Care 	R	√	√	√	

Families must only enter into a childcare agreement with the Family Day Care service and not directly with the educator. The service is responsible for charging the fees, not the educator.				√	
Ensuring that the <i>Fees Policy</i> is readily accessible at the service (<i>Regulation 171</i>)	R	√	√		
Apply fee setting policy consistently across families, particularly making sure not to charge more to ACCS eligible parents than for those parents not eligible for these payment types.	R	R			
Ensuring that all eligible families are supported to access Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS)	R	R			
Providing all parents/guardians with a fee payment agreement (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)	R	√			
Provide 28 days' notice to all educators and users of the service when there is a change to the Fees & Charges Schedule.	R	√			
Provide care for the total session where a session charge is made.			√		
Complete accurate timesheet/attendance records by recording and signing the correct times of drop-off and collection at the program				√	
Verify each child's education and care hours by signing the parent verification section on the record of attendance.				√	
Ensure all absences are approved on the attendance record, including on a public holiday.				√	
Ensure all fees are payable for all absences on the day a child is booked into care, including but not limited to family holidays and sick days.				√	
Submit accurate timesheet/attendance records to the co-ordination unit for each child in care on a fortnightly basis to comply with State and National regulations.			√		
Process timesheet/attendance records and report childcare usage through an approved Child Care Management System.	R	√			
Ensure families who approach the provider or who are attending the service receive clear advice on childcare fees and gap fees incl. fortnightly payment/billing cycles and service approved EFT payment options.	R	√	√		
Ensure proper oversight, training and risk controls to manage potential risk of error, inaccuracy or fraud – for example but not limited to spot checks and 6 monthly independent audits of timesheets, invoicing, payments received and receipt of payments.	R	R			
Clearly communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally-sensitive way, and where possible in the family's first language	R	√			

Ensure debts are followed up in a timely manner with individual families, including clear advice about amounts overdue and consequences of non-payment. Council reserves the right to terminate care where fees fall into arrears by two weeks from the invoiced due date or the conditions of the CWA or enrolment agreements by the parent/guardian are not met. Fees are payable for all absences on the day a child is booked into care, including but not limited to family holidays and sick days.	R	√	√		
Reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and the support offered.	R	√	√		
Considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families.	R	√	√		
Collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documentation regarding those with entitlement to concessions, where applicable	R	√		√	
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees	R	√	√		
Addressing any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service in a timely manner	R	√	√		
Reading all Enrolment documentation and complying with the Fee Payment Agreement.				√	
Notifying the approved provider if they are experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees				√	
Provide a fortnightly invoice to the users of the service via the educator who is an authorised agent.	R	√	√		
Provide a fortnightly payment and payment advice to educators.	R	√			
Ensure any outstanding fees and charges due are paid before the family can be placed with another educator.	R	√			
Ensure in instances where an educator cannot provide care or where the FDC service is closed ie. Christmas shutdown, that no fees are raised for this period.	R	√	√		
Ensure CCS is not claimed before a child has physically attended care or after a child has physically ceased care at the service. In these instances, the service will charge the parents/guardian the full fee applicable.	R	√			
Ensuring that all policies of Golden Plains Shire Council including <i>this policy</i> , are adhered to at all times	R	R	√	√	
Ensuring that all fees and charges schedules and conditions of care, are adhered to at all times	R	R	√	√	
Provide all users of the Service with a Statement of Entitlement on a fortnightly basis.	R	R			

Ensure all payments of gap fees are paid for via a service approved EFT method.	R	R	√	√	
Issue an invoice to families clearly detailing the total cost of care and CCS entitlement amounts for the given fortnight. Educators must ensure that additional approved costs such as excursion and transportation charges are detailed on the fortnightly invoice.			√		
Ensure any additional charges included on the fortnightly invoice are communicated to families and agreement exists between the educator and families in relation to these charges.			√		
Issue a receipt for all payments received on behalf of Council to families.			√		
Only provide care and education to children registered with the GPSC Family Day Care Service.			√		
Inform the service of any families that falls two weeks behind with payments.			√		
Suspend care and education services to a family when invoices fall into arrears by two weeks or until payment is up-to-date or advice is provided from the Family Day Care Co-ordination Unit that a payment plan is in place.			√		
Ensure that the ABN of the service is the only ABN that should appear on receipts. Family Day Care educators are authorised to accept and receipt fees on behalf of the			√		
Ensuring that the enrolment process is fair and equitable, and facilitates access for all children (<i>refer to Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>)	R	√	√		



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Regulation 168(2) (n) of Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 requires that Early Childhood Education and Care services have a comprehensive written fees policy, and the content of this policy must be communicated to families. The policy must include a written statement about the fees to be charged and the payment process. All families must be informed of applicable fees at the time of enrolment.

