

Policy Title: Fees and Whānau Payments Policy

Classification: Governance

Monitored by: Board President

Approved by: Board resolution

Effective from: September 2021

Review Date: August 2023

Objective: To outline the Fees and Whānau Payments that will be requested of all kindergarten whānau and explain how this revenue will be collected and reviewed.

Commitment: HCK is committed to treating all kindergarten whānau equitably with regards to Fees and Whānau Payments, while ensuring sufficient income levels to support the delivery of high quality ECE services in all kindergartens.

Related Documents:

- Hutt City Kindergarten Association Constitution
- Fees and Whānau Payments Information Sheet
- Hutt City Kindergarten Administrative Procedures Handbook
- Board Member Induction Booklet

Definitions:

- “Fees” are the compulsory hourly dollar amount that is charged for any child attending kindergarten.
- “20 Hours ECE” is the government subsidy for the first 20 hours per week of kindergarten fees for children over 3 years old.
- “Non 20 ECE attested hours” are the hours spent at kindergarten after the 20 Hours ECE have been used.
- “Whānau payments” are the voluntary donations requested by kindergartens for any 20 Hours ECE used.

Policy Details:

Section 1: Fees

- The Association will charge a fee for a child attending kindergarten for any non 20 Hours ECE attested hours.
- Normal fee charges will apply to any NZ public holiday falling within a Kindergarten term.
- Absences will be charged at the full rate, but exemptions may be granted due to extended illness.
- A Late Fee may be charged if children are repeatedly collected late from kindergarten.

Review, publication and increase in Fees

- The General Manager Operations will review the fees biennially and monitor the implementation of this policy.
- One term’s notice (10 weeks) will be given to whānau of any fee increase.
- The current fees and this policy must be advised on enrolment and displayed on kindergarten notice boards.

Discounts/Subsidies available

- Information about WINZ support for fee payments will be made available to all whānau. Visits from WINZ Childcare Co-ordinators may also be arranged. The Head Teacher is responsible for this.

- Fees will not be charged for 2-3 year old children for the first 20 hours, provided they attest their 20 Hours ECE entitlement to a HCK kindergarten when they turn 3 years old.
- Whānau with more than one child attending kindergarten, who are using their full entitlement of 20 Hours ECE at a HCK kindergarten for all their children, are eligible for a discount in fees, for any second or subsequent children, for any hours over their 20 Hours ECE entitlement.
- Permanent Hutt City Kindergarten staff or sitting Board members are eligible for a reduction in fees. A Fee Variation/Exemption Form must be completed and will be kept on file.

Terms of Payment

- Fees will be invoiced weekly in advance and are due on the Monday of the following week.
- Termly invoices are due at the end of Week 2 of each term. A 10% discount will apply to termly invoices paid in full by the due date.

Fee Collection Procedure

- Fees will be charged and collected by individual kindergartens.
- Fee income will be transferred to the Association funding pool to support the allocation of operating grants to each kindergarten.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for managing all fee-related procedures in accordance with the Hutt City Kindergarten Administrative Procedures Handbook.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for keeping accurate financial records for fees and sending reports to the Association office, as required.

Fee Variations/Exemptions

- The Governing Board has delegated authority to the General Manager Operations to vary fees at individual kindergartens, if it is in the best interests of that kindergarten.
- Head Teachers must use the Fee Variation/Exemption Form to apply for variations in fees.
- The General Manager Operations will review Fee Variations/Exemptions no less than 6 monthly.

Extended Absences

- 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, a full refund of any fees paid will be given provided a medical certificate is presented.
- 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.
- 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.

Late Fee

- Whānau are asked to respect the teachers' rights to be able to have their scheduled non-contact time.
- The late collection (and early drop off) of children at kindergarten may breach kindergarten licencing criteria.
- 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.
- Continued late collection may incur a Late Fee. Whānau will be advised that the Late Fee is being charged.
- The Late Fee may be waived at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Credit Control/Debt Collection

- Any fees unpaid at the start of the following month will be drawn to the attention of the whānau with a request for payment.
- If any fees remain outstanding for more than one month the whānau will be notified and requested to make payment by the 10th of the following month.
- If the fees remain unpaid, the Head Teacher will discuss a payment plan with the whānau.
- If an agreed payment plan is not adhered to, the account will be referred to the Association for action and the child's enrolment may be reduced to the number of hours covered by 20 Hours ECE.
- The debt may be referred to a collection agency and the costs of collection will be added to the debt. The General Manager Operations will make this decision.
- The whānau will be advised in writing of the actions that will be taken, including:
 - The date the account will be referred to the Association
 - The date at which, if a satisfactory arrangement to pay is not in place, the debt will be referred to a collection agency.
 - The date on which, if applicable, the child's enrolment will be reduced to the number of hours covered by 20 Hours ECE.

Section 2: Whānau Payments

- Whānau will be asked to make a Whānau Payment, which is a contribution towards the cost of running our kindergartens.
- The Whānau Payment is calculated based on total number of hours a child uses.
- The Whānau Payment will be requested for all children enrolled at a kindergarten, including those who are under 3 years old.
- The Whānau Payment is voluntary, not subject to GST and is eligible for an IRD Tax Credit.

Review, publication and increase in Whānau Payment

- The Governing Board will review the Whānau Payment annually.
- One term's notice (10 weeks) will be given to whānau of any increase.
- The current Whānau Payment and this policy must be advised on enrolment and displayed on kindergarten notice boards.

Discounts available

- The requested Whānau Payment will be reduced for any second, or subsequent children of the whānau who are also attending kindergarten.

Whānau Payments Collection Procedure

- Whānau Payments will be requested and collected by individual kindergartens.
- Whānau Payments collected will remain in kindergarten bank accounts, and not be transferred to the Association.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for managing all Whānau Payment-related procedures in accordance with the Hutt City Kindergarten Administrative Procedures Handbook.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for keeping accurate financial records for Whānau Payments and sending reports to the Association office, as required.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed biennially and approved by resolution at a Board meeting.