

FEES – FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

QUALITY AREA 7 | version 1.0



Purpose

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines for:

- the setting, payment and collection of fees
- ensuring the viability of Parkdale Preschool, by setting appropriate fees and charges
- the equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the programs provided by Parkdale Preschool.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Parkdale Preschool is committed to:

- providing responsible financial management of the service, including establishing fees that will result in a financially viable service, while keeping user fees at the lowest possible level
- providing a fair and manageable system for dealing with non-payment and/or inability to pay fees/outstanding debts
- ensuring there are no financial barriers for families wishing to access an early childhood program for their child/children
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians
- advising users of the service about program funding, including government support and fees to be paid by parents/guardians
- providing equitable access for families eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy and/or Early Start Kindergarten.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and parents/guardians attending Parkdale Preschool.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians
Reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements	√	√		
Developing a fee policy that balances the parent's/guardian's capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability	√	√		
Implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the nominated supervisor and staff, and in line with the requirements of DET's The Kindergarten Funding Guide (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	√	√		
Considering any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling at Parkdale Preschool and removing those barriers wherever possible	√	√		
Reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered	√	√		
Considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families	√	√		
Clearly communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally-sensitive way, and in the family's first language where possible	√	√		
Ensuring that the <i>Fees Policy</i> is readily accessible at the service (<i>Regulation 171</i>)	√	√		
Providing all parents/guardians with fee information (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)	√	√		
Providing all parents/guardians with a statement of fees and charges (<i>refer to samples in Attachments 2 and 3</i>) upon enrolment of their child	√	√		
Providing all parents/guardians with a fee payment agreement (<i>refer to samples in Attachments 4 and 5</i>)	√	√		
Ensuring fees are collected and receipted	√	√		
Collecting all relevant information and maintaining relevant documentation regarding those with entitlement to concessions (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)	√	√		√

Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees	√	√		
Notifying parents/guardians a minimum of 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected (<i>Regulation 172(2)</i>), and ideally providing one term's notice.	√	√		
Addressing any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service in a timely manner	√	√		
Reading the Parkdale Preschool Fee information for families (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>), the Fee Payment Agreement (<i>refer to Attachments 4 and 5</i>) and the Statement of Fees and Charges (<i>refer to Attachments 2 and 3</i>)				√
Signing and complying with the Fee Payment Agreement (<i>refer to Attachments 4 and 5</i>)				√
Notifying the approved provider if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees				√
Providing the required documentation to enable the service to claim the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy and/or Early Start Kindergarten, if eligible (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>).				√



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

The Department of Education and Training (DET) (*refer to Definitions*) provides funding for each child who is enrolled and attending a funded kindergarten program two years before school. Income from other sources, primarily fees, is required to meet all the additional costs incurred by the service in the delivery of the children's program. In addition, the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (*refer to Definitions*) enables eligible children to attend a funded kindergarten program free of charge two years before school.

DET also funds Early Start Kindergarten for three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from refugee or asylum seeker background and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs as outlined in The Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Sources*).

Regulation 168(2) (n) of Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 requires that funded kindergarten services have a comprehensive written fees policy, and the content of this policy must be communicated to families. The policy must include a written statement about the fees to be charged and the payment process. All families must be informed of applicable term and annual fees at the time of enrolment. Services must also advise eligible families of the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (*refer to Definitions*) and/or or Early Start Kindergarten (*refer to Definitions*) arrangements. The fees charged must comply with the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy requirements (*refer to Definitions*) and/or or Early Start Kindergarten (*refer to Definitions*) and be responsive to the local community and the viability of the service. The Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Sources*) outlines the criteria to be covered in the policy.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage (in relation to this policy): children are vulnerable if the capacity of parents and family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Some factors which may contribute to a child experiencing vulnerability include: a child with a disability; living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; known to child protection; in statutory out-of-home care; Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability (adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide)

Concession: A Commonwealth Government entitlement providing concessions for low-income earners and other eligible people. This includes one of the following:

- a Commonwealth Health Care Card
- a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- a Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa (200-204, 786 or 866)
- Bridging visas for any of the above Refugee or Asylum Seeker visas
- Multiple Births (triplets or more)

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK): Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher. ESK is available to children who are at least three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled to attend the program and are:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- known to child protection.

