



# Fees Policy 2018

## Purpose

This policy will provide a clear set of guidelines for:

- The setting, payment and collection of fees
- Ensuring the viability of **St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** by setting appropriate fee charges
- Equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided.

## Policy statement

### 1. Values

**St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** is committed to:

- Providing responsible financial management of the centre, which includes establishing fees that will result in a financially viable centre while keeping user fees at the lowest possible level
- Providing a fair and manageable system for dealing with the non-payment and/or inability to pay fees/outstanding debts
- Ensuring there are no financial barriers for families wishing to access this program for their child/ren
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians
- Advising users of the **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** about how the programs are funded, including government support and parent fees
- Providing equitable access for families.
- Providing service without profit

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to staff, the committee and to parents/guardians whose child/ren is/are attending, or who wish to enrol a child at **St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care**.

### 3. Background and legislation

The federal government through the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) provide child care assistance for out of hours school care. Most families are eligible for one of the two types of assistance: the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR). There is an income test for CCB but not for CCR, so families may still be eligible for CCR regardless of their income.

**St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** is an 'accredited' service so parents can receive government support for the fees under the Federal government's "Child Care Management System"(CCMS), as long as the family register with DEEWR for the benefit and advise the Centre of their CRN.

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (ECSNR)*
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*

- *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992.*

## 4. Definitions

**Approved care:** Care provided by a service provider that has been approved by the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) allowing eligible families to receive Child Care Benefit payments.

**Commonwealth Child Care Benefit (CCB):** Child Care Benefit is a Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare. All eligible families can receive some Child Care Benefit.

**Commonwealth Child Care Rebate (CCR):** Child Care Benefit is a Commonwealth Government payment to help working families with out of pocket expenses for CCB approved child care.

**ECSNR** – Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (ECSNR) and Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

**Excursion/entertainment/centre event 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 centre's budget do not incur an additional charge. (Refer to the Excursions/centre events policy for further details.)

**Ezidebit** – [www.ezidebit.com.au](http://www.ezidebit.com.au) A secure direct debit system managed by ezi-debit.

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

**Late-collection charge:** A charge that may be imposed by the committee when parents/guardians are late to collect their child/ren from the program (see [Attachment 1](#), 'Setting fees and other charges')

**Other charges:** A charge for items not directly related to the provision of the children's program, such as sun hats.

**Refundable levy:** A payment that is refunded on participation in a specific activity, such as a working bee.

**Registered care:** Care provided by nannies, grandparents, relatives or friends, kindergartens, occasional care centres and outside school hours care centres that are registered with the Family Assistance Office. Eligible families can receive some reimbursement of costs when using a registered care provider.

**Retained (non-refundable) levy:** A charge that covers the cost of replacing volunteer labour with paid labour/services.

**Voluntary parent/guardian contribution:** A voluntary payment for items not directly related to the provision of the children's program. The voluntary contribution is not a condition of attending the centre.

## 5. Sources and related centre policies

### Sources

- The Centre's constitution
- Child Care Services Handbook

### Centre policies

- Complaints and grievances
- Delivery and collection of children
- Enrolment

- Inclusion and equity
- Privacy
- Program participation
- Constitution
- Philosophy

## Procedures

### The committee is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy is based on the principles of the **Child Care Management System”(CCMS)**.
- Implementing and reviewing this policy, in consultation with the parents/guardians and staff and in line with the requirements of the **Child Care Management System”(CCMS)**
- Developing a fee policy that balances the capacity of parent’s capability to pay, providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability
- Considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at **St. Kevin’s Out of Hours School Care** and removing those barriers wherever possible
- Clearly communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally sensitive way in the family’s first language where possible
- Setting fees according to the guidelines outlined in [Attachment 1](#), ‘Setting fees and other charges’, of this policy
- Providing a copy of the Fee policy summary ([Attachment 5](#)), with the Fee schedules ([Attachments 6](#)), to all parents/guardians upon enrolment of their child/ren and making the Fees policy readily accessible at the centre and on our website.
- Invoicing, collecting and receipting all fees as per the guidelines outlined in [Attachments 3](#) and [4](#) of this policy
- Complying with the centre’s Privacy policy in regard to any information it receives relating to the financial situation of parents/guardians and the payment/non-payment of fees
- Notifying parents/guardians within twenty-eight days of any changes to the arrangements for the payment of fees
- Ensuring a notice outlining the fees charged by **St. Kevin’s Out of Hours School Care** is displayed prominently in the main entrance to **St. Kevin’s Out of Hours School Care** as required by ECSNR 173.

