



## Fees Policy

### **Policy Statement**

The management of childcare fees in Precious Children Daycare 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.

### **Principle**

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.

Parental Fees are set and managed to ensure long-term sustainability and value for money for our clients. Our facilities will constantly assess ways of funding and subsidising childcare places and we are open to other organisations and the social services purchasing or part-purchasing places for parents.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all parents/guardians who use the services of our facilities.

### **Policy & Procedures**

#### **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 day care children and after-school children). There is no exception to this policy.
- 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 Management to be unsafe to open, i.e. extreme staff shortages or severe weather conditions. Full fees will be payable. Refer to 'Exceptional Closure Policy'.

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- Unless otherwise agreed, all fees are payable in full monthly in advance by direct debit or card payment.
- This includes any extra care should this be availed of.
- Your first months' fees must be paid in advance by either bank transfer or a card payment over the phone with our accounts department to allow time to set up the direct debit which will usually commence from a child's second month with us.
- Once the direct debit is set up you will be notified via email of the date this will first present to your account and the date that it will regularly present to your account thereafter. The date for your first direct debit may differ from month to month.
- Depending on the set up date, you will however be notified in advance of this date.
- 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.
- The statement of account that is issued via email will notify you of the amount that is payable to Precious Children day-care for that 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.
- Invoices detail the full charges of your fees on the invoice and do not include any subsidy, grant or funding deductions that may be applicable.
- 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.
- Any payment received at our facilities will automatically be issues at the time of payment a receipt of paid amount including date, person and amounts inclusive of any subsidies allowance.
- Should a child attend for any extra care/time not covered by their standard care booking this will incur an additional charge.
- There is an additional fee for after-school children who wish to attend our service for additional morning care during mid-terms, school holidays and school closed days.



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- 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 Precious Children Daycare are paid in full and on time each week or 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 is payable to Precious Children Daycare whilst any application for a subsidy, grant or funding is being processed and during any time these no longer apply and/or are withdrawn. Please refer to the separate additional subsidy, grant and/or funding policy document issued on the commencement of your child availing of any of these types of funding.

Please see part - Funding, Subsidy and Grants section of this policy document for further information. Further terms and conditions apply when availing of any funding type. Funding, subsidy and/or grant deductions applied to fees may therefore be adjusted from time to time depending on a child's funding approval, absence period, start date, finish date and where a change in care has occurred.

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

If you intend to terminate your child/s care, 1 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 or emailed to the crèche management.

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

Where the required notice period is not received any deposit, monies held on file are forfeit and will be non-refundable.

Any deposits held are at risk of being forfeit if the required notice period is not received.



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### **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 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 2 months' notice (calendar months) 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.

### **Change in Care – Approval Process**

Parent/Guardian must request care change in writing to our facility management team.

On receipt of the request from a Parent/Guardian the care change request is reviewed by the facility 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 change in care occurs the fee, rate charged for the new care arrangement will be as per the current pricing applicable at the time of the change. Where a previous family discount applied this will cease and a discount will only apply where the current requirements and conditions required to avail of a family discount are satisfied. Please see section - Discounts for further information

### **Change in Care – From Pre-School Care to Afterschool Care**

Where a child is commencing primary school in the September following their final Pre-School year:

- Pre-School fees and care will continue to apply for the months of July and August.
- No ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) deductions apply during these months.
- Pre-School care will terminate at the end of August, unless the appropriate notice has been given in line with our termination of care requirements. See part II Termination of Care for further information



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- Where a child enrolls on our Afterschool Programme from the September, the afterschool care and fee rates will apply from September 1st.

Please refer to the After-School Programme Policy for further information.

### **Termination & Billing Agreement**

- A parent/guardian is requested to sign the termination and billing agreement, before their child's enrolment.
- Where the termination and billing agreement is not signed the terms and conditions as set out in this policy document will continue to apply to all enrolments at Precious Children day-care. Childcare.

### **Fee Structure and Opening Fee Structure**

The fee structure, rates and discounts offered, if any, may vary from Facility to Facility.

Unless otherwise stated 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 day care children and after-school children). There is no exception to this policy

### **Facilities Openings**

Our centres open throughout the year with the exception of the following times: Christmas Eve, Good Friday and all Bank Holidays.

Each year, each of our centres may close for up to an additional 3 days over the Christmas holiday period i.e. between the 24th December and 31st December. The actual days over the Christmas period that the facilities will close in addition to Christmas Eve will be notified to parents a minimum of 1 month in advance of these facilities closure days. Our fee structure incorporates these as closed facilities days and therefore no changes/discounts will be applicable to fees due to these closures.

### **Fee Review**

Fees are reviewed periodically by management, to ensure that sustainability, quality, staff costs and overheads are appropriately met.



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Fees are subject to change. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing a minimum of 1 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 1 months' notice in writing and email this notice to that centre manager.

### **Funding, Subsidy and Grant**

**Our services have a Fee Structure with different fees for the three different bands above.**

Please note that where a parent/guardian is availing of any type of funding, subsidy or grant for their child additional rules and policies will apply depending on the type of funding being availed of.

A supplementary policy & guideline document is issued directly to a parent/guardian when their child is availing of a particular government funding scheme. A parent/guardian can also request a copy of this document from the accounts department at any time.

The rules and procedures as set out in these additional and separate funding policy documents will also apply in addition to those already noted in this document.

Any rules and procedures set out by the DCYA (Department of Children and Youth Affairs) in relation to their childcare funding programmes must be complied with to continue to avail of these funding types.

