

FEE INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

1. General information

The Department of Education & Training (DET) provides per capita funding for four year olds, as a contribution towards the cost of operating the preschool. There is no funding for three year olds or for the Early Learners' program. The service itself is responsible for all operational costs. Fees are necessary because there is a shortfall between the level of government funding and the costs of operating a viable preschool.

Parents/guardians need to be aware that the Centre is a non-profit organisation and relies on prompt payment of fees to meet costs. All parents/guardians must pay fees; the Centre has the discretion to withdraw service for non-payment of fees.

2. Procedure for setting fees & advising families

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 operational costs of the programs; the financial viability of the Centre; the affordability to parents/guardians; and the level of government funding provided for the program. The budget and fees are set in October/November each year for the following school / financial year. The current Schedule of Fees is on display at the entrance to each classroom and is available on the website or from the Admin office. After the Committee sets the fees for the following year, the new Schedule of Fees is distributed to families of children commencing or continuing in the program in the following year. Once fees are set for the year, they will only be reviewed and changed if the financial viability of the Centre is at risk.

3. Fees

Registration Fee – A non-refundable fee, currently \$55 (incl GST) but subject to change, charged for the registration of a child on the waiting list for a Preschool Program place and on the waiting list for the Early Learners' Program, if applicable. The registration fee must accompany an Application for Registration. A separate registration fee is payable for each child.

KMC Membership Fee – In the event that a child is offered a place at the Centre at least one parent/guardian of the child must become and remain a member of the Kalker Montessori Centre Ltd while the child is attending. Membership is dependent on the payment of an annual subscription, currently \$27.50 (incl GST) per family, but subject to change. A Membership carries with it certain rights to receive notices and to vote at the AGM.

Holding Fee – Where a child is allocated a 'held place' (refer definitions), a holding fee will be charged to hold a place. The holding fee, currently \$500 for an Early Learner place and for Preschool an amount equal to the current 15 hour unfunded term fee less \$200, must be paid at the time the 'held place' is allocated. When the child's enrolment is confirmed the holding fee will be credited to the Early Learner/Preschool Bond. Refer also 'Cancellation Fee' and 'Withdrawal' below.

Preschool Bond – In the event that a child is offered a Preschool place, a bond must be paid in respect of such child, by the due date as specified in the offer letter. The payment of a bond shall, (subject to there being no family debt, refer below) once the Centre confirms a preschool place, secure the place for the child. The amount of the bond is equal to the current 15 hour unfunded term fee less \$200. Where there are siblings attending concurrently, both children will require a full bond. The bond is held by the Centre, for the duration of the child's preschool education at the Centre. The bond will be offset against the final term tuition fees where the child in respect of whom the bond has been paid has completed the two (or optional three) year preschool program

The offer of a place in the Preschool program is an offer of place for 2 years, with an option, based on the Director's assessment, of a 3rd year. For late offers, the offer of place is from the date advised, until the end of Term 4 in the child's second (or optional third) preschool year. Refer also 'Cancellation Fee' and 'Withdrawal' below.

Early Learner Bond

In the event that a child is offered an Early Learner place, a bond, currently \$500 but subject to change, must be paid by the due date as specified in the offer letter. The payment of a bond shall, (subject to there being no family debt, refer below) once the Centre confirms an Early Learner place, secure the place for the child. The bond is held by the Centre and will be offset against the term four tuition fees where the child in respect of whom the bond has been paid has completed the year in the Early Learner program.

The offer of a place in the Early Learner program is an offer of place from the start of the school year (or later date for late offers) until the end of Term 4 for the EL group. Refer also 'Cancellation Fee' and 'Withdrawal' below.

Building Levy

A levy, associated with maintaining and upgrading of the Centre's buildings, currently \$50 for Early Learners and \$200 for Preschool, but subject to change, must accompany the completed enrolment application forms. The payment of the levy will be processed with the enrolment and once the school year has commenced, is non-refundable.

Term Fees

Term fees are invoiced prior to the start of each term and are due 14 days from the date of invoice. Term fees are payable from the time the child is eligible to commence in the program. Term fees will not be reduced by reason of non-attendance at the Centre from any cause.

Cancellation Fee

A fee charged in the event of cancellation of: (1) a confirmed or held place by written advice received from a parent/guardian, before the start of term 1 in the year of commencement in the program; or (2) a held place cancelled by the Centre as the parent/guardian has not provided an updated Immunisation History Statement as required (refer Enrolment & Orientation Policy). The fee charged is: - Early Learners' place - \$300 (incl. GST); Preschool program place - \$1,000 (incl. GST).

Written notification of a cancellation of a held or confirmed place, which is received after the start of Term 1 in the year the child commences in the program, will be regarded as a withdrawal. (See 'Withdrawal' below.)

