

FEES STATEMENT

Rationale: The Ashburton Kindergarten Association is committed to maintaining the provision of high quality ECE Services at it's Kindergartens. To achieve this the Association will implement policies to provide a consistent, appropriate level of income to support the delivery of this service.

Purpose: The purpose of this procedure is to outline the Fees that will be requested from all kindergarten whānau and to explain how this revenue will be collected and reviewed.

PROCEDURES

Setting of fees: The General Manager / Board sets the hourly fees for all services within the Ashburton Kindergarten Association (AKA). One terms notice (10 weeks) will be given to whānau of any fee increase.

The current fees and this procedure will be advised on enrolment. Families will be asked to sign a Fee Contract as part of the standard enrolment form.

20 Hours ECE Subsidy: All three, four and five-year olds (not enrolled at a primary school) are eligible to receive a maximum of *20 hours ECE* per week. To access the *20 hours ECE*, parents/caregivers must attest their ECE hours in the Enrolment Form and/or the 20 hours ECE Attestation Form. Once enrolled, the parent/caregiver must sign the Attendance (Sign-In) Sheet every time their child attends their AKA Kindergarten.

Plus 10 hours ECE: All three, four and five-year olds (not enrolled at a primary school) are eligible to receive an additional *10 hours ECE* per week provided the full 20 hours ECE is used at AKA. To access the additional *10 hours ECE*, parents/caregivers must attest their ECE hours in the Enrolment Form and/or the 20 hours ECE Attestation Form. Once enrolled, the parent/caregiver must sign the Attendance (Sign-In) Sheet every time their child attends their AKA Kindergarten.

Fees: The AKA is entitled to charge a fee for the enrolled hours not covered by the *20 hours ECE* subsidy or the *10 hours ECE* subsidy. The AKA will charge fees per child on the following basis:

1. Families who attest their full 20 hours ECE fee entitlement will not be charged for additional hours over the 20 hours, up to a maximum of 30 hours per week, at all five kindergartens.
2. Three (3), Four (4) and Five (5) years old's who attest only a portion or none of their 20 hours ECE free entitlement will be charged \$4.00 per hour at all five kindergartens. The fee will only apply once the balance of 20 hours ECE is exhausted. This fee is inclusive of GST.
3. Two (2) year old's who attest to use their full 20 hours ECE fee entitlement once they become eligible will not be charged for attended hours, up to a maximum of 30 hours, at all five kindergartens.

Fees are charged for enrolled hours, including absent days and notified non-attendance. Fees will not be charged when the kindergartens are officially closed over the Christmas and New Year period, NZ public holidays falling during the term, Kindergarten term breaks and teacher only days set by AKA.

The General Manager has the delegated authority to vary fees on an individual case after consultation with the Head Teacher. Requests must be submitted in writing to association@ashkindy.co.nz.

Late pick up fees:

- Children can only attend during licensed hours and their agreed enrolment timetable. AKA kindergartens can be in breach of their Ministry of Education license if children are dropped off early or picked up late.
- In the first instance, the Head Teacher will discuss the situation with the whānau and establish a plan to avoid the late collection occurring again.
- A late pick-up fee may be charged for children who are repeatedly collected late. The late pick-up fee will be \$10.00 per 15 minutes after the end of session.
- The Late Fee may be waived at the discretion of the General Manager.

Extended absence:

- Whānau must notify the kindergarten if their child is going to be absent for more than 5 consecutive days for any reason.
- If this absence is due to illness, exemptions may be granted due to extended illness provided a medical certificate is provided.
- If the absence is not due to illness, the child may be removed from the roll and returned to the waiting list after 3 weeks of non-attendance.
- Fees will be charged for non-attendance due to any reason other than illness (subject to a medical certificate being provided), only if fee's are being charged already.
- If the child has an absence due to illness of more than 3 weeks, the kindergarten may be able to use the EC12/13 provisions to secure funding for this child.
- In the situation where there has been a breach of Ministry of Education absence rules and loss of funding, management reserves the right to charge a fee. The decision including the amount to be charged, will be made by the General Manager, consideration will be made based on the circumstances of each individual case.
- A family can request an extended absence in writing giving a months' notice to the Head Teacher. The kindergarten will endeavour to hold open their place by filling it with a casual enrolment. If the space is filled for the period, then no fees will be charged for the requested absence. However, if this is not an option the place will be relinquished and the child/ren will be placed back on the waiting list until a new place is available.

