Payment of Fees Policy

Birra-Li is committed to providing quality education and care to all children at an affordable fee for families. As an approved childcare service, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to reduce fees to eligible families. Our fee structure is based on our ability to provide the requirements of the Education and Care National Law and National Regulations, Family Assistance Law, the Australian Taxation Office and guidelines contained in the Child Care Provider Handbook.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 7: Governance And Leadership		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service that a child is safe
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service that a child is safe
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service

Education and Care Service National Law and National Regulations:

S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
111	Administrative space
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents
184	Storage of records after service approval transferred

Purpose:

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the fee structure, payment requirements and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains the fee payment process and the necessity of

ensuring children's fees are paid on time and the consequences for failing to pay fees on time. Fee levels will be set by the approved provider each year on completion of the annual budget and according to the Service's required income in order to provide a quality education and care Service.

Scope:

This policy applies to families, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

Implementation:

At Birra-Li we aim to ensure families understand the fee schedule and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to meeting our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Child Care Subsidy (CCS) legislative requirements. Our Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure CCS is administered appropriately and receipts and statements are provided to families. Our Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family. We are committed to ensuring that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and practices including those relating to the payment of fees, recognising the importance of continuity of education and care for all children.

The fee structure of the service includes:

Enrolment fee & bond payment:

- An enrolment fee of $300.00 is charged upon confirmation of enrolment. This fee must be paid prior to commencement at the Service. The fee will be credited into family's accounts. **However, the fee is non-refundable if a family changes their mind and no longer wishes to take the position.**

Child Care Subsidy (CCS):

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their MyGov account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment.
- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy. The child must:

- Be a 'Family Tax Benefit child' or 'regular care child' and
- Be 13 or under and not attending secondary school and
- Meet immunisation requirements.

- The person claiming the Child Care Subsidy, or their partner must:
  - Meet residency requirements and
  - Be liable to pay for care provided under a Complying Written Arrangement (their written agreement) with their childcare provider.
  - Childcare must be provided by an approved provider.
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
  - Combined family income.
  - Recognised participation.
  - Type of early learning and childcare Service.
- Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to the Service and this is used to apply a fee reduction (visible on a family's statement).
- Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount- "the gap" amount.
- Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstance to Centrelink (family income, activity levels, relationship changes or any other changes to their circumstances).
- Any disputes with CCS payments are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments.

Payment of Fees

- Fees are to be paid fortnightly via direct bank transfer ensuring your account is maintained two weeks in advance at all times.
- Families will be issued with a *Statement of Account* on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements.
- The *Statement of Account* will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts.
- The *Statement of Account* is generated using our CCS Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

- Fees are payable in advance for every session that a child is enrolled at the Service. This includes sick days, and family holidays but excludes periods when the Service is closed. The Service may be directed to close due to periods of local emergency such as a bushfire, flood or pandemic.
- If a session of care falls on a public holiday, families are required to pay normal fees.
- Fees are charged for full sessions only. (11.25 hours per day).
- Casual days may be offered to families if available.
- If a child is unable to attend the parents/guardian is required to advise the service, fees will still be charged.
- Statements displaying all necessary information, will be available to parents at any time.

Payment for casual days:

- If children are absent from the centre families are able to take on casual days. Families will be charged on a Friday for any additional days for the following week. If the day is no longer needed, families will still need to pay for any additional days they have booked.

Absences from the Service:

- Families are requested to contact the Service if their child is unable to attend.
- Families must still pay fees to the Service if their child is unable to attend.
- Child Care Subsidy allows families 42 absence days per child, per financial year and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances. (See Child Care Subsidy Handbook).
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason, including public holidays and when children are sick.
- Records will be kept by the Service for each absence if necessary.
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via MyGov.
- In a period of local emergency, such as a bushfire or pandemic, and Birra-Li is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families may be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation.
- If the Service is closed for a period of time over Christmas/ New Year, both the public holidays & child's enrolled days will not be charged to the families during that time.

Financial difficulties:

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with the Nominated Supervisor.
- Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink if they are in temporary financial hardship. ACCS provides extra assistance for up to 13 weeks.
- There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:
  - Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)—to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect. The approved provider is involved in determining children who may require additional support who are at risk of harm.
  - Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent)—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment.
  - Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship)—to help families experiencing financial hardship. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment.
  - Additional Child Care Subsidy (transition to work)—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment.

Debt recovery procedure:

- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after three weeks, for which the family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time the Service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements.

Late fees:

- Our Service is not licensed or insured to have children on the premises after hours. This is a breach in the Education and Care Regulations.
- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from the Service. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time.
- Currently, a fee of $1.00 per minute will be incurred by the family.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late.

Change of fees:

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of 4 weeks written notice is given to all families.
- CCS hourly rate caps may be increased by the CPI at the commencement of each financial year, Any CCS hourly rate increases are governed by CCS and are automatically adjusted through our CCS Software.

Termination of enrolment:

- Parents are to provide 4 weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the service or make changes to enrolled days.
- If termination from the Service is required without notification, families may lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in full fees being charged for the four weeks' notice period.
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care.
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law.

Responsibility of management:

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring all families are aware of our *Payment of Fees Policy.*
- Ensuring that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration of all Service decisions and practices.
- Ensuring enrolment information includes the parent/guardian's Customer Reference Number (CRN) and date of birth and the child's CRN and date of birth.
- Providing families with regular statement of fees payable.
- Notifying families of any overdue fees.
- Providing families with reminder letters as required.
- Terminating enrolment of children should fees not be paid.
- Discussing fee payment with families if required.
- Providing at least 4 weeks written notice to families of any fee increases.

Responsibility of families:

- Provide the Service with the correct enrolment details to facilitate the CCS claim, if required, including:
  - Customer Reference Numbers for child and CCS claimant.
  - Date of Birth for child and CCS claimant.
- Ensure payment of fees as per policy.
- Notify Centrelink of any changes that may affect their CCS entitlement.
- Confirm their child's enrolment through the parents MyGov account.

Complaints relating to the administration of Child Care Subsidy:

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.

Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone or email:

Phone: 1800 664 231 Email: tipoffline@dese.gov.au

Continuous improvement:

Our Payment of Fees Policy will be evaluated and reviewed on every 18 months or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy.

Sources:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Payment of service fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the service Policy and procedure guidelines*

Australian Government Department of Education Child care discount for early childhood workforce

Australian Government Department of Education. (2026). Child Care Provider Handbook

Australian Government Department of Education *Early Childhood and Care*

Australian Government Department of Education (2024). *Help in an emergency*

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012

Western Australia Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

Review:

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
July 2026	Changed "*Statement of Entitlement" to "Statement of Account".* Added: public holidays during Christmas break will not be charged to families. Added legislative changes to include paramount consideration.	**July 2027**