

### 1. General information

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides funding for each child enrolled and attending kindergarten in the year 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 year before school.

DET also provides funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs.

Summerhill Park Kindergarten 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
- 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](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

### 3. Other charges

Other charges levied by Summerhill Park Kindergarten 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 as part payment on term fees. Families eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see below) are not required to pay the deposit. Families experiencing hardship should discuss any difficulties with the service. Parents/guardians are required to pay a \$100 fee deposit on offer of a place. This payment is retained and deducted from Term 2 fees.
- **Capital Improvement Contribution:** Included in the term fees is a Capital Improvement Contribution of \$25 per family per term. The levy was adopted to fairly share the burden of fundraising between the kindergarten families, guarantee a minimum funding base for each year, and reduce the level of fundraising activity and therefore the workload of the Social Subcommittee during the year.
- **Excursion/service event charge:** At times throughout the year an additional excursion(s) or event(s) may be arranged where it is considered relevant to the service's program and the

children's interests. At this time any additional costs to families are taken into consideration before a decision is made (refer to *Excursions and Service Events Policy*).

- **Refundable levy:** The participation of parents/guardians is encouraged by the service and can help to keep costs more affordable. As not all families are able to assist at the service, a refundable levy system has been introduced to replace volunteering or fundraising activities. Payment will be refunded to parents/guardians on participation in specified activities which may include working bees, maintenance, and gardening etc.. Eligible concession card holders will not be required to pay this levy. The levy is not intended to be a barrier to participation and families experiencing difficulties should discuss this with the service. A levy of \$90 per family per year is included in Term 1 fees charged by Summerhill Park Kindergarten. This levy is refunded to parents/guardians in Term 4 where participation in approved activities has occurred.
- **Non-refundable levy:** This levy is retained by the service and is included in the total fees charged by the service.
- **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. In these situations, the following procedures will apply:
  - The qualified staff member will inform the parents/guardians that if late collection continues the Committee of Management will be notified and the family may be charged a late fee.
  - If after the reminder, the parents/guardians are between 15 and 30 minutes late, a fee of \$2 for every 5 minutes, or part thereof, from the conclusion of the session will be invoiced by the Committee of Management.
  - Where the parent/guardian is over 30 minutes late in collecting their child, a fee of \$5 for every 10 minutes, or part thereof, for the first 30 minutes from the conclusion of the session and then \$7 for every 10 minutes they are late or part thereof after that.

#### **4. Statement of fees and charges**

A statement of fees and charges for four-year-old or three-year-old kindergarten will be provided to families on enrolment.

#### **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.

The Committee of Management will ensure that fundraising income is kept separate from Summerhill Park Kindergarten's operating budget, and that families will be informed of the nature of expenditure of fundraising income.

#### **6. 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 given 28 days' notice in advance of any required fee increase. Parents/guardians will be provided an option of requesting a payment plan.

#### **7. Subsidies**

##### **7.1 Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (four-year-old programs only)**

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*).

Families may be eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy in the year before school if their child::

- is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; or
- holds, or has a parent/guardian who holds a Humanitarian or refugee Visa; or
- is a multiple birth child (triplets or more); or
- • holds, or has a parent who holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card
- Pensioner Concession Card or Veterans' Affairs Card
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Exclusions and exceptions: Not available for long day care services in receipt of Commonwealth Child Care Benefit.

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

## **7.2 Early Start Kindergarten fee subsidy**

Three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children known to Child Protection are eligible to attend a funded early childhood program that is planned and delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher free of charge. The service receives funding for children who meet the eligibility criteria. Contact the service for further information.

## **7.3 Child Care Benefit (CCB)**

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is an Australian Government payment that can assist eligible families with the costs of childcare at an approved or registered care provider. Summerhill Park Kindergarten is a registered care provider with the Family Assistance Office (FAO).

Approved care is childcare that meets certain standards and requirements, and is approved by the Australian Government. Approved care providers must hold a licence to operate, have qualified and trained staff, be open certain hours and meet health, safety and other quality standards. Most long day care, family day care, before-and-after school care, vacation care, some occasional care and some in-home care childcare services are approved providers.

Registered care is childcare provided for work-related purposes, including training and studying, maternity leave, sick leave or voluntary work, and the work-related purpose must have occurred at some time during the week in which the registered care was used. Registered care is provided by individuals registered with the Department of Human Services and may include care given by kindergarten staff.

The amount payable is set by the Australian Government.

## **8. 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.

The annual fee will be invoiced as follows:

- On acceptance of a place, the kindergarten fee deposit invoice will be issued

- Terms 1, 2, 3 and 4 are outlined below.
  1. The kindergarten fee deposit invoice will be sent by mail with the letter of offer.
  2. The fee deposit will be deducted from the second term fees.
  3. Invoice for Term 1 will be sent by email in late Term 4 of the previous year. Term 2, 3 & 4 invoices are issued at the end of the preceding term. Invoices are to be paid in full by the due date.
  4. Families commencing at Summerhill Park Kindergarten at other times will be invoiced with payment terms of two weeks from the commencement date.
  5. All families, including those eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy, will receive an invoice detailing the charges for the period invoiced and the amount owing (if any).
  6. If requested, invoices will be sent by mail to parents/guardians.
  7. All fees will be collected by the Treasurer. The Treasurer will provide account statements to all families detailing payments received.

