



# Payment of Fees Policy

## National Education and Care Regulations

### Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management

168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
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#### PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the service fee structure, ensuring children's fees are paid on time.

#### AIM

To enable our Montessori school to provide high quality early education and care for children we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times.. Prompt payment of fees allows us to plan with certainty. We have a commitment to ensuring our fees are as affordable as possible and to pass on the increase in government funding to families of children who are 4 years of age in their year before school The Farmhouse Montessori School Board determines the financial policies including the annual budgets and fees. They are consistent with, and seek to reinforce the commitment to the full program that parents make when their child commences at the school.

The school finances are administered by the Board who are elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Manly Warringah Montessori Society in March of each year. The Board is assisted by the School Financial Administrator who deals with the day-to-day responsibilities including banking, invoicing, salaries and correspondence. A Registered Company Auditor audits the school accounts annually.

#### GOALS

Our school's financial health will be maximized by:

- To increase the number of 4 year olds attending 600 hours per year.
- Ensuring families are aware of all fees and fee payment requirements upon enrolments
- Keeping fee increases to a minimum
- Ensuring the cost of administering fee collection is minimised
- Following all legal requirements required by our access to government funding
- Managing fee collection to avoid bad debts
- Families are notified as far ahead as possible of any changes to fees or the ways fees will be collected and
- Ensuring fee invoices or statements are issued on a regular basis.

#### SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the service.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

The fee structure of the service includes:

##### Society Fees

An annual membership of the Manly Warringah Society is charged per family unit and confers one vote per family at all general meetings of the Society and the right for either parent to stand for election to the Board. It also gives the family free access to the lending library, regularly information on child development and family relationships, access to workshops and information sessions.

##### Waitlist Application Fee

The application fee is non-refundable. It must be paid before the child can be placed onto the school waitlist.

##### Enrolment Fee

The enrolment fee is non-refundable. It must be paid before the child can begin at the school.

**Term Fees**

- School fees are set so that, together with the government subsidy, they cover the day-to-day running costs of the school. Extra funds for specific items and purposes outside these areas may, however, be required. The School Board reviews fees annually.
- Fees are charged according to age. Cycles are 2 year olds (toddler), 3-6year olds 3 days or 5 day attendance (pre-primary), 4-5 year old 2 day attendance (pre-primary turning 4 before 31<sup>st</sup> July), 6-12 (primary)
- Fees are invoiced for the whole year with relevant due dates. In order to receive discounted fees, full payment must be received by that due date. Periodic payments are available; a written request with payment schedule must be made to the Head of School or the Financial Administrator.

**Payment of fees**

- Payment can be made by
  - Cheque, made payable to the Manly Warringah Montessori Society
  - Direct deposit to the nominated bank.
  - *Credit Card*: an additional credit card fee is also added
- Payments received are credited to the oldest debt first.
- Families will be issued with a fee statement at the beginning of the year and/or on commencement of the student at the school in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements.
- Families will be given reminders of the Term fee due dates two weeks before the date of payment.
- A dishonor fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees.

**Financial Difficulties**

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the Principal. There is a 100.00 fee per child to set up a payment plan.

**Failure to Pay**

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder letter will be issued after one week and then again after two weeks, where the fees are still outstanding the Principal will be advised and a child's position may be terminated if payment has not been made after the three weeks. If applicable the family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time the service will initiate its debt collection procedure.

**Late Fees**

- 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 \$15.00 per 10 minutes block and part thereof.
- 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 four weeks written notice is given to all families. This is determined by the Farmhouse Montessori School Board.

**Termination of Enrolment**

- Parents are to provide one terms written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the Farmhouse Montessori School.

**Responsibility of Management**

- The Financial Administrator is responsible for the billing and chasing of fees.
- Should families wish to discuss fees, they will need to see the Principal.

**Child Care Benefit (This ceases to be available as of 2 July 2018)**

This is an amount given to parents to assist towards their childcare school fees. It is not income tested to receive it but incomes will vary the amount. Families can claim the rebate if either parent is:

- working (including paid full-time, part-time or casual work, self-employment, paid leave, unpaid sick leave, paid or unpaid maternity leave or setting up a business);
- actively looking for paid work
- studying or training
- a person with a disability or
- caring for a child or adult with a disability
- If eligible, families need to register with Centrelink and inform the School Secretary in order to obtain a Child Care Rebate receipt to submit. Due to Centrelink requirements, these receipts can only be issued and submitted at the end of the term rather than when payments are made at the beginning.

**Child Care Cash Rebate Scheme(This does not apply to the Farmhouse Montessori School)**

This is an amount given to parents to assist towards their childcare school fees in Long Day Care Centres. Farmhouse Montessori School parents are unable to receive this benefit. More information can be obtained from your closest Centrelink office.

**Maintenance Levy**

This amount may be paid each term or annually. There is one Maintenance levy per family and this amount will be listed on your annual invoice

**Source**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Quality Standards</li> </ul> |
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<b>Policy Review Date</b>
<b>June 2018</b>