Terms of payment for fees:

- Fees will be charged and collected by the Association Office. Fees income will be used to support the operating costs associated with each kindergarten.
- *Fees will be invoiced monthly in arrears and are due for payment by the end of the month invoiced.*
- An invoice and/or statement will be sent out at the beginning of each month. Families and Whānau can pay by internet banking, cash or automatic payment.
- The bank account number is **03-0835-0166551-00 (Ashburton Kindergarten Association)**. Please use the reference number found at the bottom of the invoice and your child's name.

Non-payment of fees:

- If unpaid fees reach \$100; the Association will send the parent/family a reminder notice of outstanding balance owed. All correspondence will be sent directly to the parent's/families' home or email address – i.e. it will not be sent to the kindergarten to be forwarded on.
- If after 7 days the parent/family has not contacted the Association, the parent/family will be contacted by the Association to make payment arrangements.
- The Association will take all reasonable steps to collect the fees.
- Some debts may be written off if not deemed suitable for collection – this action can only be approved by the General Manager.

Fee Collection Steps for Unpaid Fees:

Scenario	
Fees unpaid with overdue amounts over \$100.00+	<p>General Manager or delegate to talk with bill payer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request payment of overdue amount • Arrange and agree on payment plan if applicable. • Advise if overdue amount not paid within 7 days, child's enrolment may be reduced to 20 ECE hours.
Further week has passed and no payment. Overdue amount over \$150.00+	<p>General Manager or delegate to talk with bill payer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the child's enrolment to 20 ECE hours. • Arrange and agree on payment plan • Advise a failure to pay according to the payment plan will result in the debt being forwarded to the debt collection agency.
Further week has passed and no payment and account still overdue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise bill payer action due to no payment. • Refer to debt collection.

Note: where only part payment is received and amounts overdue continue to increase, AKA may consider matching enrolment in line with the family's ability to pay.

Childcare subsidies:

Childcare Subsidy from WINZ or ELP may be available to families/whānau to help with the fees. Information about WINZ support for fee payments will be made available to all whānau.

Parents/caregivers who are eligible and receive a childcare subsidy are responsible for any shortfall between the subsidy paid and the normal fees due and are also responsible for renewing the subsidy as appropriate

The Association will advise The Ministry of Social Development (WINZ) on the following instances:

- When a child receiving WINZ Childcare Subsidy:
 - Leaves the kindergarten or has timetable changes resulting in reduced hours.
 - Turns 3 and is entitled to 20 ECE hours.
- If an overpayment has occurred and a refund is due.
- The dates the kindergarten will be closed i.e. Christmas holiday period dates only.
- Changes that are for increases to childcare hours/subsidy MUST be applied for using a WINZ "Change of Circumstances" form by the parent and the kindergarten.

Childcare Subsidy from WINZ or ELP may be available to families/whānau to help with the fees. Parents/caregivers who are eligible and receive a childcare subsidy are responsible for any shortfall between the subsidy paid and the normal fees due including the full fee should the subsidy stop. Families/whānau are also responsible for renewing and cancellation of the subsidy as appropriate.

Notice periods:

A minimum of two weeks' notice is required to be given by a parent/caregiver if their child is leaving the kindergarten. Where the appropriate notice is not given, a penalty equivalent to two weeks' booked hours charged at the hourly rate for their kindergarten will be charged.

Booking policy:

The minimum enrolment is 6 hours per day, 2 days a week for AKA kindergartens. This can however be discussed, and a different minimum enrolment can be mutually agreed on with the Head Teacher.

Privacy:

The Association and Kindergarten's respect the privacy rights of parents/caregivers. What families/whānau pay is confidential to them, the General Manager and the Head Teacher. So, while staff and association members can know the total amount of fees coming in, they are not allowed access to the amounts paid by individual families/whānau. Confidential records showing what amount is expected and what amount is collected from each family/whānau are maintained.