These children can also access free year-before-school kindergarten through the ESK Extension Grant regardless of whether they have accessed ESK in the previous year.

Early Start Kindergarten extension grants: provides a free or low cost year-before-school kindergarten program for children:

- not eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- who participated in Access to Early Learning in the previous year or are from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or known to child protection. A child is not required to access ESK in the previous year to access the ESK extension grant.

High priority families: as defined in the Kindergarten Guide this includes:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Asylum seeker and refugee children
- Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
 - A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or multiple birth children (triplets, quadruplets)
- Children with additional needs, defined as children who:
 - require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
 - require a combination of services which are individually planned
 - have an identified specific disability or developmental delay

Kindergarten Registration fee: A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service, if applicable. High priority families (*refer to Definitions*) **should not be charged** any fees or levies, unless it is for outside the funded hours

Excursion/service event charge: An additional charge required to meet the cost of special events or excursions that occur in response to emerging children's program needs. Events that are planned ahead and are included as an expenditure item in the service's budget do not incur this additional charge (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy).

Fees: A charge for a place within a program at the service.

Kindergarten fee deposit: A charge to secure a place that has been offered in a program at the service. This is deducted from term fees. This deposit should not act as a barrier for enrolment of vulnerable families

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS): A state government subsidy paid in addition to per capita grants to subsidise the costs of parent fees and enable eligible children to attend a funded kindergarten for 15 hours free of charge (The Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Sources*))

Late collection charge: A charge that may be imposed by the approved provider when parents/guardians are late to collect their child/children from the program (*refer to Attachment 1*)

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Department of Education and Training): www.education.vic.gov.au
- The constitution of Parkdale Preschool

RELATED POLICIES

- Complaints and Grievances
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Excursions and Service Events

- Inclusion and Equity
- Privacy and Confidentiality

EVALUATION



In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to affordability, flexibility of payment options and procedures for the collection of fees
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- investigating what measures can be taken to reduce any barriers to access the program, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- monitor the number of families/children excluded from the service because of their inability to pay fees
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172 \(2\)](#))

ATTACHMENTS



- Attachment 1: Fee information for families
- Attachment 2: Statement of Fees and Charges – 3-year-old kindergarten program
- Attachment 3: Statement of Fees and Charges – 4-year-old kindergarten program
- Attachment 4: Fee Agreement – 3-year-old kindergarten program
- Attachment 5: Fee Agreement – 4-year-old kindergarten program
- Attachment 6: Additional Days – Fees and Policy

AUTHORISATION



This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Parkdale Preschool on 2nd SEPTEMBER 2021

REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2022

ATTACHMENT 1. FEE INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Parkdale Preschool 2022

1. General information

The Department of Education and Training (DET) (*refer to Definitions*) provides funding for each child enrolled and attending kindergarten in the two years before school as a contribution toward the costs of providing the program. Services meet the balance of costs through charging fees and fundraising activities.

DET provides a Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see below) that enables children from eligible families to attend a kindergarten program free of charge in the two years before school.

DET also provides Early Start Kindergarten funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, from a refugee or asylum seeker background or children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs.

Parkdale Preschool provides a range of support options to parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with payment of fees (see below).

2. How fees are set

As part of the budget development process, the Committee of Management sets fees each year for the programs of the service, taking into consideration:

- the financial viability of the service
- the level of government funding provided for the program, including the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy and Early Start Kindergarten
- the availability of other income sources, such as grants
- the fees charged by similar services in the area
- the capacity of parents/guardians to pay fees
- reasonable expenditure in meeting agreed program quality and standards
- requirements of The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Department of Education and Training) available from the DET website: www.education.vic.gov.au

Once fees are set for the year, they will only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if enrolments drop and the service is at risk of not being able to meet its expenses.

3. Other charges

Other charges levied by Parkdale Preschool are included on the Statement of Fees and Charges. These include:

- **Kindergarten fee deposit:** This payment secures a child's place at the service and is payable on acceptance of enrolment. The deposit is retained, and has been taken into account in setting the term fees (i.e. the term fee amounts shown in Attachment 1 are net of the deposit amount). **Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage (*refer to Definitions*) and families eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see below) will be charged 50% of the deposit.** Families experiencing hardship should discuss any difficulties with the service.
- **Additional Kinder Day fees:** Parkdale Preschool offers families optional additional days of kinder when available. Additional Days are above the set 15 hours per week (600 hours per year), and are charged as "full fees" – ie there is no government funding or subsidy for these fees. The additional day fee includes the costs of regular incursions and excursions and is specified in Attachment 3.
- **Late collection charge:** The Committee of Management reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from the service. This charge will be set at a level determined by the Committee of Management.

