



## FEES POLICY

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### **Mandatory – Quality Area 7**

**Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd trading as "Kids Haven Childcare"**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy will provide clear guidelines for:

- the setting, payment and collection of fees
- ensuring the viability of Precious Gems Childcare, by setting appropriate fees and charges
- the equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided by Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd.

### **Children (Education and Care Services) National Regulations NSW**

**Regulation 168(2)(n)** Payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees charged

**Regulation 171** Policies and procedures to be kept available.

**Regulation 172(2)** Service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

### **Related Service policies**

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| • <i>Complaints and Grievances Policy</i>           | <i>Excursions and Service Events Policy</i> |
| • <i>Delivery and Collection of Children Policy</i> | <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>          |
| • <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>           | <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>          |
| • <i>Excursions and Service Events Policy</i>       | <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>          |
| • <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i>         |   |

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1. VALUES**

Precious Gems Childcare is committed to:

- 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 inability to pay fees/outstanding debts
- ensuring there are no financial barriers for families wishing to access an early childhood program for their child/children
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians
- advising users of the service about program funding, including government support and fees to be paid by parents/guardians
- Providing families with information relating to CCS eligibility

### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Person in Day-to-Day Charge, educators and parents/guardians with an enrolled child, or who wish to enrol a child at Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd.

### **3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION**

## PROCEDURES

R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements	R	√			
Developing a fee policy that balances the parent's/guardian's capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability	R	√			
Implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the nominated supervisor and staff, and in line with the requirements of the Commonwealth Governments Child Care Package ( <i>refer to Sources</i> )	R	√			
Reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered	R	√			
Considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families	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	√			
Ensuring that the <i>Fees Policy</i> is readily accessible at the service ( <i>Regulation 171</i> )	R	√			
Providing all parents/guardians with fee information ( <i>refer to Attachment 1</i> )	R	√			
Providing all parents/guardians with a statement of fees and charges upon enrolment of their child/ren	R	√			
Providing all parents/guardians with a fee payment agreement ( <i>refer to samples in Attachment 2</i> )	R	√			
Ensuring fees are collected and receipted	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	√			
Notifying parents/guardians a minimum of 14 days before any proposed changes that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected. ( <i>Regulation 172(2)</i> )	R	√			
Addressing any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service in a timely manner	R	√			
Reading the Precious Childcare Fee information for families ( <i>refer to Attachment 1</i> ), and complying with the Fee Payment Agreement ( <i>refer to Attachments 2</i> )				√	
Notifying the approved provider if they are experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees				√	

## 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Approved care:** Approved child care services which have Australian Government approval to pass on Child Care Subsidy (refer to Definitions) as a reduction in child care fees: [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au) (Note: There will be changes to child care assistance from 2 July 2018. More information about the New Child Care Package can be found at: [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au))

**Child Care Subsidy (CCS):** A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved services or registered childcare (refer to *Definitions*). All eligible families can receive some Child Care Subsidy. Details are available at: [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au). (Note: There will be changes to child care assistance from 2 July 2018. More information about the New Child Care Package can be found at: [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au))

**Complying Written Arrangement:** (CWA) is an ongoing **agreement** between an ECEC service provider and a Parent/Guardian, to provide care in return for fees. The CWA must contain a minimum amount of information as **defined** by the Government.

**Enrolment Bond:** A bond of a weekly gap fee to be paid to confirm position at service. This is refunded when notice is given

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

**Health Care Card:** A Commonwealth Government entitlement providing concessions for low-income earners and other eligible people. Details are available at: [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au)

**Late collection charge:** A charge that may be imposed by the Approved Provider when parents/guardians are late to collect their child/children from the program of \$10 for first 5 min then \$1 for every minute after.

**Registered carer:** Registered child care is provided by individuals who are registered as carers with the Department of Human Services. A registered carer may include grandparents, relatives, friends, neighbours or nannies. In some cases, it can also include care provided by individuals in private preschools, kindergartens and some outside school hour services, including before and after school care, vacation care and holiday programs: [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au)

More information about the New Child Care Package can be found at: [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au))

**Voluntary parent/guardian contribution:** A voluntary payment for items not directly related to the provision of the children's program. Attendance at the service is not conditional on this payment.

#### **Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- reading the Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd Fee information for families, the Fee Payment Agreement (CWA) and the Statement of Fees and Charges from Owna Management Software
- signing and complying with the Fee Payment Agreement (CWA)
- notifying the Approved Provider if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees

#### **Background**

Income from fees, is required to meet all the costs incurred by the service in the delivery of the children's program.

DET requires that funded 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, as required under Regulation 168(2)(n), and the payment process. All families must be informed of applicable term and annual fees at the time of enrolment

#### **Family Assistance Law**

Family Assistance Law is a broad term that encompasses the following legislation:

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*
- *Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017* (Minister's Rules)
- *Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017* (Secretary's Rules)
- Any other instruments (including regulations) made under the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* and the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*

Schedules 5 and 6 to the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance and Related Measures) Act 2000*.

*CCS: The subsidy you will receive and any applicable cap will depend upon your own personal circumstances and is subject to your combined family income, hours of recognised activity and child care details. You will need to update your details through your Centrelink account on MyGov.*

### 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](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au)
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: [www.legislation.gov.au](http://www.legislation.gov.au)

### 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 the 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
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures (Regulation 172(2)) unless a lesser period is necessary because of a risk.

### AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd on 01st December 2022

**REVIEW DATE:** 01/01/2024