For further information in relation to the rules on the DCYA funding schemes please go to [www.dcy.gov.ie](http://www.dcy.gov.ie)

Full fees without any subsidy, grant or funding deduction is payable to Precious Children Daycare whilst any application for a subsidy, grant or funding is being processed and during any time these no longer apply and/or are withdrawn.

Please refer to the separate additional government subsidy, grant and/or funding policy document issued on the commencement of your child availing of any of these types of funding. Funding, subsidy and/or grant deductions applied to fees may therefore be adjusted from time to time depending on a



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child's funding approval, absence period, start date, finish date and where a change in care has occurred.

Subsidy means the Government will pay the service "a subvention" towards each childcare place, but the amount of this subvention depends on the income and circumstances of the family. In other words, the lower the income (parents on social welfare) the greater the subvention will be. The Government has introduced three income bands as follows:

- Band A- this subvention payment relates to parents who are in receipt of social welfare related payments, on a community scheme, still at school or training.
- Band B- this subvention payment relates to parents who are in receipt of Family Income Supplement (FIS) or certain childcare subsidies such as FAS/VEC schemes.
- Band C- all other parents.

Parents will be asked to register and create any account on GOV.ID. Once registered then they must set up the profile account for their children, and once approved they must give a CHICK account number to the facility that their child is attend. This information is then returned to the service who will then be able to inform the parent what fee they will have to pay. The subvention grant will be paid to the facility of use by Pobal (an agency working on behalf of the Government).

### **Annual Reviewing Fees**

- Fees are reviewed in August of each year.
- Parents/Guardians will be given 4 weeks' notice of an increase in fees.
- Increase in fees each year will be related to the cost of living increases and/or exceptional cost circumstances.

### **Cashless Service**

- By the end of September, all our services and facilities will be operated as a cashless service. Card machines will be installed as, in the interest of safety, we do not wish to have payments on the premises, i.e. fees.
- We will try to assist you in the best possible way.

### **Discounts Available**

- 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 weekly fees only, prior to the deduction of any grant/subsidy.

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- 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.
- Sibling discount applies to two or more siblings attending full day care 5 days per week.
- Sibling discount applies to two or more siblings attending afterschool care 5 days per week.
- A family may be able to avail of a discount in fees if they have siblings in the early years setting. If there are two siblings, the discount is **€6.00**. (This does not include cousins).
- If a family consists of more than two siblings who attend our service, the discount may be greater due to the number of children.
- If a staff member has a family member attending the early years setting, the discount offered will be **15%**.
- 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.

### **Payments in relation to Holiday or Illness of the Child/Children**

- No reduction in fees will be made if children are absent for holidays, illness or other reasons.
- There is no reduction in fees for Public/Bank holidays
- In the case of a long term, medically certified illness of a child, parent/guardians are advised to keep in contact with the centre on a regular basis. In this situation, fees are still payable for the first two weeks. Further arrangements will be discussed with the parent/guardian and the Manager.

### **Late Collection of Child/Children from the Centre**

Parents/Guardians are advised to keep within their agreed times for collection of their child/children. There will be a late fee charge of €8.00. This fee can only be waived by the Manager.

### **Deposit**

The deposit relevant to your child's particular care is required along with a completed application form before a child's place is secured. A portion of the deposit will cover an initial booking administration fee and is non-refundable. The deposit balance will be held onto separately, for the duration of a child's attendance at Precious Children Daycare.





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The deposit amount is reviewed by management regularly and is subject to change.

The deposit will be refunded once the terms of our termination and billing agreement have been met and all balances on your account are paid in full. The deposit will be refunded in the month following a child's finishing date via bank transfer.

### **In the event of the following instances the deposit will be non-refundable:**

- Where a booked place is not taken up and/or is cancelled by you, the deposit will be forfeit and therefore non-refundable.
- Where the terms of the fee policy are not upheld.
- Where the child does not start on the reserved start date (or on the deferred start date where the start date has been deferred by agreement with Precious Children Daycare for a maximum period of up to 6 weeks only).
- Where the notice period required to terminate care is not provided in full.
- Where all balances due on an account are not paid in full. All outstanding fees must be paid in full before a deposit refund is issued. Where a balance is outstanding on the account the deposit monies held on file will be retained to cover this outstanding balance.

### **Non-Payment of Fees Policy**

Non-payment of fees in full will result in the loss of your child's place with Links Childcare. Links Childcare will provide one week's notice in this instance.

Our centre's reserves the right to request Parent/Guardians to withdraw their child/children from the centre if there is non-compliance with the terms of the Parents Fee Agreement Policy & Collection Policy.

Precious Children Daycare will provide one week's notice in this instance.

### **Arrears**

If arrears occur and fees are owed to our setting, we do advise parents to contact a staff member/member of management to discuss and arrange a payment plan.

If the fees are still not paid and the parent/guardian has been approached several times highlighting the arrears, they will then be informed that the child will **NOT** be allowed to enter the premises due to payment not being made.



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### **Additional Care**

At Precious Children Daycare we aim to provide as flexible a service as possible, we understand that schedules can change and at times a parent/guardian of a child enrolled for part time care and/or afterschool care will require additional care in our facilities.

Should additional care be required from time to time for a child in addition to the normal standard care arrangement the centres manager will confirm availability directly with the parent/guardian.

- Additional care will be charged for and included in the next available billing period.

### Precious Children Daycare Policies & Procedures

- 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.
- We do not charge extra care by the half hour. Where a child attends for an extra hour or part thereof a full hour will be charged for.