4. Statement of fees and charges

A statement of fees and charges for three-year-old kindergarten and/or four-year-old will be provided to families on enrolment (*refer to Attachment 2 and 3*).

5. Fundraising

Not all service costs are covered by DET per capita funding and the fees charged. Fundraising is undertaken to meet the balance and/or pay for additional items for the service. While participation in fundraising is voluntary, the support of every family is encouraged. Fundraising activities are also an opportunity for families and communities to come together.

6. Subsidies

6.1 Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is provided by DET and enables eligible children to attend 15 hours of kindergarten free of charge. Eligibility conditions may change from time-to-time and must be checked in the most recent edition of the Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Sources*).

Your child is eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy:

- if your child identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- if your child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more).

or if your child holds or has a parent or guardian who holds, one of the following:

- a Commonwealth Health Care Card
- a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- a Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa (200-204, 786 or 866)
- Bridging visas for any of the above Refugee or Asylum Seeker visas

If your family or child has a humanitarian or refugee visa listed by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection which is not included in the above list, your child may still be eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy.

Where a child is identified by a parent, carer or legal guardian as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, no verification is required.

In all other instances, supporting documentation should be sighted by the service on acceptance of a place or on commencement in the program, however where there are delays, such as in obtaining health care cards for children in out-of-home care, the delay should not provide a barrier to the child accessing the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy. Families are eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for the full term in which their concession is valid.

6.2 Early Start Kindergarten

Early Start Kindergarten gives eligible children 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten a week for two years before starting school.

To be eligible, the child must be three by 30 April in the year they start kindergarten and meet one of the following criteria:

- be from a refugee or asylum seeker background
- identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- your family has had contact with Child Protection.

Children can also access free or low cost Four-Year-Old Kindergarten through the Early Start Kindergarten Extension Grant. Contact the service for further information.

7. Payment of fees

The Committee of Management will regularly review payment options and procedures to ensure that they are inclusive and sensitive to families' cultural and financial situations.

Fees will be invoiced to parents/guardians directly and must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. Each invoice will be accompanied by payment instructions. The first term's fees must be received in full prior to the child commencing at the service. For children enrolled after the commencement of a term, a pro rata invoice will be issued and must be paid in full within 14 days of the child's commencement at the service. Receipts will be provided for all fee payments.

Parents/guardians experiencing difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the administration officer at admin.parkdale.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au to arrange a suitable alternative payment plan. The *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* of the service will be complied with at all times in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances.

8. Unpaid fees

If fees are not paid by the due date, the following steps will be taken:

- An initial reminder letter will be sent to parents/guardians with a specified payment date, and will include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- Where payment is still not received, families will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the range of support options available and establish a payment plan.
- Failure to attend the meeting and continued non-payment may result in a second and final letter notifying parents/guardians that the child's place at the service may be withdrawn unless payment is made or a payment plan is entered into within a specified period of time. This letter will also include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- The Committee of Management will continue to offer support and will reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector.
- If a decision is made to withdraw the child's place at the service, the parents/guardians will be provided with 14 days' notice in writing.
- No further enrolments of children from the parents/guardians will be accepted until all outstanding fees have been paid.

9. Refund of fees

If a family becomes eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy during a term, a full refund of the applicable term fees (and fee deposit, where appropriate) will be provided. Fees may still apply for programs offering more than the required minimum hours per week.

In any other case, fees are non-refundable (exceptional circumstances may apply – these are at the discretion of the Committee of Management). There will be no refund of fees in the following circumstances:

- a child's short-term illness
- public holidays
- family holiday during operational times
- closure of the service for one or more days when a qualified educator is absent, and a qualified reliever is not available
- closure of the service for staff training days
- closure of the service due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances.

In addition, there will be no refund where a family chooses not to send their child to the program for the maximum number of hours for which they are enrolled

10. Support services

Families experiencing financial hardship often require access to family support services. Information on these services may be available from the kindergarten service provider or alternatively families may contact the local council.

