OSHC Fee Policy

Purpose:

This policy applies to all parents/guardians and authorised persons, staff, visitors, volunteers and students working within the service.

Rationale:

Gembrook Primary School aims to protect the safety of children and to protect the custodial rights of families/guardians at all times. The Service will remain free from discrimination to children and families. Equal Opportunity principles will apply subject to the Commonwealth Government 'priority of access' guidelines.

Scope:

The service aims to provide quality care at an affordable price to parents eligible to attend under the 'Priority of Access' guidelines. Fee levels are set by Gembrook Primary School Council according to the service's required income, in order to provide quality care. The service will adopt administration systems that ensure information collected is protected from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification and disclosure. Refer to Council Privacy Policy

Protocol/Procedure:

Gembrook Primary School shall:

• Set fees for the program each year, while taking into consideration:
  . The operational costs of the programs.
  . The fees charged by similar services in the area.
• Review and change the fees during the year if the financial viability of the service is at risk.
• Advise families/guardians of any changes to the program fees at least 28 days prior to the change.
• Provide the fee schedule to families on Enrolment.
• Advise parents that it is their responsibility to communicate with Centrelink in relation to any Child care benefits they may be eligible for. Parents will be informed of the 1/1/2016 ‘No jab, no pay’ legislation affecting childcare benefits.

Accounts

Families shall:

• Ensure they collect their account from the service directly or
• Ensure they supply a correct email address to receive an email account or
• Request OSHC administration staff to mail account to home address.
Gembrook Primary School staff shall:

- Process accounts each Monday to cover the previous weeks care.
- Distribute accounts in a number of ways including via the service the child attends, email or by request to be mailed to the home address.

Payment of Accounts

Gembrook Primary School shall:

- Value the privacy of information and commit to protecting information.
- Take reasonable steps to protect information it holds from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modifications and disclosure.

Families shall:

- Pay weekly, unless an individual payment schedule has been agreed on between families and the OSHC Coordinator.
- Inform OSHC administration staff of any issues with their account.
- Contact the OSHC Coordinator if experiencing financial hardship to discuss their current situation.
- Negotiate payment plans, where fees are paid in instalments, directly with the OSHC Coordinator if facing financial hardship.
- Have access to their account records at an arranged time with the OSHC administration office.
- Make available in writing, particulars of fees or ongoing account issues.

Gembrook Primary School staff shall:

- Issue weekly invoices to families/guardians.
- Bank fee payments at least twice weekly.
- Ensure details of an individual’s account and all completed forms remain confidential and are stored appropriately.
- Make families/guardians aware they are able to set up a direct debit payment method and ensure they understand direct debits will remain current until such time families/guardians request they cease and that they will continue into a new calendar year if the child is re-enrolled.

Methods of Payment:

Gembrook Primary School shall accept the following payment methods:

- In person: at Gembrook Primary School via cash, cheque, EFTPOS (debit only), Visa or Mastercard. In person payment receipts will be available immediately.
- Phone payment: by calling the School Office on 59681313 via Visa or Mastercard only. Phone payment receipts will be posted.
- BPAY by using the family BPay reference number
- Direct Debit payments through Ezidebit as the preferred option.

Gembrook Primary School staff shall:

- Complete a receipt of payment immediately.
- Ensure all information is kept in a safe environment, as per the privacy statement.
Late Payment of Fees

Families shall:

• Understand that their account must be paid upon receipt of an invoice.
• Understand that they will be contacted by OSHC administration if their account is over due
• Understand that if a payment plan is put in place, failure to meet agreed payments will result in a care being cancelled and a final account and letter will be sent requesting payment in full within one week.
• Understand that, at the discretion of the OSHC Coordinator, a $10 administration fee will be added to overdue accounts every five days.
• Understand that continual non-payment will result in the overdue account being sent to Gembrook Primary School OSHC’s debt collection agency for recovery.

Debt recovery

Gembrook Primary School shall:

• Reserve the right to take action to recover debts owing to the service.
• Reserve the right, where a family owes a substantial amount of money to the service, to no longer provide further access to the service until the outstanding account is paid or a payment plan is agreed on.

Refund of Fees

Families shall:

• Understand that if care is paid for more than 2 weeks in advance and ceases care before this time, they may apply for a refund in writing, clearly stating reasons why the child ceased attendance at the service.

Related Policy

References/Legislation

Children's Services Act 1996

• Children's Services Regulations 2009

Department of Education, Employment and workplace relations: www.deewr.gov.au.au

• Family assistance office, 13 61 SO or via the website: www.familyassist.gov.au

Policy History:

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