Childcare services providing approved childcare (*refer to Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017* (*refer to Legislation and standards*).

The Commonwealth Government supports working parents/guardians in making early childhood education and care more affordable and accessible through the Child Care Package (The Package). The Package includes the Child Care Subsidy (*refer to Definitions*) and Child Care Safety Net (*refer to Definitions*). Together, they enable parents/guardians to participate in the workforce by making early childhood education and care affordable and accessible.

The **Child Care Subsidy** helps by assisting families with their childcare fees and provides greater assistance to low and middle-income families

The **Child Care Safety Net** provides families and services extra support if they are vulnerable and disadvantaged, or located in a regional or remote community. The Child Care Safety Net includes:

- **The Additional Child Care Subsidy:** which provides extra payment on top of the Child Care Subsidy for families who need more help. There are four different payments:
 - For families who need help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
 - For grandparents who care for their grandchildren
 - For families experiencing significant financial stress
 - For parents transitioning from welfare to work
- **The Community Child Care Fund:** which helps services stay open and available to children in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities.
- **The Inclusion Support Program:** which provides support to Early Childhood Education and Care services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs in mainstream services
- **Subsidised Care for Low Income Families:** who earn \$69,390 or less a year can access 24 hours of subsidised care per child per fortnight without having to meet the activity test.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic)
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017
- Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017
- National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Child Care Safety Net: Child Care Safety Net provides families and services extra support if they are vulnerable and disadvantaged, or located in a regional or remote community. Supporting children to access quality early childhood education and care services

Child Care Subsidy (CCS): A Commonwealth Government means tested subsidy to assist eligible parents/guardians with the cost of child care. Payments are paid directly to approved child care providers. Further information can be found at: [Child Care Subsidy](#)

Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS): provides extra help with the cost of early childhood education and care to families facing difficult or challenging circumstances. ACCS will usually cover all of a child's early childhood education and care fees. Further information can be found at: [Additional Child Care Subsidy](#)

Excursion/transport charge: An additional charge required to meet the cost of special events or excursions that occur in response to emerging children’s program needs. Events that are planned ahead and are included as an expenditure item in the service’s budget do not incur this additional charge (*refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy*).

Fees: A charge for a place within a program at the service.

Session of Care: A period of time for which a family is charged a fee for providing care to their child.

Late collection fee: A charge that may be imposed by the approved provider when parents/guardians are late to collect their child/children from the program.

Core Hours: The ‘standard’ hours of care available with a set hourly rate applied.

Non-Core Hours: The ‘non-standard’ hours of care available with a higher set hourly rate applied.



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- Child Care Package: Commonwealth child care fee assistance including the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS): www.dese.gov.au
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Guide to the National Quality Framework: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework Principal Practice Guide: Equity and Diversity: www.education.vic.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

- Enrolment and Registration
- Compliments and Complaints
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Excursions and Service Events
- Inclusion and Equity
- Privacy and Confidentiality



EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to affordability, flexibility of payment options and procedures for collection of fees
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- monitor the number of families/children excluded from the service because of their inability to pay fees
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service’s policy review cycle, or as required

- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172 \(2\)](#)).



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Complying Written Agreement/Booked Hours Form
- Attachment 2: Fee Payment Agreement
- Attachment 3: Sample Statement of Fees & Conditions



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Golden Plains Shire Council on December 2023

REVIEW DATE: December 2025

ATTACHMENT 1. SAMPLE COMPLYING WRITTEN AGREEMENT/BOOKED HOURS FORM



FAMILY DAY CARE

Confirmation of Booked Hours & Complying Written Agreement

Service ID: 190017014T ABN: 86 998 570 296

As part of your enrolment at our service we require you to confirm acceptance of the following items in order for our service to be able to receive Government funding on your behalf. Acceptance of these items, together with information from your enrolment form will be used as your Complying Written Agreement for Child Care Subsidy purposes.