11. Notification of fee changes during the year

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget 'break even' point. Parents/guardians will be notified one term in advance of any required fee increase and will be offered the option to request a payment plan.

ATTACHMENT 2. STATEMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES

Three-year-old funded kindergarten

Parkdale Preschool

Fee schedule 2022

Three-year-old kindergarten

Hours: 5 hours per week

	Total Fees (\$)	Families eligible for Subsidy (see below) Total Fees (\$)	Payment Due Date
Deposit	\$120.00	\$60.00	Upon acceptance of position
Term 1	\$210.00	-	Friday 5 th November 2021
Term 2	\$210.00	-	Monday 14 th March 2022
Term 3	\$210.00	-	Monday 13 th June 2022
Term 4	\$210.00	-	Monday 5 th September 2022
Less Volunteer Refund*	(\$120.00)	(\$60.00)	Paid as \$60 instalments for participation as a volunteer for the pre-school – see more detail below
Plus <u>Extended Care charged at \$30 per day (if accesses)</u>	(Depending on enrolment)	(Depending on enrolment)	Paid on a per-term basis on the due date for the corresponding Term fee – See enrolment and Orientation Policy for details
Total	\$840.00	\$0.00	

Deposit: This payment secures a child's place at the service and is payable on acceptance of enrolment. This deposit is NOT refundable if the enrolment is cancelled and the child does not commence at the service.

Volunteer Refund*: The participation of families in preschool activities is encouraged by the preschool and can help to keep costs more affordable. For each \$120 deposit paid, the family can receive a \$60 refund for each (i) membership of the committee of management or a subcommittee (including the fundraising subcommittee and social subcommittee/group representative roles); and (ii) voluntary participation in pre-school activities, such as working bees, undertaking required maintenance tasks, and assisting with fundraising (such as working at the Bunnings BBQ). Where a family would like to receive the volunteer refund, but have been unable to attend a scheduled event or join the committee or subcommittee, they must make a request to the Administration Officer prior to the last week of Term 3 for equivalent work that can be completed at a different date/time. Refunds will be issued via electronic funds transfer to the nominated bank account within 14 days of participation at an event or prior to the AGM for committee membership. In the case of fees being overdue, any amount due to be refunded, shall be used towards payment of overdue fees.

Late collection charge: The Committee of Management reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from the service. (After written warning given, charges will be \$10 for the first 10 minutes late, then \$1 per minute thereafter)

Children turning three during the year: Full payment for the whole of Term 1 is required to reserve a place in the program. Children can only commence the program on or after their third birthday.

Fee Refunds: Fees are non-refundable (exceptional circumstances may apply at the discretion of the Committee of Management). There will be no refund of fees for a child's short-term illness; public holidays; family holiday during operational times; closure of the service for one or more days when a qualified educator is absent and a qualified reliever is not available; closure of the service for staff training days; closure of the service due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances. No discount or refund is available where a family chooses not to send their child to the program for the maximum number of hours for which they are enrolled.

Early Start Kindergarten fee subsidy: eligible families will not be required to make fee payments (refer to Department of Education and Training for further information).

Fees are required to run the preschool programs and are used to pay for staff salaries, materials, resources and equipment, building and grounds improvements and maintenance, visitors, incursions and excursions.

Fees are invoiced to parents/guardians directly and must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. Each invoice will be accompanied by payment instructions and receipts will be provided upon request. Invoices will be issued at least 14 days prior to the due date via Xero. For children enrolled after the commencement of a term, a pro-rata invoice will be issued and must be paid in full within 14 days of the child's commencement at the service.

Parents/guardians that are having difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the Administration Officer to arrange a suitable alternative payment plan. The preschool Privacy Policy will be complied with at all times in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances. Information will be held in the strictest confidence and will not be discussed with the general committee, staff or other parents. A record of all conversations and correspondence regarding fees will be kept securely on file by the Administration Officer. Families experiencing financial hardship should contact the Administration Officer to discuss a payment plan and/or ongoing support.

