

Kids at Play Waterford Policies and Procedures

Fees Policy

Last Review Date 12/10/2022
2022

Policy No. 15

Issued:



Policy Statement

The management of childcare fees in Kids at Play Waterford endeavours to reflect best practice with regard to the budgeting of costs for the provision of a quality childcare service and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the service.

Principles

This policy is underpinned by the National Standards for Preschool Services 2010, the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2012.

Procedures

I. Billing

- Fees are payable on a 12 month / 52-week basis and all absences and holidays must be paid for. This applies for all children (both tuition and after-school children). The **only** exception to this is for the period we are closed for during Christmas. This means that during school holidays you will be charged for your child's usual school term hours. Children can increase hours during school holidays if required.
- There is no refund for illness, holidays, or closure of the service due to unforeseen circumstances.
- The service will close if it is deemed by Senior Management to be unsafe to open, e.g., extreme staff shortages or severe weather conditions. Full fees will be payable.
- Unless otherwise agreed, all fees are payable in full weekly/monthly. This includes any extra care should this be availed of.
- Direct debit is our preferred method of payment, and we ask you to inform us of the date of your direct payment. Alternative payment methods that have been agreed remain in place. For new service users please discuss alternative payment methods with Aoife Lynch (manager).
- An administration fee of €5 will be incurred for each direct debit that is returned unpaid on its due date and this will be charged for and included on the monthly invoice in the next available billing period.
- Each month both a statement of account and an invoice will be issued via email.

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- The statement of account that is issued via email will notify you of the amount that is payable to Kids at Play Waterford for that week/month. This amount will reflect any subsidy, grant or funding deductions and/or adjustments that have been applied to your fees.
- Invoices are issued via email by the 1st of the month.
- Unless stated otherwise, care charged on the monthly invoice is for the current calendar month's regular standard care booking, i.e., from the 1st of the month to the last day of the same month.
- A child's first month's invoice may be issued on an alternate date if the start date is not on the 1st of the month. Unless stated otherwise, a child's first month's invoice is for care from the child's first day with us to the last day of the same month.
- Should a child attend for any extra care/time not covered by their standard care booking this will incur an additional charge.
- Unless otherwise stated, extra care/time availed of during a month will be charged for and included on the monthly invoice in the next available billing period. If you have pre-booked extra care in advance for mid-terms and summer camps this will be charged for as per the terms set out on the booking forms.
- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that full fees as charged by Kids at Play Waterford are paid in full and on time each month regardless of any subsidy, grant and/or funding being applied for and/or availed of from any source.
- Full fees without any subsidy, grant or funding deduction are payable to Kids at Play Waterford whilst any application for a subsidy, grant or funding is being processed and during any time these no longer apply and/or are withdrawn.

II. Termination of Care

Unless stated otherwise the following will be required to terminate a child's care:

- If you intend to terminate your child's care, 2 months (calendar months) written notice must be provided by the parent/guardian to withdraw a child from the service.
- Termination of care notices must be made in writing and emailed to the service manager.

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- If the required termination of notice period is not provided by the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must forgo two month's fees in lieu of same.

III. Change in Care – Notice Period

- Should you wish to change your child's care please refer to the Change in Care – Approval Process noted in part IV of this document.
- All places and care arrangements are subject to availability. Should a change of care request be approved the following notice periods will apply:
 - Where the request is to reduce your child's care; a minimum of 1 month (calendar month) written notice must be provided by the parent/guardian.
 - Where the request is to increase your child's care, the request must be made in writing and the increase in care will take place from the date of availability.

IV. Change in Care – Approval Process

- Parent/Guardian must request care change in writing by email to the service manager/ senior management team.
- On receipt of the request from a Parent/Guardian the care change request is reviewed by management.
- The care change request will be approved if the requested care is available at the time of the enquiry.
- In the event, whereby the care is unavailable, the care request will be rejected by the management team and the care request will be added to a waiting list, if/once the care becomes available the parent/guardian will be informed.
- Where a parent requests a reduction in care any future increase in care cannot be held or guaranteed, the care request will be added to a waiting list, if/once the care becomes available the parent/guardian will be informed.

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V. Fee Review

- Fees are reviewed periodically by management, to ensure that sustainability, quality, staff costs and overheads are appropriately met.
- We are currently in 'fee freeze' agreement with the NCS
- If fees are due to change parents/guardians will be notified in writing, via email, a minimum of 2 months prior to any increase/change in fees. Should a parent/guardian not wish to continue his/her child's care arrangement with our service on foot of a notice to increase/change fees, the parent/guardian can terminate the child's care with us by giving 2 months' notice in writing and email this notice to the service manager.

VI. Discount

- Should a discount be offered to a family it is offered at the sole discretion of management and may be amended or withdrawn without reason or notice at any time.
- Any discount offered will be applied to standard monthly fees only, prior to the deduction of any grant/subsidy.
- No discounts will apply to any extra care, hours and/or time availed of outside of the standard regular care booking.
- Minimum care requirements will apply to avail of any discount offered.
- Once a change in care occurs, any prior discount applied will cease. Current fee rates applicable at the commencement of the change in care will apply. Should the new care arrangement satisfy the current criteria required for a discount, if any, the discount rate that will apply will be based on the current discount rate offered at the time of the change in care.

VII. Non-Payment of Fees Policy

- Non-payment of fees in full will result in the loss of your child's place with Kids at Play Waterford.

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- Kids at Play Waterford reserves the right to request a Parent/Guardian to withdraw their child from the service if fees are unpaid. Kids at Play Waterford will provide one week's notice in this instance.

VIII. Late Collection/early drop off Fee

- A late collection/early drop off fee will apply where a child is collected/dropped off after/before the service's closing time/before their scheduled start time. The fee charged will be €10.00 for each 15-minute period or part thereof after the crèche closing time/ before scheduled start time.
- If an earlier start time as been agreed, this fee will be waived.

IX. Additional Care

- At Kids at Play Waterford we aim to provide as flexible a service as possible, we understand that schedules can change and at times a parent/guardian will require additional care in the service. Should additional care be required from time to time for a child in addition to the normal standard care arrangement the service manager will confirm availability directly with the parent/guardian.
- Additional care will be charged for and included in the next available billing period.
- Where you have pre-booked extra care in advance for mid-terms and summer camps this will be charged for.
- We do not facilitate 'change in day request' whereby a parent/guardian requests to swap their child's days on a given week. Please note that we cannot provide a 'care change' (i.e., swapping of days). If your child attends for care that is not as per their normal standard care booking, then this will be charged as extra care.

X. Funding, Subsidy and Grants

- The National Childcare Subsidy is accepted in Kids at Play Waterford.
- It is the parent/guardian responsibility to ensure the service manager has the relevant information to avail of this subsidy.

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- Where non-payment or end of term of the subsidy occurs payment in full will be required.

Review:

Management, in consultation with staff, monitors and reviews the effectiveness of the policy yearly or as required.