This agreement is made between the following parties and will commence on this day: ____/____/____ (Start Date)

Parent/Guardian 1	Parent/Guardian 2
Name: <i>Insert Full Name of Parent/Guardian</i>	Name: <i>Insert Full Name of Parent/Guardian</i>
Address: <i>Insert Address of Parent/Guardian</i>	Address: <i>Insert Address of Parent/Guardian</i>
Phone: <i>Insert telephone number</i>	Phone: <i>Insert telephone number</i>

And

Provider Details:	
Educator Name:	Educator ID:
Service: Golden Plains Family Day Care	Service ID: 190017014T
Service Address:	Phone: (03) 5220 7230

To provide care for:

Child's Details	
Name: <i>Insert Child's name</i>	Date of Birth: <i>Insert Child's Date of Birth</i>

Please record below the hours of care you and your care provider have agreed upon. The hours listed below are your child's booked hours of care.

These are the hours that you will be charged for each week (even if your child is absent). Depending on your needs and the availability of places at the service, care may also be provided on other days and times (outside of your routine days and times) and will be charged accordingly.

Booking Pattern				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
In:	In:	In:	In:	In:
Out:	Out:	Out:	Out:	Out:
In:	In:	In:	In:	In:
Out:	Out:	Out:	Out:	Out:

Fees & Attendances:

Fee Details	
Core Hours	Betweenam andpm (Mon – Fri) \$12.85 per hour (incl. administration levy of \$2.25 per hour)
None Core Hours	Betweenpm andam (Mon – Fri) \$16.10 per hour (incl. administration levy of \$2.25 per hour)

Fees are payable for any absences from the service on routine booked days and/ or casual days. When the service is closed for conference days and the Christmas break period fees will not be charged.

Please be aware that you will be charged the full fee for any absence days that occur between the start date listed above and your child's actual first day of attendance. You will also be charged the full fee for any absence days that occur between your last actual attendance and the end date of your booking.

If your child will be absent, please notify the service at your earliest convenience.

Fees are only payable via Direct Deposit (service approved EFT method)

Signatures	
Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date
Educator Signature:	Date

Council will comply with Privacy Policy and the Information Privacy Principles as set out in schedule 1 of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and the Health Records Act 2001 in relation to the use, storage and disclosure of information. If you have any queries regarding this Privacy Statement, please contact the Privacy Officer in writing to enquiries@gpsains.vic.gov.au or by mail: PO Box 111, Bannockburn 3331.

OFFICE USE ONLY:			
Booking created:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Entered by:	
CWA generated:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	CCS Enrolment Updated:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

ATTACHMENT 2: FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT



GOLDEN PLAINS FAMILY DAY CARE FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT

This fee agreement is made between the following parties on this day: ____/____/____

PROVIDER DETAILS			
Service Name	Golden Plains Family Day Care	Service ID	190017014T
Educator		Educator ID	
Service Address			

AND

PARENT/GUARDIAN DETAILS	
Name	
Address	
Phone No.	

To provide care for: _____

Our Method of Payment will be: Direct Deposit

Please refer to the Statement of Fees & Conditions of Care forwarded at the time enrolment for information regarding Fees applicable to your child's enrolment with the Family Day Care Educator as mentioned above.

The following Agreement outlines the 'Conditions of Use' for users of Golden Plains Family Day Care. The Agreement must be signed by the parent/guardian prior to care commencing at the service.

Payment of Fees

- I agree to pay all fees on or before the due date unless other arrangements have been made with the Family Day Care Educator. If fees are not paid debt collection may be instigated and a late payment fee of \$5.00/week will be incurred until full payment is received.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to register for Child Care Subsidy and provide the service with the required information (CRN's and Dates of Birth).
- I agree to pay fees for any absences from the service on routine booked days and/ or casual booked days. I understand when the service is closed for conference days, public holidays and/or school holidays, fees will not be charged.
- Curriculum days may be available through negotiation. Full fees will be charged where bookings are made and not cancelled within the two weeks notification period.
- I understand that I will not be eligible to receive CCS for any absence days that occur between the start date listed above and my child's actual first day of attendance and for any absence days that occur between my child's last actual attendance and the end date of the booking. I will be required to pay the full fee for these days.
- I agree to provide written notice of a period of one (1) week (5 working days) of any change to my permanent booking.
- I agree to notify the service of any agreed casual days (in addition to my routine booked days) by completing a timesheet notification.

Golden Plains Family Day Care Fee Payment Agreement (V1:20181120)1 | Page

- I understand fees will be invoiced in arrears and are payable on invoice (statement date). Payments can only be made by Direct Debit (service approved EFT method).
- I understand that if the educator is not available on my normal booked days that I will not incur any fees.
- Fees are administered by the Golden Plains Shire Council Early Years team. An administration fee is charged directly to the parent/guardian to cover the cost of this service.
- Fees are collected by the registered Educator on behalf of the Golden Plains Family Day Care Service.