PAYMENT PLANS

- Where the parent/guardian requests a payment plan or additional time for payment, a Payment Plan Agreement will be prepared outlining the payment amounts and timeframe. This will be signed by the parent/guardian and Administration Officer.
- The Administration Officer is at liberty to offer a payment plan up to one month from the initial due date. Extended payment terms are offered or granted by the committee of management or authorised representative only.
- If the parent/guardian fails to make a payment as per the agreed plan, the Administration Officer will issue a follow up letter, advising that the agreed plan has not been fulfilled and the letter will request full payment within 5 working days. Alternatively the parent/guardian will be offered attendance at a meeting with committee representatives to discuss alternative payment options. The letter will include information on support options available.
- Late fees will not be charged where a payment plan is agreed upon and payments are made on time. Where the parent/guardian enters into a payment plan and fails to make the required payments, a late fee will be charged at the rate of \$20 per week commencing from one month following the initial due date of fees. This late fee will cease when full payment is made.
- A payment plan cannot be offered where a parent/guardian has informed the service that they are withdrawing their place at the service in the future. In this instance, all outstanding fees must be paid in full. Where fees are not paid in full, the Administration Officer will refer the issue to the Committee of Management.

UNPAID FEES

If fees are not paid by the due date on each invoice, the following steps will be taken:

- Initial Reminder Letter (day following due date): An initial reminder letter will be placed in the child's communication pocket at the preschool the day after fees are due, along with a reminder invoice sent via Xero stating that fees are now overdue and requesting prompt payment. The letter will encourage the parent/guardian to contact the Administration Officer if a payment plan or other support is required.
- Reminder Phone Call (three weeks following due date): Where no contact has been made following the initial reminder letter, the parent/guardian will be contacted by telephone by the Administration Officer to discuss the outstanding fees and to develop an agreed plan.

- **Payment Plan:** Where contact has been made and a payment plan is required, the Administration Officer will draft the plan and have it signed by the parent/guardian and Administration Officer. Late fees will not be charged where a payment plan is agreed upon and payments are made on time.
- **Additional Late Fee Letter (four weeks following due date):**
If no payments have been made by four weeks following the due date, an Additional Late fee letter will be placed in the child's communication pocket at the preschool indicating that an additional late fee will now be charged at the rate of \$20 per week from the initial due date.
- **Final Phone Call (five weeks following due date):** If no payments have been made by five weeks following the due date, the parent/guardian will be contacted again by the Administration Officer by telephone. The Administration Officer will inform the parent/guardian that the issue will now be referred to the Committee of Management for discussion of engaging debt collectors or withdrawing the child's place at the preschool.
- **Final Reminder Letter (six weeks following due date):** Continued non-payment will result in a final letter notifying the parent/guardian that the child's place at the service will be withdrawn unless payment is made or a payment plan is entered into within 14 days. This letter will also include information on a range of support options available for the family. This letter will be posted via registered post and a copy also placed in the child's communication pocket.
- **Withdrawal of Child's Place (eight weeks following due date):** If no payment has been made and no payment plan agreement has been entered into, the child's place at the service will be withdrawn. The parent/guardian will be provided with 14 days' notice in writing. The Committee of Management reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector and will consider this a final option after all other attempts to collect payment have been made.

ATTACHMENT 3. STATEMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES

Four-year-old funded kindergarten

Parkdale Preschool

Fee schedule 2022

Four-year-old kindergarten

Hours: 15 hours per week

	Total Fees (\$)	Families eligible for Subsidy (see below) Total Fees (\$)	Payment Due Date
Deposit	\$120.00	\$60.00	Upon acceptance of position
Term 1	\$540.00	-	Friday 5 th November 2021
Term 2	\$540.00	-	Monday 14 th March 2022
Term 3	\$540.00	-	Monday 13 th June 2022
Term 4	\$540.00	*	Monday 5 th September 2022
Less \$120 Volunteer Refund*	(\$120.00)	(\$60.00)	Paid as instalments for participation as a volunteer for the pre-school – see more detail below
PLUS Additional Days charged at \$75 per day	[depending on enrolment]	[depending on enrolment]	Paid on a per-term basis on the due date for the corresponding Term fee – see Enrolment and Orientation Policy for details
Total	\$2160.00 [plus Additional Days fees]	\$0 [plus Additional Days fees]	

Deposit: This payment secures a child’s place at the service and is payable on acceptance of enrolment. This deposit is NOT refundable if the enrolment is cancelled and the child does not commence at the service.

