

## FEE PAYMENT POLICY

The Littlehampton Out of School Hours Care program aims to provide a quality service for all families at an affordable price.

All families will sign the enrolment agreement which includes an agreement to pay fees as follows:

*"In accordance with the service policies, I agree to pay the required fees for my child's/children's booked care for OSHC. I agree to pay all extra costs relating to outstanding fees and late fees as well as excursion costs. I understand that Child Care Subsidy is available through the Family Assistance Office to assist the cost of my Child Care Fee."*

### Privacy and Account Access

Details of an individual's account will be confidential and stored accordingly. Individual families may access their own records at any time via an appointment with the Director.

### Fee Procedures

Fee levels will be set by the Governing Council each year upon completion of the annual budget. The fees charged will be reviewed according to the services required income to cover operational costs. The OSHC Advisory Committee and School Finance Committee will be consulted and involved in the decision-making process.

### Issuing of Accounts

Accounts are issued weekly on a Monday by email.

For occasional users without an email address, accounts will be posted to parents/caregivers.

### Payment of Fees

Fees are expected to be paid on a weekly basis unless negotiated with the Director to be paid regularly on a fortnightly basis. All fee payment is to be made electronically via direct debit or via Pay Way as negotiated with the school.

Fees due must be paid within 2 weeks of the account being issued at the service.

If a family requests an alternative method re the payment of fees, they must make a written request to the Director. The Director will consult with the Finance Officer, and will reply in writing. Copies of both letters to be stored in the family's OSHC file. Any resulting agreement for payment of fees will be documented and two copies stored, one with the Director and one with the school Finance Officer.

### Receipting of Fees

Receipts will be provided including all details as required per Commonwealth Department guidelines via email.

### Non Payment of Fees or Debt Management

Parents with overdue fees will be contacted by the Director to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and to make suitable arrangements to pay. Any arrangements for payment of overdue fees will be documented in writing and signed by both the Director and parents/caregivers, with a copy to be kept in the family file and a copy to be provided to the school Finance Officer.

If no co-signed written arrangement for payment of overdue fees is put in place, or agreed upon arrangements are not adhered to, the following procedures will apply.

### Overdue Accounts for After School/Before School/Vacation Care

**A letter will be sent to parents/caregivers when a family account reaches \$300.** This letter will be accompanied by an account for the entire amount owed and will request payment within a two week

period. The letter will include a reminder that the Director can be contacted to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and to make suitable arrangements to pay. All agreed payment plans must be made in writing and signed by the parents/caregivers, the Director as well as a member of School Leadership/School Finance Officer (Standard Letter AS/BF Care #1).

**If total payment not made or payment plan and first payment NOT made within TWO WEEKS from date of first letter issued:**

A second letter will be sent to parents/caregivers advising that OSHC services will not be available to parents/caregivers **until** the account is paid in total or a payment plan is put in place as outlined above and first payment made.

If neither of these actions occur, OSHC services will be suspended ongoing with no further bookings actioned until a payment plan is in place and payments have commenced **or** payment is received in full (Standard Letter AS/BFCare #2).

**If no payments made or alternative arrangements made within four weeks of the second letter issued:**

Further action will be implemented on behalf of the Governing Council to ensure that outstanding monies owed to the service for the administration and attendance fees are received. At this stage the account will be sent to Debt Collection and further bookings will remain suspended until the matter is resolved.

**Difficulties with payment of fees**

- Families who are experiencing financial hardship or an alteration to family circumstances, need to inform the Director and negotiate a suitable arrangement to pay fees ongoing.
- An agreement will be written and signed by both parents/caregivers and the Director then kept in that family's file for future reference.
- Periods of care may have to be negotiated should the difficulties remain for an extended period.

**Child Care Subsidy**

- Assistance with the costs of fees is available from the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services via the Family Assistance Office (Centrelink).
- Parents need to provide a CRN (Customer Reference Number). The Primary Caregiver must have a CRN number, and a CRN for each child. If these numbers have been provided to the Director, the bill will reflect the deductions which the parent/caregiver is entitled to.
- The billing system will display the amount of Child Care Subsidy that is claimed from the full fee.
- Child Care Subsidy can only be claimed if attendance records are signed by parents/caregivers.
- Child Care Subsidy is not claimable on the late collection fee.

**Late Collection of students**

Because of the need to pay staff, Late Collection Fees after 6.35pm of \$1 per minute apply.

If parents/caregivers are regularly late in collecting their children, the Director will make an appointment with the parents/caregivers to discuss other options for Out of School Hours Care for their children.

**Bookings and Cancellations**

Parents/caregivers are required to inform staff if their children are not attending a session they have been booked into, either by phone, in person or email (cancellations through the front office of school are not acceptable)

All children attending must be booked into OSHC by an adult. **We will not accept bookings or cancellations from children or from notes in their diaries.**

Permanent bookings can be made on the OSHC enrolment form and those places will be held unless changed by the parent/caregiver.

We would encourage parents/caregivers to make casual bookings prior to the day of booking to enable extra staff to be employed if needed. Casual booking can be made later if places are available and staff ratios are correct. (Enrolment forms need to be filled out before children are able to attend).

### **Conditions of cancelling bookings**

Cancellations of booking for all sessions (Before School Care, Afterschool Care and Vacation Care) require a 1 week (7 day) notice. Late cancellations of bookings will result in the full payment of fees, less Child Care Subsidy.

Families will be exempt from paying late cancellation fees under the following circumstances:

- A medical certificate indicating that a child was unable to attend school on the stated dates and given to OSHC staff no later than 24 hours after cancelled session.
- A medical certificate indicating that sibling of child was unable to attend school/child care on stated dates and given to OSHC staff no later than 24 hours after cancelled session.
- A medical certificate indicating that parent/caregiver of child was unable to attend work on stated dates and given to OSHC staff no later than 24 hours after cancelled session.
- Medical certificates will not be accepted for children who are recorded as absent from a session – absent applies to families who have failed to notified the service on the day that their children are not attending.
- Cancellation of child due to Covid, either child or other household member, a registration with SA Health of a Covid positive result or doctors will be accepted as evidence.

If children are still unwell after the dates on the medical certificate, then another medical certificate will need to be provided.

### **Ceasing Enrolments**

It is the responsibility of a parent/caregiver to inform the OSHC if their child/ren are planning to cease using the service. Notification of the last date of attendance needs to be provided to the OSHC director in writing at least 7 days prior to the final day of attendance. Any notification after this 7 day period, or any notifications not given may incur additional fees. In the event that a child/ren's last day or days attending the service are marked as absent, further additional costs may be incurred. This is due to the Centrelink withdrawal of Child Care Subsidy which applies if the final day/s of attendance by a child/ren at OSHC are marked absent. In order to avoid this circumstance the OSHC strongly encourages families to ensure that their child/ren attend their final session before ceasing use of the service.

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