### The staff are responsible for:

- Informing the committee of any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding the fees at the centre
- Referring parents’/guardians’ questions in relation to this policy to the **St. Kevin’s Out of Hours School Care Treasurer**
- Assisting the **Treasurer** as required in sighting/recording supporting documentation for rebates

### The parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Reading the Fee policy summary ([Attachment 5](#)) and Fee schedules ([Attachments 6](#))
- Notifying the **Treasurer** if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees
- Providing the required documentation to enable the service to claim any government rebates.

## Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes, the committee will:

- Assess the effectiveness of the payment options and procedures for the collection of fees
- Review the current budget to determine fee income requirements
- Take into account feedback from staff and parents/guardians regarding the policy
- Monitor complaints and incidents regarding the policy
- Review the number of families experiencing financial hardship and the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered
- Monitor the number of families/children excluded from the centre because of the non-payment of fees.
- Review feedback provided directly from members given via our annual feedback survey

## Attachments

[Attachment 1](#): Setting fees and other charges

[Attachment 2](#): Subsidies and discounts

[Attachment 3](#): Invoicing, receipting and collection of fees

[Attachment 4](#): Procedures for late payments/refunds

[Attachment 5](#): Fees policy summary for families attending in 2018

[Attachment 6](#): Fee schedule

## Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the **St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** committee of management at a committee meeting on **July 2018**

Next Review date: July 2018

# Attachment 1 - Setting fees and other charges

## 1. Fees

As part of the budget development process, the committee sets fees for the programs for the following year (prior to enrolment), taking into consideration:

- Financial viability
- Fees charged by similar centres in the area
- Level of government funding provided for the program
- Availability of other income sources, such as grants
- Capacity of parents/guardians to pay
- Reasonable expenditure, ensuring agreed program quality/standards
- Requirements of the Child Care Management System (CCMS).
- Contribution by volunteers to the service

## 2. Payment options and procedures

The committee will regularly review the payment options and procedures to ensure that they are inclusive and sensitive to families' cultures and financial situations. Procedures for payment will be clearly communicated to all families.

## 3. Notification of fee changes during the year

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances; for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget 'break even' point. Parents/guardians will be given notice one month in advance of any required fee increase. Parents/guardians will be provided an option of requesting a payment plan.

## 4. Late collection charge

A late collection of children charge applies when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child/ren. After a reminder from the educator, parents are advised that a late collection charge will be invoiced to them with their fees. Please see attachment 5 (Other Charges).

## 5. Member Enrolment/Re-Enrolment Administration Fee

There is a substantial cost to running the enrolment system as we need to automatically provide information to DEEWR for parents Child care rebates and benefits. To meet this cost, there is a once off Enrolment fee payable per family of **\$30, the first time you enrol**.

When re-enrolling each year there is member reenrolment fee of **\$20 payable per family**. This is once again a fee that goes toward the cost of running and updating our enrolment and financial systems which allow government child care rebates to be processed.

## 6. Refundable levies

The committee is committed to making **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** affordable for all families and providing families with access to the full benefit subsidies available. Refundable levies will only be introduced if necessary and in accordance with details in this policy. At this stage it has not been introduced, however the committee will review annually the application of any refundable levies as defined in this policy.

## Attachment 2 - Subsidies and discounts

### 1. Child Care Benefit—Registered care (CCB)

The **St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** is a registered care provider and parents/guardians can claim CCB and/or CCR, providing they meet the Department of Education Employment and Work place Relations (DEEWR) work/training/study test and income tests.

The rate is set by the Commonwealth Government and can be:

- a) claimed directly by parents/guardians from DEEWR after fees have been paid in full.
- b) Paid directly to **St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** and they can invoice you for the difference between the scheduled fees (see attachment 7) and the allowance. Please contact the **Treasurer** if you require invoicing via this method.

