



# Fees Policy

(Updated April 25th, 2020)

'We would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would also like to pay respect to the elders past and present of the Wurundjeri nation'.

## Purpose

This policy will provide clear guidelines for:

- the setting, payment and collection of fees
- ensuring the viability of , by setting appropriate fees and charges
- the equitable and non-discriminatory application of fees across the program provided by

## Policy statement

Maroondah Montessori Preschool is committed to:

- providing responsible financial management of the service, including establishing fees that will result in a financially viable service, while keeping user fees at the lowest possible level
- providing a fair and manageable system for dealing with non-payment and/or inability to pay fees/outstanding debts
- ensuring there are payment plans available to assist families wishing to access a Montessori childhood program for their child/children
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to the financial circumstances of parents/guardians
- advising users of the service about program funding, including government support and fees to be paid by parents/guardians

## Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider/Committee of Management, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators and parents/guardians with an enrolled child, or who wish to enrol a child at Maroondah Montessori Preschool Inc.

## Background and legislation

Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc receives Government funding from the Department of Education for our 4 year old children at a rate of \$600 per child.

Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc relies on fee collection to cover operating costs, including staff wages, rent and all utility costs. As such Parents/Guardians must be aware that Maroondah Montessori Pre-School relies on the prompt payments of fees to be viable. Fees must be paid and the centre has discretion to withdraw service for non-payment. An exemption to fee payment may be considered in exceptional circumstances at the Committee's discretion.

Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc yearly budget is set at the minimum required to meet basic running costs. Any additional required equipment purchases are met through fundraising efforts (currently \$10,000–\$12,000 per annum).

Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc yearly budget is dependent on a minimum of 27 full term fee paying enrolments for all 4 terms of each year to meet operating costs. MMPS is not in a position to offer "pro rata" fee payments, and consequently, the first quarterly instalment becomes due from the first day of term, regardless of the actual starting date of a child.

### **Legislation and standards**

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic), as amended 2011
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic), as amended 2012
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management
- Standard 7.3: Administrative systems enable the effective management of a quality service

### **Definitions**

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider/Committee of Management, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the General Definitions section of this manual.

*Enrolment application fee:* A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service.

*Excursion/service event charge:* An additional charge required to meet the cost of special events or excursions that occur in response to emerging children's program needs. Events that are planned ahead and are included as an expenditure item in the service's budget do not incur this additional charge (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy).

*Fees:* A charge for a place within a program at the service.

*Kindergarten fee bond:* A \$2000 charge to secure a place that has been offered in a program at the service.

*Late collection charge:* A charge that may be imposed by the Approved Provider/Committee of Management when parents/guardians are late to collect their child/children from the program (refer to Attachment 1 – Fee information for families).

*Registered care:* Care provided by nannies, grandparents, relatives or friends, individuals working within kindergartens, occasional care services and outside school hours care services that are registered with the Family Assistance Office. Eligible families can receive some reimbursement of costs when using a registered care provider. Details are available at [www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/](http://www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/)

## **Sources and related policies**

### **Sources**

- Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria: [www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/)
- The constitution of

### **Service policies**

- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Excursions and Service Events Policy
- Inclusion and Equity Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

### **Procedures**

The Approved Provider/Committee of Management is responsible for:

- reviewing the current budget to determine fee income requirements
- developing a fee policy that balances the parent's/guardian's capacity to pay, with providing a high-quality program and maintaining service viability
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the Nominated Supervisor and staff, and in line with the requirements of DEECD's Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria (refer to Sources)
- considering any issues regarding fees for any families enrolled at Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc.
- reviewing the number of families experiencing financial hardship and the effectiveness of the procedures for late payment and support offered
- considering options for payment when affordability is an issue for families
- clearly communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally-sensitive way.

- providing all parents/guardians with a copy of the document containing fee information for families (refer to Attachment 1)
- providing all parents/guardians with a statement of fees and charges (refer to samples in Attachments 2 and 3) upon enrolment of their child, and ensure that the Fees Policy is readily accessible at the service (Regulation 171)
- providing all parents/guardians with a fee payment agreement (refer to samples in Attachments 3 and 4)
- collecting and receipting all fees
- complying with the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees
- notifying parents/guardians within 14 days of any proposed changes to the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected (Regulation 172(2))
- ensuring a notice outlining fees charged by the service is available on the schools website, and any changes made to fees is Emailed to all members.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- assisting the Approved Provider/Committee of Management in developing this policy
- implementing and reviewing this policy, in consultation with parents/guardians, the Approved Provider/Committee of Management and staff, and in line with the requirements of DEECD's Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria (refer to Sources)
- communicating this policy and payment options to families in a culturally-sensitive way and in the family's first language where possible
- complying with the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of fees
- ensuring a notice outlining fees charged by the service is available on the school's website and any changes made are Emailed to all members.

Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:

- informing the Approved Provider/Committee of Management of any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding fees at the service
- referring parents'/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the Approved Provider/Committee of Management

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading the Fee information for families (refer to Attachment 1), the Fee Payment Agreement (refer to Attachments 4 and 5) and the Statement of Fees and Charges (refer to Attachments 2)
- signing and complying with the Fee Payment Agreement (refer to Attachments 4 and 5)
- notifying the Approved Provider/Committee of Management if experiencing difficulties with the payment of fees

## **Evaluation**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider/Committee of Management will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to affordability, flexibility of payment options and procedures for the collection of fees
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- monitor the number of families/children excluded from the service because of their inability to pay fees
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures (Regulation 172(2)).