### **8.1 Method of payment**

Details of payment will be specified on the invoice: payment can be made by cheque or electronic funds transfer. Payments or direct deposit records can be given directly to the Treasurer or placed in the collection box at the kindergarten entrance.

### **8.2 Issue of Statements**

Statements will be as a means of receipt or where accounts remain outstanding.

## **9. Unpaid fees**

Parents/guardians experiencing difficulty in paying fees are requested to contact the Treasurer 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.

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.

The Treasurer, any Committee of Management members and any staff involved will ensure the Privacy policy of Summerhill Park Kindergarten is complied with. Staff may be consulted on a child's attendance rates and any other information required for the Treasurer to fulfil their role.

### **9.1 Debt recovery**

The Committee of Management reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the centre. This can include the engagement of debt collectors. Using a debt collector will be considered as a last resort after attempts to implement other payment procedures have been offered.

Where a family owes a substantial amount of money to the kindergarten, the committee reserves the right to not allow further placements in programs until all outstanding monies are paid, or a payment plan is agreed and adhered to by both parties.

## **10. 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.

1. 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.

## **11. Children turning three during the year of enrolment**

Full payment from the first day of Term 1 is required if a place is to be reserved for a child in the three-year-old kindergarten program. Children can only commence the program when they have turned three.

## **12. 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.



## Statement of Fees and Charges Summerhill Park Kindergarten

### Fee schedule 2019

#### Four-year-old (funded) kindergarten – Blue Group

Hours: 15 hours per week

	<b>Fees (\$)</b>	<b>Capital Improvement Contribution*</b>	<b>Refundable Levy**</b>	<b>Total (\$)</b>
Kindergarten fee deposit	\$100			<b>\$100</b>
Term 1	\$565	Nil	\$100	<b>\$665</b>
Term 2	\$465 <i>(refund of fee deposit applies)</i>	Nil		<b>\$465</b>
Term 3	\$565	Nil		<b>\$565</b>
Term 4	\$565	Nil		<b>\$565</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,260</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$2,360</b>

*\*Payable once per family per term*

*\*\*Payable once per family per year, to be refunded in Term 4 upon participation in approved activity (eg, working bee)*



## Statement of Fees and Charges Summerhill Park Kindergarten

### Fee schedule 2019

#### Four-year-old (funded) kindergarten – Yellow Group

Hours: 15 hours per week

	Fees (\$)	Capital Improvement Contribution*	Refundable Levy**	Total (\$)
Kindergarten fee deposit	\$100			<b>\$100</b>
Term 1	\$625	Nil	\$100	<b>\$725</b>
Term 2	\$525 <i>(refund of fee deposit applies)</i>	Nil		<b>\$525</b>
Term 3	\$625	Nil		<b>\$625</b>
Term 4	\$625	Nil		<b>\$625</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$2,600</b>

*\*Payable once per family per term*

*\*\*Payable once per family per year, to be refunded in Term 4 upon participation in approved activity (eg, working bee)*

#### Payment of fees

Payment of term fees is required prior to the commencement of the term. Invoices will be issued prior the end of the term and must be paid by the due date.

#### Kindergarten fee deposit

Parents/guardians are required to pay a \$100 fee deposit on offer of a place. This payment is retained and deducted from Term 2 fees. Payment will secure the child's place in the four-year-old (funded) kindergarten program.

#### Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

Families who are eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (refer to Fee information for families) will not be required to make fee payments.

**Child Care Benefit (CCB)**

For information on the Child Care Benefit, refer to Fee information for families. (Note: There will be changes to child care assistance from 2 July 2018. More information about the New Child Care Package can be found at: [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au)).

**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 (refer to Fee information for families).



## Statement of Fees and Charges Summerhill Park Kindergarten

### Fee schedule 2019

#### Three-year-old kindergarten – Red Group

Hours: 5 hours per week

	Fees (\$)	Capital Improvement Contribution*	Refundable Levy**	Total (\$)
Kindergarten fee deposit	\$100			\$100
Term 1	\$460	Nil	\$100	\$560
Term 2	\$360 ( <i>Refund of fee deposit applies</i> )	Nil		\$360
Term 3	\$460	Nil		\$460
Term 4	\$460	Nil		\$460
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,840</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$1,940</b>

\*Payable once per family per term

\*\*Payable once per family per year, to be refunded in Term 4 upon participation in approved activity (eg, working bee)

#### Payment of fees

Payment of term fees is required prior to the commencement of the term. Invoices will be issued prior the end of the Term and must be paid by the due date.

#### Kindergarten fee deposit

Parents/guardians are required to pay a \$100 fee deposit on offer of a place. This payment is retained and deducted from Term 2 fees. Payment will secure the child's place in the three-year-old kindergarten program.

#### Early Start Kindergarten fee subsidy

Families who are eligible for the Early Start Kindergarten fee subsidy (refer to Fee information for families) will not be required to make fee payments.

**Child Care Benefit (CCB)**

For information on the Child Care Benefit, refer to Fee information for families. (Note: There will be changes to child care assistance from 2 July 2018. More information about the New Child Care Package can be found at: [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au))

**Children turning three during the year**

Full payment from the first day of Term 1 is required if a place is to be reserved for a child in the three-year-old kindergarten program. Children can only commence the program when they have turned three.

**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 (refer to Fee information for families).