Volunteer Refund*: The participation of families in preschool activities is encouraged by the preschool and can help to keep costs more affordable. For each \$120 deposit paid, the family can receive a \$60 refund for each (i) membership of the committee of management or a subcommittee (including the fundraising subcommittee and social subcommittee/group representative roles); and (ii) voluntary participation in pre-school activities, such as working bees, undertaking required maintenance tasks, and assisting with fundraising (such as working at the Bunnings BBQ). Where a family would like to receive the volunteer refund, but have been unable to attend a scheduled event or join the committee of management, they must make a request to the Administration Officer prior to the last week of Term 3 for equivalent work that can be completed at a different date/time. Refunds will be issued via electronic funds transfer to the nominated bank account within 14 days of participation at an event or prior to the AGM for committee membership. In the case of fees being overdue, any amount due to be refunded, shall be used towards payment of overdue fees.

Late collection charge: The Committee of Management reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from the service. (After written warning given, charges will be \$10 for the first 10 minutes late, then \$1 per minute thereafter)

Additional Days: conditions regarding enrolment in Additional Days, and fees payable for that enrolment, are set out in Attachment 6, and in the Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

Fee Refunds: Fees are non-refundable (exceptional circumstances may apply at the discretion of the Committee of Management). There will be no refund of fees for a child's short-term illness; public holidays; family holiday during operational times; closure of the service for one or more days when a qualified educator is absent and a qualified reliever is not available; closure of the service for staff training days; closure of the service due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances. No discount or refund is available where a family chooses not to send their child to the program for the maximum number of hours for which they are enrolled.

Early Start Kindergarten fee subsidy: eligible families will not be required to make fee payments (refer to Department of Education and Training for further information).

Fees are required to run the preschool programs and are used to pay for staff salaries, materials, resources and equipment, building and grounds improvements and maintenance, visitors, incursions and excursions.

Fees are invoiced to parents/guardians directly and must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. Each invoice will be accompanied by payment instructions and receipts will be provided upon request. Invoices will be issued at least 14 days prior to the due date via Xero. For children enrolled after the commencement of a term, a pro-rata invoice will be issued and must be paid in full within 14 days of the child's commencement at the service.

Parents/guardians that are having difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the Administration Officer to arrange a suitable alternative payment plan. The preschool Privacy Policy will be complied with at all times in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances. Information will be held in the strictest confidence and will not be discussed with the general committee, staff or other parents. A record of all conversations and correspondence regarding fees will be kept securely on file by the Administration Officer. Families experiencing financial hardship should contact the Administration Officer to discuss a payment plan and/or ongoing support.

PAYMENT PLANS

- Where the parent/guardian requests a payment plan or additional time for payment, a Payment Plan Agreement will be prepared outlining the payment amounts and timeframe. This will be signed by the parent/guardian and Administration Officer.
- The Administration Officer is at liberty to offer a payment plan up to one month from the initial due date. Extended payment terms are offered or granted by the committee of management or authorised representative only.
- If the parent/guardian fails to make a payment as per the agreed plan, the Administration Officer will issue a follow up letter, advising that the agreed plan has not been fulfilled and the letter will request full payment within 5 working days. Alternatively the parent/guardian will be offered attendance at a meeting with committee representatives to discuss alternative payment options. The letter will include information on support options available.
- Late fees will not be charged where a payment plan is agreed upon and payments are made on time. Where the parent/guardian enters into a payment plan and fails to make the required payments, a late fee will be charged at the rate of \$20 per week commencing from one month following the initial due date of fees. This late fee will cease when full payment is made.
- A payment plan cannot be offered where a parent/guardian has informed the service that they are withdrawing their place at the service in the future. In this instance, all outstanding fees must be paid in full. Where fees are not paid in full, the Administration Officer will refer the issue to the Committee of Management.

UNPAID FEES

If fees are not paid by the due date on each invoice, the following steps will be taken:

- Initial Reminder Letter (day following due date): An initial reminder letter will be placed in the child's communication pocket at the preschool the day after fees are due, along with a reminder invoice sent via Xero stating that fees are now overdue and requesting prompt payment. The letter will encourage the parent/guardian to contact the Administration Officer if a payment plan or other support is required.