A statement of attendance and payments will be issued by the centre at the beginning of the month for the full month prior.

Parents/guardians can access information at [www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au), or contact the local FAO.

### 2. Committee Discount

In recognition of their contribution to managing the organisation, committee members will be given a 5% discount on the standard fee. This discount is designed to encourage ongoing community participation and to recognise the responsibility and the complexity that comes with running an organisation.

Committee members will also NOT pay higher fees if booking within 48 hours of the session starting.

This applies to committee members listed in the current committee handbook (including shared roles) and does not apply to any special sub-committees that are formed from time to time. Examples of those eligible for the discount are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Enrolment officer

## Attachment 3 - Invoicing, receipting and collection of fees

Fee information will be provided to parents/guardians via the **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care website**, ([www.stkevinsohsc.com.au](http://www.stkevinsohsc.com.au)) and the handbook. Fee information provided will include:

- Fee payment agreement ([Attachments 5](#))
- Fee policy summary ([Attachment 6](#))
- Fee schedule ([Attachments 7](#)).

### Procedure for fees collection

Fees will be invoiced at the end of each Fortnight for the children who have attended **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** the 2 weeks prior.

Invoices will be emailed to parents, except where there is no access to email, then they will be given to the child at school to take home. All invoices must be paid in full within 7 days via the Ezi-debit system (see below).

### Method of payment

Details of payment will be specified on the invoice, but to avoid any cash-flow issues and to minimise any issues with late payment (and the stress of chasing these by parents of the committee), all families who utilise the service must sign up to Ezi-debit. This is a secure service which once set up by the families, authorises all payments for **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** directly from the parent's nominated account or credit card. It is free to parents (although **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** pays a small fee). Any other method of payment must be approved by the **Treasurer**. For more information on Ezi-debit see [www.ezidebit.com.au](http://www.ezidebit.com.au)

Through Ezi-debit, **St Kevin's Out of hours School Care** absorbs the cost of credit card transactions for master and visa card but NOT for American Express or Diners cards. They attract an additional fee of 4.4% (or min of \$0.88 cents will be charged).

### Enrolments during the Invoice Period

For children enrolling after the commencement of Term 1, an invoice will be issued pro rata, the child is able to commence the program immediately and the fee invoice will need to be paid in full within fourteen days of commencement.

## Attachment 4 - Procedures for late Payments/Refunds

As ezidebit is the preferred method of payment, it is hoped the use of this procedure will be minimised.

### Difficulty in paying fees

Parents/guardians experiencing difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the **Treasurer** to arrange suitable alternative payment arrangements, such as an instalment plan. Being honest about your financial arrangements enables the committee to provide the best support possible.

### Dishonored Ezi-debit payment/Late payment/non-payment of fees procedure

If the parents/guardians have not communicated the reasons for non-payment, late payment, or if fees are not paid due to inefficient monies in nominated Ezi-debit account (called dishonoured payment) the following procedures will be implemented:

- Step 1: A written reminder notice (via email) will be sent after **5 days, from** the due date stating fees are overdue, giving 5 working days for an alternate time to collect the payment via Ezi-debit. A copy of the current invoice will be included and support options available (see Attachment 6, 'Fees policy summary'). A copy of this letter will be kept by the **Treasurer**. The letter will encourage the parents/guardians to contact **the treasurer**. If contact is made, a record of the conversation will be recorded, a copy sent to the parents/guardians (if required) and a copy placed on file.
- Step 2: If payment has not been received by the specified date or no contact has been made with the **Treasurer**, the parents/guardians will be contacted by telephone to discuss alternative payment options and to develop an agreed payment plan. Minutes of contact/conversation will be kept on file. If a payment plan is agreed on, both parties will sign the agreed plan and a copy will be given to the parents/guardians and placed on file. This step will also apply for families who continue to have difficulty paying their fees.
- Step 3: If the parents/guardians continue to fail to make a payment, the committee will issue a second and final letter, requesting full payment within 3 working days, or attendance at a meeting to discuss alternative payment options (as per Step 2). The letter will be sent by registered mail or email and will include information on support options available (refer [Attachment 6](#)). At this meeting a payment plan will be drawn up and signed by both parties in relation to the payment options. If the parents refuse to attend the meeting then step 4 applies.
- Step 4: If the payment plan drawn up and signed by both parties is not adhered to (or non-attendance by the parents at a meeting), **the parents membership from St Kevin's Outside of School Care may be withdrawn** (see constitution), which means the child/ren cannot attend **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care**. It is at the discretion of the committee to decide whether to reinstate the member or not. The parents/guardians will be provided fourteen days' notice by registered mail.

