

## **FEES POLICY**

### 1. **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Highmount Pre-School Committee at its **28 October 2010** meeting.

### 2. **REVIEW DATE**

This policy shall be reviewed as required each year.

### 3. **SCOPE**

This policy applies to:

- Parents whose children attend the preschool
- Parents who wish to have their child attend the preschool
- Staff

### 4. **DEFINITIONS**

**Fees** – A payment for a place at the preschool which covers part of the cost of attendance.

**Deposit/holding fees** – A non-refundable amount which is required as part of the booking process for a place at the preschool in the future.

**Non-refundable administration fee** – Fee associated with lodging an application to enrol a child for a program at the preschool.

### 5. **POLICY**

#### **VALUES**

This pre-school is committed to:

- Affordability of fees to parents of this preschool
- Responsible financial management of this preschool
- Application of the fees policy in a non-discriminatory manner
- Fair negotiation of late or non-payment of fees

#### **PURPOSE**

- To inform all parents of the normal rates, methods and options for payment of fees.
- To provide a fair and manageable system for dealing with failure to pay or inability to pay outstanding fee debts.
- To inform parents of the rights and responsibilities of the preschool in the setting and collection of fees.
- To inform parents of the procedures should they experience difficulty in payment.
- To inform parents of the consequences and procedures where persistent non payment occurs, and no other arrangement is made.
- To maintain confidential details regarding parents' financial circumstances within the Committee of Management.

### 6. **OUR POLICY AIMS TO ENSURE THAT:**

#### **FEE SETTING**

The Committee of Management will decide the rate of fees payable, the period of time (e.g. term) for which the fee is fixed and the method of payment. The Committee of Management will take into account:

- The running cost of the preschool
- Affordability to parents
- Extra charges such as excursion fees, fundraising levies etc.

### **(SEE APPENDICES FOR FEE DETAILS)**

All parents will be notified that the kindergarten is not a free service and relies on fee collection to cover a percentage of running costs. Fees must be paid as directed by the Committee of Management and notice to this effect will be given to parents prior to collection of fees.

### **NON PAYMENT OF FEES**

Fee collection is mandatory and the committee has the discretion to withdraw service of non-payment of fees.

Parents should approach the kindergarten teacher if they are having difficulty with payment of fees as the preschool has a process for negotiating alternative arrangements.

### **SPECIAL CASES**

This kindergarten has a policy of non discrimination, however, fees are structured to recognise the difficulty for parents under certain circumstances.

- Three-year-old kindergarten (see separate fee structure at end of policy)
- Four-year-old kindergarten – this must be financial and authorised by the Dept of Human Services (DHS).
- Four-year-old kindergarten - Health care card holders/Pensioner Health Benefit card holders will receive the DHS rebate. To receive a discount, the relevant card must be presented to the Treasurer or Enrolment Officer and a photocopy of the current card and a photocopy of subsequent renewals must be kept at the Preschool and Child and Family Care Network Inc. to be entitled to a discounted fee.
- When a child leaves permanently from the Preschool in the middle of a term, the fees will only be refunded if the child's place is filled by another child. Fees will be refunded on a pro-rata basis for the period of time in the term that another child fills the place.

### **KINDERGARTEN FEE SUBSIDY**

To benefit from the kindergarten fee subsidy a child must meet the following criteria:

- The child is eligible to attend a funded kindergarten program, and individually holds, or has a parent or guardian who holds,
  - Health Care Card
  - Pensioner Concession Card
  - Temporary Protection/ humanitarian Visas 447, 451, 785 or 786
  - Asylum Seekers on Bridging Visas A - F and Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visas holders 200- 217
  - Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card
  - If you have triplets or quadruplets attending kindergarten in the same year you are also eligible for the subsidy for each child.

For more information and frequently asked questions visit [www.education.vic.gov.au/kindergarten/feesubsidy](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/kindergarten/feesubsidy).

## **7. PROCEDURES**

### **HOW FEES ARE SET AND WHEN**

The rules of the preschool provide for the fees to be set and varied by the Committee of Management.

The Committee of Management will prepare a budget and fix fees for the following year.

### **Late Collection Fee**

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to collect their child promptly at the conclusion of the Kindergarten session. The Committee of Management recognises however that there may be isolated occasions when parents/guardians may be delayed through no fault of their own. Parents are encouraged to call the preschool when such a situation arises so that staff can reassure their child that the person is on the way.

Highbound Preschool has adopted the "Child and Family Care Network" kindergarten cluster policy where a late fee may be applied if a parent/guardian is late in collecting their child. The implementation of the policy is done at the Committee of Management's discretion.

The policy states that on the first occasion the parent/guardian will be issued with a warning. On subsequent occasions the late collection fee will be charged.

The late collection fee is applied as stated in the kindergarten cluster policy:

- If the parent/guardian is between 15 and 30 minutes late in collecting their child then the fee will be \$5 for the first five minutes, then \$1 per minute after that until the child has been collected.
- If the parent/guardian is more than 30 minutes late in collecting their child then the fee will be \$5 for every ten minutes, or part thereof, for the first 30 minutes from the conclusion of the session and then \$10 for every ten minutes or part thereof, after that.

## PROCEDURE FOR FEE COLLECTION

### Fee Calculation

- Fees are calculated based on the per capita grant, the preschool budget and the number of children enrolled.

### Notification of Fees

- Fee schedule to be handed out to parents at the start of the year (interview).
- Signage to be displayed showing when Fees are due.

