

Lismore South Public School Preschool - Ngulliboo Jarjums

Payment of Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees Charged by the Education and Care Service Procedure



Reviewed: 3rd November 2021 Next review: November 2022

Education and care services regulation/s	NSW Department of Education policy, procedure or guidelines	Preschool DoE Guidelines	School policy or procedure, where applicable
<p>Regulation 168(2)(n) and 172</p>	<p>The following department policies and relevant documents can be accessed from the preschool section of the department's website;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool Class Fees in Government Schools Policy PD/2011/0423/V01 • https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/preschool-class-fees-in-government-schools • Finance in schools handbook (FISH) • Preschool fee schedule 	<p>Fees p. 109</p>	

Preschool Class Fees in Government Schools: -

The 'Preschool Class Fees in Government Schools' policy applies to all NSW Government preschool classes. It outlines the general principles governing the fees processes, information on collecting fees, fee relief and/or exemption.

The NSW Department of Education operates preschool classes in 100 government schools. These classes were established to provide a preschool education for children one year before school entry in areas of disadvantage, with a particular focus on children:

- Living in low socio-economic circumstances;
- Who are refugees or from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- With disabilities;
- Who are Aboriginal.

In line with the Enrolment Procedures Lismore South Public School Preschool – Ngulliboo Jarjums provides priority to the neediest children in the local community who are unable to access other early childhood services.

Fees at Lismore South Public School Preschool – Ngulliboo Jarjums are guided by the following principles;

- In 2021 and 2022 preschool fees will continue to not be charged, as announced by the NSW Education Minister Sarah Mitchell.

- Fees are \$15.00/day or \$7.50/day if the family has a Low Income Health Care card and/or identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Fees are charged should a child attend preschool or be absent.
- For a preschool child covered by a current Health Care card on the first day of each term the school will invoice the whole term at the health care card rate, irrespective of the expiry date. The new card should be presented before the start of the next term.
- Families receive their fee invoice at the middle of each school term.
- No voluntary contributions are requested.
- Families can make a request for fee relief if they are experiencing financial hardship.
- At Lismore South Public School Preschool - Ngulliboo Jarjums, at the discretion of the Principal/Nominated Supervisor, a full fee exemption can be granted where the child would not otherwise be able to attend.
- Fees are not reduced in the case of the absence of a child.
- The payment of fees is legally enforceable. If fees are not paid within one month, families will receive a letter requesting contact be made to set down a payment plan. Follow up letters and contact may need to be made to ensure fees are paid.

PRESCHOOL FEES - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Why do I have to pay preschool fees in a Government (public school) preschool?

Answer: The Government believes that every family should be able to access an affordable, high quality early childhood education for their child.

This policy brings preschools in public schools in line with the wider early childhood sector in NSW where parents pay fees for their children to access a preschool education.

However, the Minister has been very clear that no child will be excluded from preschool in a public school because of the financial circumstances of their family.

Families that can afford to pay will be asked to pay the full preschool fee. There will be different fees in different preschools throughout NSW in recognition of our diverse communities.

Question: How much will I have to pay for preschool fees?

Answer: The government has provided a range of fees for its preschools so that families who are experiencing financial hardship and/or who have a Commonwealth Health Care Card are entitled to fee relief. This means that some families will have a reduced fee and in some circumstances families may not have to pay a fee at all.

Your school principal will have more information about the preschool fees.

It is important that you make a time to have a confidential conversation with your school principal concerning any questions you may have about your eligibility for fee relief, so that an appropriate fee can be charged for your child's attendance at preschool.

Question: What if I can't afford to pay fees?

Answer: Low income families who have a Commonwealth Health Care Card will get fee relief. The new fee structure that has been developed will protect low income and disadvantaged families.

In exceptional circumstances, the school principal will be able to consider a full fee exemption on either a short or long term basis. Parents can be assured that they can discuss issues relating to fees with the principal in absolute confidentiality.

Question: Won't this policy further disadvantage Aboriginal children? What about the Government's commitment to closing the gap between outcomes for Aboriginal children and non-Aboriginal children?

The review into Aboriginal education identified financial considerations and transport as the two biggest barriers to Aboriginal children accessing an early childhood education. Doesn't this policy work against Aboriginal children attending preschool?

Answer: The NSW Government is committed to improving outcomes for Aboriginal people. Accessing a high quality Early Childhood education helps to ensure the best possible start in life. That is why our new policy provides free access to public school preschool classes for Aboriginal children living in our most disadvantaged communities and why all other Aboriginal children are eligible for fee relief.

It is our intention to continue to increase the numbers of Aboriginal children accessing preschool.

Question: When do I have to pay?

Answer: We want to make sure that the payment of fees can be arranged to best suit the circumstances of families and so this will be worked out locally to best fit families with children attending the preschool classes. Your Preschool will advise you about when and how to pay the preschool fees.

Question: Will there be any other compulsory fees?

Answer: No, the preschool classes will not have any other compulsory fees.

Question: Will I be eligible for the Commonwealth Child Care Benefit or the Child Care Tax Rebate for preschool fees in government preschools?

Answer: No, the Commonwealth Child Care Benefit and the Child Care Tax Rebate are only available to services that operate for extended hours (such as long day care) and the Department's Preschool classes operate during school hours and do not provide extended hours.