The **Treasurer** and any committee involved will ensure the Privacy Policy of the centre is complied with and staff will not be involved in any stage of this process. Staff may be consulted on a child's attendance rates and any other information required for the **Treasurer** to fulfil their role. The **Treasurer** and any other committee members involved will ensure the centre's Privacy policy is complied with in relation to the family's financial/personal situation.



## Debt recovery

The committee reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the centre. This can include the engagement of debt collectors. Using a debt collector will be considered as a final option after attempts to implement other payment procedures have been offered.

Where a family owes **the cost of more than 4 sessions** to the Centre, the committee reserves the right to not allow further placements in programs until all outstanding monies are paid, or a payment plan is agreed and adhered to by both parties.

## Refund of fees

Fees are non-refundable if the session is cancellation INSIDE 24 hours (regardless of cause).

Refunds/pro rata refunds apply only in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the committee. Any application for refund must be in writing with relevant supporting evidence.

There will be no refund of fees due to a child's short-term illness; family holiday during operational times; closure of the centre for one or more days when a qualified staff member is absent and a qualified reliever is not available; closure of the centre for staff training days; or closure of the centre in extreme and unavoidable circumstances.

## Attachment 5 - Fees policy summary for families attending in 2018 (in our handbook and on the web site)

### 1. Why fees are necessary?

In the past St Kevin's has struggled to operate an Out of Hours School Care due to low numbers and high care costs. We meet all of our operational costs through fees and can only purchase new equipment through grants and fundraising.

**St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** provides a range of support options for parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with paying fees.

### 2. How fees are set?

As part of the budget development process, the committee sets fees for the programs for the following year (prior to enrolment), taking into consideration:

- Financial viability
- Fees charged by similar centres in the area
- Level of government funding provided for the program
- Availability of other income sources, such as grants
- Capacity of parents/guardians to pay
- Reasonable expenditure, ensuring agreed program quality/standards
- Requirements of the Child Care Management System (CCMS).

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances; for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget 'break even' point.

### 3. Other charges

**Member Enrolment/Re-Enrolment Administration Fee:** To meet the cost of running and updating our enrolment and financial systems which allow government child care rebates to be processed we charge a member enrolment fee and a re-enrolment administration fee. This is \$30 per family upon first enrolment and \$20 per family for each additional year they re-enrol in the service. These fees are refundable within 14 days of enrolling if you cancel your membership.

**Late collection charge:** A late collection of children charge applies when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child/ren. In these situations, after a reminder from the staff member, if the parents/guardians/carer are between **5** and **15** minutes late, a fee of **\$1** for every minute, or part thereof will apply, and after 15 minutes the charge will be **\$10 for every 5 minutes** or part thereof. This will be invoiced by the committee.

**Refundable levy:** The committee is committed to making **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** affordable for all families and providing families with access to all subsidies, hence no refundable levy's are currently being charged. E.g. working bees

**Ezi Debit Fee for default payments:** If Ezi debit are unable to deduct amounts from your nominated account due to insufficient funds than a \$10 default payment fee will automatically charge your account.

### 4. Child Care Benefits

The federal government through the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) provide child care assistance for out of hours school care. Most families are eligible for one of the two types of assistance: the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR). There is an income test for CCB but not for CCR, so you may still be eligible for CCR regardless of your income.

**St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** is an 'accredited' service so parents can receive government support for the under the Federal government's "Child Care Management System"(CCMS), as long as the family register with DEEWR for the benefit and advise the centre of their CRN.