Timesheets

- I understand that timesheets are required to be completed with the actual arrival and departure times of my child and that this shall be acknowledged with an initial or signature.
- I acknowledge that by signing the completed timesheet at the end of each billing fortnight I am confirming the hours of attendance and therefore the hours of care that will be charged. Timesheets are a legal document that confirms your child's attendance, and you are responsible for the accuracy of the timesheet to prevent fraud against the Commonwealth Government.

Withdrawal from and Cancellation of Care

- I agree that I am to give two (2) weeks (14 days) notice in writing before terminating the arrangement of care or pay one (1) week full fees in lieu of notice (CCS will not apply in this instance). Please discuss this with the Educator.
- Two weeks' notice is also required for cancellation of casual booked sessions. If children are absent or casual booked days are cancelled with less than two weeks' notice, normal charges will apply in full.
- If my child/ren do not attend during the period of notice (cancellation period), I will be charged the full fee for all booked days as CCS will not be paid on absences after the last day of actual attendance at the service.

Confidentiality and Privacy

I accept that confidentiality is an essential part of the program. I accept that information is covered by Council's Information Privacy Principles as set out in the *Information and Data Privacy Act, 2014*.

Golden Plains Shire Privacy Statement

Golden Plains Shire Council is strongly committed to protecting your privacy. All personal information collected on this form shall only be used by Council's Early Years Services in the planning and provision of appropriate services to your child(ren). Personal information collected, including payment details, will only be disclosed to persons in connection with early year's services and will not be disclosed to any external party without your consent, unless required to do so by law. If you have any queries or wish to gain access to amend your information please contact Council's Early Years Team on 0352207230.

Council will comply with the Privacy Policy and the Information Privacy Principles as set out in schedule 1 of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and the Health Records Act 2001 in relation to the use, storage and disclosure of information. If you have any queries regarding this Privacy Statement, please contact the Privacy Officer in writing to enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au or by mail: PO Box 111, Bannockburn 3331

- That my details in the enrolment form, as well as the details of the child I am enrolling are correct.
- I have agreed to days of care within the service and understand the start and end times of these sessions of care.
- That care may be provided on a casual or non- routine basis where there is availability and when agreed upon with my child's FDC educator.
- I understand that I am liable to pay fees for the care of my child as indicated above and, if applicable, in other information the service has given me (fee schedule and parent handbook) which are subject to change over time based on advice from the provider and acceptance by me.,
- I understand that I am only eligible for Child Care Subsidy when I pay for the agreed sessions of care.

Parent/ Guardian Name:			
Signature:		Date:	

ATTACHMENT 3: SAMPLE STATEMENT OF FEES AND CONDITIONS



FAMILY DAY CARE

Statement of Fees & Conditions of Care

Effective: 1 July 2023

Educator:

Child Care Subsidy is applicable in accordance with the Australian Government – Department of Human Services guidelines.

Core Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Between 7:00am and 5:00pm (Monday - Friday)• \$12.65 per hour (incl. administration levy of \$2.25 per hour)
Non Core Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Between 5:00pm and 7:00am (Monday- Friday)• \$16.10 per hour (incl. administration levy of \$2.25 per hour)
Administration Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$2.25 per hour per child (included in the hourly fee)
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0.90c per km
Minimum Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A minimum of 8 hours per day for pre-schoolers. A minimum of 2 hours before school and 2.5 hours per child for after school. This does not apply to casual bookings.
Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not included
Fee for Late Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$5.00 per week for payments not received within 7 days of the invoice issue date.

Service closure & absence fee charges:

Christmas/New Year closure:	The service closes during the Christmas/New Year period. There is no charge during this closure.
Public Holidays:	If your booked hours fall on the following days, you will be charged your normal fee: <i>Australia Day Queens Birthday Labour Day Easter Monday Good Friday</i> <i>Anzac Day Grand Final Friday Melbourne Cup Day</i>
School holiday & pupil free days:	School holidays and pupil free days may be available through negotiation. Full fees will be charged where bookings are made and not cancelled within the two weeks notification period.
Educator unavailable:	No charge applicable.
Conference Days:	Please note that educators may choose to close their service and attend training provided by Council. Should the service close there will be no charge for these days. You will be given four weeks' notice of service closure.
Holiday Fees/Absences*:	100% of normal rate. Where the child's holidays/absence coincides with booked hours, the normal fee is charged to hold the place. *Child Care Subsidy is paid on a maximum of 42 allowable absences each financial year.

Educators will collect payment as agents of the Golden Plains Shire Family Day Care Service.