## **Attachments**

### Attachment 1: Fee information for families

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider/Committee of Management on the 12th May 2013. This policy was reviewed in 2014, 2015 and 2016, 2017, 2019.

Review date: 11/06/2019

### Attachment 2: Fee information for families 2019

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 availability of other income sources, such as fundraising and government funding
- 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

## **Other charges**

Other charges levied by are included on the Statement of Fees and Charges. These include:

- Bond: A payment of \$2000 to secure a place that has been offered in cycle one program at Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc. The bond is returned when the child completes Cycle One, but is otherwise non-refundable.
- Excursion/service event charge: This additional charge is required to cover the cost of excursions or special events that occur throughout the year in response to emerging children's program needs and interests. Affordability and relevance to the children's interests and the service program will be taken into consideration before a decision is made that will require families to pay this additional charge (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy). Events that are planned ahead are included as an expenditure item in the service's budget and do not incur this additional charge.

- Equipment levy: This \$500 levy is retained by the service and is included in the total fees charged by the service. Per child once off for the life of the cycle.
- 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. This charge will be set at a level determined by the Committee of Management
- Gardening fee: \$100 payment to cover the costs of hiring a gardener to care for our school ground (This used to be a working bee service that all parents were required to do)

### **Statement of fees and charges**

A statement of fees and charges for Maroondah Montessori Pre-school Inc. will be provided to families on enrolment.

### **Fundraising**

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.

### **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 quarterly installment must be received in full prior to the child commencing at the service. Receipts will be provided for all fee payments.

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.

### **Unpaid fees**

If fees are not paid by the due date, the following steps will be taken.

- An initial reminder letter, at the discretion of the Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer, 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.
- There will be a 7 days grace period from the date of the initial reminder letter. If the fees have not been paid by the end of the 7 days, a \$50 late fee that will be charged to the account for every week the fees are late thereafter. This also applies to where Payment Plans are in place.

- 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.

### **Notification of fee changes during the year**

Fees set for the year would only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of any required fee increase and will be offered the option to request a payment plan.

### **Kindergarten Fee Subsidy**

As we are an approved provider with the Department of Education, those eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy are welcome to apply to our school Families eligible for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy will receive \$1514 off your \$1690 term fees in the year they are 4 years old only, and there will be a gap that is required to be paid. You will need to pay full fees for all other years your child attends our school. To read more on who is eligible for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy click here:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx>



**Address:**  
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Ringwood East VIC 3135  
Australia

**Postal address:**  
PO Box 110  
Ringwood East VIC 3135  
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**Phone:**  
03 9876 9172  
**Email:**  
info@mmps.vic.edu.au

**Website:**  
<http://mmps.vic.edu.au/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/maroondahmontessori/>



## Attachment 2

### Statement of Fees and Charges

Bond	\$2000
Enrolment application fee	\$100
Cycle one fee plan	\$1690/term payable in advance or under a payment plan
Equipment Levy	\$500 (once off per child on enrolment)
Gardening Levy	\$100 (charged yearly in Term 2)
Late payment fee	\$50
Late collection fee	\$1 per minute
MMPS Association Joining Fee	\$10 one-off payment per family
MMPS Association Annual Membership	\$40 per year per family
MAF Montessori Association Foundation	\$51 per child per year



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<http://mmmps.vic.edu.au/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/maroondahmontessori/>





### Attachment 3

Agreement with Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc.

Maroondah Montessori Pre-School Inc.  
17D Everard Rd  
Ringwood East, Vic 3135

AGREEMENT WITH  
MAROONDAH MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL INC.

Name of Child.....

By signing this form, I/We..... (name/s of  
Parents/Guardians)

- Acknowledge that this centre is a privately operated, independent Pre-School funded by the fees paid by parents, and supplemented by fundraising activities, and minimal government funding. The Pre-School cannot operate without fees paid by parents. The Pre-School cannot operate to its full potential without parents' participation in fundraising activities. The centre aims to raise approximately \$10,000 per annum from fundraising.
- Agree to fully participate in all fundraising activities to the greatest extent possible, acknowledging that this is the only means whereby fees can be kept to a minimum.
- Agree to pay each of the quarterly fee instalments in accordance with invoices issued.
- Agree that if our financial circumstances change and we are unable to pay as agreed, we will immediately notify the Treasurer of the Committee of Management of the centre to request alternative payment arrangements.
- Acknowledge to having received and read the centre's Fee Policy.

- Agree to give the Pre-School a full term's notification in writing of the withdrawal of our child from the centre.
- Acknowledge that we understand that if we withdraw our child from the Pre-School without the required notice, we consequently owe any outstanding quarterly instalment (fees) for that term and the following quarterly instalment for the next term. This will be charged to our account. This also applies to the first quarterly instalment of the subsequent year.
- Acknowledge that if we withdraw our child after accepting a place and before the completion of the cycle one program, we forfeit our bond.
- Agree that as part of the Pre-School's Emergency Management Plan, training drills will occur and that our child will be required to leave the premises under these conditions.
- Agree that during our child's time at the Pre-School, a parent will commit to at least one year on the Committee of Management.
- Agree to participate in Parent Responsibilities, as determined by the number of families enrolled, which include:
  - Laundry
  - Fruit & Dishes Duty
- Acknowledge that some policies will change during the time my child attends Maroondah Montessori Pre-School and that I/we will be duly notified.

**Signed:**.....

**Dated:**.....

**Maroondah Montessori Pre-school Inc**  
**17D Everard Road, Ringwood East,**  
**Victoria, Australia, 3135**  
**ABN: 39 918 313 573**



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