## 5. Fee structure

For permanent and casual bookings is set out in [Attachment 6](#).

## 6. Refunds

Fees are non-refundable (exceptional circumstances may apply). There will be no refund of fees due to a child's short-term illness; family holiday during operational times; closure of the centre for one or more days when a qualified staff member is absent and a qualified reliever is not available; closure of the centre for staff training days; or closure of the centre due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances.

## 7. Payment of accounts

Fees will be invoiced and emailed to parents/guardians directly and must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. All families utilising the service must sign up to Ezi-debit. This is a secure service which authorises Ezi-debit to automatically pay monies due to **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** from your nominated bank account (including credit card). It is a free service to families. See [www.ezidebit.com.au](http://www.ezidebit.com.au)

Parents may nominate a bank account or a credit card for payment. **St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** absorbs the cost of credit card transactions for master and visa card but NOT for American Express or Diners cards. They attract an additional fee of 4.4% (or min of \$0.88 cents will be charged). Any other forms of payment must be approved by the Treasurer.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, please contact the **Treasurer** to discuss payment options.

## 8. Support services

Families experiencing financial hardship often require access to family support services. List organisations offering support in your local community. The committee will enlist the support of these services when required.

## 9. Unpaid fees

Fees not paid by the due date (or are not paid due to inefficient monies in nominated Ezi-debit account) will be followed up by:

- An initial reminder letter is sent stating fees are overdue, giving 5 working days for payment. The letter will include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- If payment is not received, families will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss a payment plan and a range of support options available.
- Failure to attend the meeting and continued non-payment will result in a **suspension of your membership** and your child/ren will not be able to attend the service until fees are paid in full.
- If invoices continue to be paid late and families do not contact the **Treasurer**, families may be **stopped from attending the service on a permanent basis** (i.e. membership cancelled)
- The committee will continue to offer support and reserves the right to employ the services of a debt collector.



## Attachment 6 - St. Kevin's Out Of Hours School Care

### Fee Schedule 2018

Effective: first session of term 1, for the school year, unless otherwise advised as per the terms of this policy.

STANDARD BOOKING FEES	\$
<b>Permanent Booking:</b> After school care (3.30pm-6pm) \$27.00 After school care short stay (3.30-4.15) \$10.00 Before school Care (7am-9am) \$18.00 Before school care short stay (8.15am-9am) \$10.00  <b>Casual Booking:</b> After school care (3.30pm-6pm) \$32.00 After school care short stay (3.30-4.15) \$15.00 Before school Care (7am-9am) \$23.00 Before school care short stay (8.15am-9am) \$15.00  <b>Other</b> School Holiday Program/Pupil free days (7am-6pm) \$65.00 Short Stay School Holiday Program (4.5hr) \$45.00 Early finish (4+hours) \$45.00	
OTHER FEES	\$
<b>ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE</b> <i>(for Permanent and Casual Users)</i> First enrolment (per family, paid once only) \$30 Re-enrolment (per family, paid once only) \$20	
<b>CANCELLATION FEES</b> Cancellation OUTSIDE 24 hours 100% refunded Cancellation INSIDE 24 hours (regardless of cause) – loss of full fee for session Nil refunded	

**Before School Care (BSC) SHORT STAY:** Runs from 8:15am – 8:50am (bell time), does not include breakfast. Is designed for those who need to drop off after 8:15, but before school supervises the playground at 8:30 am

**After School Care (ASC) SHORT STAY:** Runs from 3.30pm (bell time) - 4.15pm does not include afternoon tea.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Permanent Booking:** *Any booking that is regular and for the whole term or longer. One change per term is permitted.* e.g. my child is booked in every second Monday for term 1. Halfway through term 1 my boss changes the day I work, so I change from Monday to Tuesday for ASC.

**Casual Booking:** *Is every other type of booking.* e.g. I work late on a Wednesday, so I have a permanent ASC booking on a Wednesday. On Monday a sudden work change means I can finish early Wednesday but need to work late Thursday, I cancel my Wednesday booking (outside 24 hours so no penalty) but I book ASC for Thursday, this is defined as a 'casual booking'.