- **Reminder Phone Call (three weeks following due date):** Where no contact has been made following the initial reminder letter, the parent/guardian will be contacted by telephone by the Administration Officer to discuss the outstanding fees and to develop an agreed plan.
- **Payment Plan:** Where contact has been made and a payment plan is required, the Administration Officer will draft the plan and have it signed by the parent/guardian and Administration Officer. Late fees will not be charged where a payment plan is agreed upon and payments are made on time.
- **Additional Late Fee Letter (four weeks following due date):**
If no payments have been made by four weeks following the due date, an Additional Late fee letter will be placed in the child's communication pocket at the preschool indicating that an additional late fee will now be charged at the rate of \$20 per week from the initial due date.
- **Final Phone Call (five weeks following due date):** If no payments have been made by five weeks following the due date, the parent/guardian will be contacted again by the Administration Officer by telephone. The Administration Officer will inform the parent/guardian that the issue will now be referred to the Committee of Management for discussion of engaging debt collectors or withdrawing the child's place at the preschool.
- **Final Reminder Letter (six weeks following due date):** Continued non-payment will result in a final letter notifying the parent/guardian that the child's place at the service will be withdrawn unless payment is made or a payment plan is entered into within 14 days. This letter will also include information on a range of support options available for the family. This letter will be posted via registered post and a copy also placed in the child's communication pocket.
- **Withdrawal of Child's Place (eight weeks following due date):** If no payment has been made and no payment plan agreement has been entered into, the child's place at the service will be withdrawn. The parent/guardian will be provided with 14 days' notice in writing. The Committee of Management reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector and will consider this a final option after all other attempts to collect payment have been made.

ATTACHMENT 4. FEE AGREEMENT FOR THREE-YEAR-OLD-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

This attachment is for all 3 year old children attending a 3 year old program and for any 3-year-old child that is eligible for ESK and will be attending a 4 year old kinder program

THREE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM – 2022

Please complete this form and return to Parkdale Preschool by **date to be decided**

Fee payment contract

Child's full name: _____

Parent's/guardian's full name: _____

- I/we acknowledge that the three-year-old kindergarten program is partly funded by the state government, with the balance of funds coming from fees paid by parents/guardians
- I/we understand that I/we am/are entitled to obtain the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy if I/we meet one of the criteria. If my/our eligibility lapses, then I/we understand that full payment of fees is required from the beginning of the following term.
- I/we understand that I/we am/are entitled to obtain the Early Start Kindergarten if I/we meet one of the criteria (as per below).
- I/we agree to pay fees by the due date on the invoice.
- I/we acknowledge that if fees are not paid by the due date, the Committee of Management/Board will implement the late payment of fees procedures, as outlined in the Fees Information for Families which could result in the withdrawal of my/our child's place at the service and no further enrolments being accepted until the outstanding fees are paid.
- I/we understand that term fees are non-refundable.
- I/we agree that if my/our financial circumstances change and I/we am/are unable to pay as agreed, I/we will immediately notify the "[responsible position]" to discuss alternative payment options.
- I/we acknowledge that I/we have received and read the service's Fee information for families, which outlines the procedures for payment of fees.

Early Start Kindergarten

Early Start Kindergarten gives eligible children 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten a week for two years before starting school. To be eligible, the child must be three by 30 April in the year they start kindergarten and meet one of the following criteria:

- be from a refugee or asylum seeker background
- identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- your family has had contact with Child Protection.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is provided by DET and enables eligible children to attend 15 hours of kindergarten free of charge. Your child is eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy:

- if your child identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- if your child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more).
- a Commonwealth Health Care Card
- a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card



- a Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa (200-204, 786 or 866) or bridging visas for Refugee or Asylum Seeker visas

Please indicate below which concession you are eligible for as outline in the criteria above.

Concession: _____

Signature (parent/guardian): _____ Date: _____

Note: invoices, receipts and collection of fees will be in accordance with the Parkdale Preschool *Fees Policy*.

ATTACHMENT 5. FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

Four-year-old kindergarten

FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM - 2022

Please complete this form and return to Parkdale Preschool by **date to be decided**