### Term 1 Fees

- A non-refundable deposit on Term 1 fees as set out in the attached appendices is due at the time of acceptance of a place.
- Applicants accepting a place after the Annual General Meeting in the year prior to attendance will be required to pay their non-refundable deposit within fourteen (14) days of accepting the place.
- An invoice for the balance of Term 1 fees will be issued by the Enrolment Officer at least four (4) weeks before the payment due date.
- Payment is due by the end of the first week of Term 1.

### Term 2, 3, 4 fees

- An invoice will be issued by the Enrolment Officer at least five (5) weeks before the end of each term.
- Payment is due by the second last Friday of the relevant term, allowing four (4) weeks for payment.

### Discounts

- Fees of children who enrol when the term has already commenced will be charged on a pro-rata basis. Thereby the term fee is divided by the number of weeks in that particular term and payment should be made within two weeks of the commencement date.

### Method of Payment

Payment may be made by:

- a. cheque (cheques are to be made payable to the "Highbound Pre-School Association"); or
- b. crediting cash or cheques into the Highbound Pre-School Association bank account; or
- c. Internet banking into the Highbound Pre-School Association bank account; or
- d. as directed by the Enrolment Officers.

### Dishonoured Cheques

- The banks charge both parties for any dishonoured cheques. The Pre-School's Enrolment Officer will inform the parent responsible for presenting a dishonoured cheque as soon as practicable after the bank notifies the Pre-School of the dishonoured cheque. The parent responsible will be notified he/she is required to pay the Pre-School's bank fees on the dishonoured cheque together with the amount of the dishonoured cheque within fourteen (14) days of the notification to the parent.

### Procedure of Non-Payment of Fees

- The Enrolment Officer will issue one (1) reminder to late payers of Fees, on the **Monday** following the payment due date. Late Fees are then due one (1) week after the original due date.

- On the **last day of Term**, if Fees have not been paid, or if a repayment plan has not been entered into, the **President** will decide whether the basis for non-payment of Fees is either an...
  - An inability to pay, or
  - A refusal to pay
- This decision should be based on (at least) the following information...
  - Has sufficient contact been made to notify the parent of late payment?
  - Has the parent always previously paid on time?
  - Has the parent expressed a reason that suggests whether they are either unable or unwilling to pay?
  - Is this consistent with other behaviour?
- Once a decision has been reached, the President must follow one of the following two Procedures, "Inability to Pay Fees", or "Refusal to Pay Fees".

### **Inability to Pay Fees**

The following options may be considered by the President, *in extenuating circumstances*, as choices for negotiating unpaid Fees:

- Extend deadline for payment of Fees
- Payment by instalments – parents may negotiate to pay Fees at the unfettered discretion of the President on a weekly/monthly payment basis
- Waiving of Fees for that Term

### **Refusal to Pay Fees**

On the **last day of Term**, when the President has decided that the parent is refusing to pay, the service will be withdrawn. The parent will be warned, in writing, that the Committee may undertake the processes necessary to recover the unpaid Fees.

**The Committee takes full responsibility for this process and staff will not be involved in this final stage of fee collection.**

### **Commonwealth Childcare Rebate**

Parents may be eligible for the Commonwealth Childcare Rebate if both parents are working (full-time, part-time or casual), self-employed, on paid or un-paid leave, looking for work or studying. There is no income limit for receiving these payments. Parents may ask Enrolment Officers for information or apply to the Family Assistance Office for information.

## **IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT**

### **8. IMPLEMENTATION AND CIRCULATION RESOURCES**

- The Enrolment Officer will keep a record of the regularity and correctness of fee payment and report to the Committee instances where one or two people get very behind, or many people get slightly behind in payments.
- Discussion on the broad reasons for this can be held at the committee meeting to decide the need for a change to the policy or further investigation.

### **PEOPLE WHO NEED TO KNOW THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES EXIST**

- Parents whose children attend the preschool.
- Parents who wish to have their child attend the preschool
- Committee members
- Staff

### **METHOD**

- A copy will be placed on the preschool notice board.
- A copy will be added to the preschool policy booklet.
- A summary of the policy will be included in the preschool information booklet.

**SEE ATTACHED APPENDICES:-**

**SCHEDULE OF FEES – 4YO – 2011**

**SCHEDULE OF FEES – 3YO – 2011**

**HIGHMOUNT PRE-SCHOOL SCHEDULE OF FEES 4 Y.O. 2011**

<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Amount Payable</b>
The date set by the enrolment officer	Term 1 Fees non-refundable deposit to secure 4yo position for 2011	\$100.00	\$100.00
All term fees are due to be paid at the end of the first week of the relevant term.	Term 1 Fees balance	\$180.00	\$280.00
	Term 2 Fees	\$280.00	\$280.00
	Term 3 Fees	\$280.00	\$280.00
	Term 4 Fees	\$280.00	\$280.00

**Non-refundable administration fee** – Payable as required by the Monash City Council central enrolment scheme.

**Please note:** Current Health care card holders/Pensioner health benefit card holders are eligible for a discount each term on satisfying the requirements set out in clause 6 of this policy. Fees are subject to change at the committee's discretion, this is a guide only.

**HIGHMOUNT PRE-SCHOOL SCHEDULE OF FEES 3 Y.O. 2011**

<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Amount Payable</b>
The date set by the enrolment officer	Term 1 Fees non-refundable deposit to secure 3yo position for 2011	\$100.00	\$100.00
All term fees are due to be paid at the end of the first week of the relevant term.	Term 1 Fees balance	\$200.00	\$300.00
	Term 2 Fees	\$300.00	\$300.00
	Term 3 Fees	\$300.00	\$300.00
	Term 4 Fees	\$300.00	\$300.00

**Non-refundable administration fee** – Payable as required by the Monash City Council central enrolment scheme.

**Please Note:** Fees are subject to change at committee's discretion; this is a guide only.