Fee payment contract

Child's full name: _____

Parent's/guardian's full name: _____

- I/we acknowledge that the four-year-old kindergarten program is partly funded by the state government, with the balance of funds coming from fees paid by parents/guardians.
- I/we understand that I/we am/are entitled to obtain the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy if I/we meet one of the criteria. If my/our eligibility lapses, then I/we understand that full payment of fees is required from the beginning of the following term.
- I/we agree to pay fees by the due date on the invoice.
- I/we understand that term fees are non-refundable.
- I/we acknowledge that if fees are not paid by the due date, the Committee of Management/Board will implement the late payment of fees procedures, as outlined in the Fee Information for Families, which could result in the withdrawal of my/our child's place at the service and no further enrolments until the outstanding fees are paid.
- I/we agree that if my/our financial circumstances change and I/we am/are unable to pay as agreed, I/we will immediately notify the [responsible position] to discuss alternative payment options.
- I/we acknowledge that I/we have received and read the service's Fee information for families, which outlines the procedure for payment of fees.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is provided by DET and enables eligible children to attend 15 hours of kindergarten free of charge. Your child is eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy:

- if your child identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- if your child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more).
- a Commonwealth Health Care Card
- a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- a Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa (200-204, 786 or 866) or a bridging visas for Refugee or Asylum Seeker visas

Early Start Kindergarten extension grants: provides a free or low cost year-before-school kindergarten program for children:

- not eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- who participated in Access to Early Learning in the previous year or are from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or known to child protection. A child is not required to access ESK in the previous year to access the ESK extension grant.

Please indicate below which concession you are eligible for as outlined in the criteria above

Concession: _____

Signature (parent/guardian): _____ Date: _____

Note: invoices, receipts and collection of fees will be in accordance with the Parkdale Preschool *Fees Policy*

ATTACHEMENT 6. ADDITIONAL DAYS – FEES & POLICY

Additional Days - Full Fee Paying (Unfunded) Positions

In 2022, Parkdale Preschool will be offering “Additional Days” – full fee paying (unfunded) positions for existing families with children enrolled in the four-year-old program. Additional Days will be available on a Tuesday and/or Friday, for children enrolled in the Dolphins (Mon/Thurs) group, and on a Monday and/or Thursday for those enrolled in the Sea Stars (Tues/Fri) group. All sessions run for the same duration – 8.30-4pm. No Additional Days are available on a Wednesday, when the Turtles (3-year-olds) are in session, on public holidays or during school term holiday periods.

Applications for Additional Days will open to families at the time of enrolment confirmation. Families may apply for one or two Additional Days.

Where demand for Additional Days exceeds the places available, places will be allocated on the following prioritised criteria:

First, to families who have requested two Additional Days by the due date for applications.

If there are more families requesting two Additional Days than places available, consideration will first be given to families who have served in a volunteer role on the Committee or Subcommittee, with a ballot to be held for remaining places.

Secondly, to families who have requested one Additional Day by the due date for applications.

If there are more families requesting an Additional Day on a specific day than places available, consideration will first be given to families who have served in a volunteer role on the Committee or Subcommittee, with a ballot to be held for remaining places.

Thirdly to families on the Waitlist following first round allocations; and

Finally, and subject to application of the Waitlist, to families requesting one or two Additional Days after the due date, on a first-come-first-allocated basis.

Giving priority to families serving in volunteer roles is consistent with the existing policy in relation to 4-year-old group allocations, and previous policies in relation to 3-year-old enrolments. These priorities are offered as an incentive to families considering nominating for a role on a committee or subcommittee, as it is crucial for the preschool to have sufficient volunteers for those roles.

A waitlist may be established and maintained by the Preschool for Additional Days, with families listed in accordance with the above criteria.

Additional Days will be charged at \$75 per day. Enrolments for Additional Days will be booked and paid for on a term basis, with payment due on the same date as fees for the funded sessions (see Fee Information Schedule for details). Individual invoices will be sent to families including their Additional Days fees for each term. Additional Days will not be charged where the Additional Day falls on a public holiday, or where the preschool is unable to accept the child on the relevant day (due to Coronavirus-related restrictions or a pupil free day). Additional Days will be charged where the child does not attend due to illness, family holiday, or any other reason where the preschool session proceeds as normal.

Families enrolled for Additional Day/s in one term, will be offered priority access to the same Additional Day/s in the following term. Payment of fees for the term will be taken as confirmation of enrolment for Additional Days in that following term. Where fees are unpaid beyond the due date, the enrolment for Additional Days will be taken to have been cancelled, and the Additional Days will become available to be offered to other families.

Enrolments for Additional Days may be cancelled on provision of 2 weeks’ written notice to the preschool, at which time the Additional Days will become available to be offered to other families. Fees paid for unused Additional Days will be refunded to the family cancelling the enrolment.