Late Collection Fee

As set out in the Delivery & Collection of Children policy, a Late Collection Fee may be applied when a child is collected late on a number of occasions. The fee calculation is: the child is collected 10 minutes or more after the program finishes, a fee of \$100.00 will be imposed immediately with an additional \$10.00 for every minute.

Late Payment Fee

A Late Payment Fee of \$50 will be charged as per point 11. Late Payment of Fees Procedure, step 2 below.

4. Withdrawal – Notice Required & Forfeiture of Bond

Cancellation of a confirmed or held place: (a) after the start of term 1 in the year of commencement in the program; or (b) where a parent has advised their child will undertake an optional 3rd year of preschool, after the start of term 1 in that 3rd year.

At least one full term's notice in writing to the Business Manager must be given before any child is withdrawn from a program. Where such notice is not provided, one term's fees will be charged in lieu of notice. A 'full term' is from the first attendance day to the last attendance day for the particular term, as designated by the Department of Education & Training Victoria.

If a preschool child is withdrawn from the program prematurely, that is, after the start of term 1 in the year the child is due to commence in the program and prior to the completion of the two years (or three years, if the child has commenced this optional third year), the **bond monies will not** be returned.

If an Early Learners' child is withdrawn from the program after the start of term 1 in the year the child is due to commence in the program and prior to the completion of term 4, the **bond monies will not** be returned.

5. KMC Limited by Guarantee

The Kalker Montessori Centre is a company limited by guarantee. Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, each member undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of the same being wound up during the time that he/she is a member or **within one year after he/she ceases to be a member** such amount as may be required not exceeding \$50.00.

6. Payment of Accounts

Fees will be invoiced to families directly prior to the commencement of each term, giving 14 days for payment. Fees must be paid by the date indicated on the invoice. If parents/guardians are experiencing financial hardship, they should contact the Business Manager to discuss payment options.

Payments can be made by either: cheque, made payable to the Kalker Montessori Centre Ltd, direct deposit to the Centre's bank account; EFTPOS – cheque or savings account; credit card – Mastercard or VISA; or by cash. The completed payment slip, with the cheque attached if applicable, should be either: handed to the Business Manager; left in the locked letter box at the main gate of the Centre; or posted to the Centre. Cash payments must accompany the payment slip and can only be accepted by administrative staff.

7. 5% Discount

A 5% discount on the full year's Term Fees (not including the KMC membership) is available when the total amount of whole year's fees is paid by the due date for Term 1 fees.

8. Kindergarten 4 Year Old Per Capita Funding

The Government provides funding for children in the year before they commence school. The funding is a contribution towards meeting the cost of the kindergarten program. Each child can only be funded for 1 kindergarten place at 1 service. Parents will be asked to sign a form confirming that their child will receive the funding for their KMC preschool program. The funding is claimed by KMC and offset against the child's term fees.

9. Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for Funded Kindergarten

Families with children attending a funded kindergarten program, i.e. the 2nd or 3rd year of preschool, may be eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) provided by DET. The subsidy will be deducted from the term's fee. 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 KFS if their child:

- is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; or
- holds or has a parent who holds a Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; Veteran's Affairs Card; or
- is a multiple birth child (triplets or more); or
- holds, or has a parent/guardian who holds a Humanitarian or refugee Visa.

To obtain the reduction, the relevant, current card or Visa must be sighted by the Business Manager prior to the start of each term (refer Attachment 5).

10. Early Start Kindergarten Grants

Funding is available for three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children known to Child Protection to assist them to attend a funded early childhood program in the two years before school. The Centre receives funding for children who meet the eligibility criteria. Contact the Centre for further information.

11. Fee Payment Agreement Form

All families must complete and sign a Fee Payment Agreement form when accepting an offer of place.

12. Late Payment of Fees Procedure

If fees are not paid by the due date, the Business Manager will:

- Step 1 Issue a reminder notice, giving 5 working days for payment & advising that if the fees are not paid by this date a late payment fee of \$50.00 will be implemented. The notice will advise the parents to contact the Business Manager if they are having difficulty paying the fees, in order to arrange a payment plan.
- Step 2 If payment has not been received, or an agreed payment plan implemented, within the 5 working days, the Business Manager will add the late payment fee to the invoice and issue a final demand for full payment within 5 working days, including notification that if full payment is not made there will no longer be a place available at the Centre for the child. If the payment is not received by the due date on the final notice the case will be referred to the Committee for their approval to withdraw the place.

If a family receives two final demands for fees, the Committee may decide to advise that all future payments must be made by the original due date or the child's place will be cancelled from that due date.

The Committee reserves the right to take action to recover debts owing to the Centre, this can include the engagement of debt collectors. Any charges incurred in this process will be passed on to the parent/guardian.

Where a family owes any amount of money to the Centre, no further placements in a program will be provided to any child in the family, until all outstanding monies are paid or a payment plan signed by both the parents/guardians and the Centre is implemented. (Refer to Registration & Enrolment Information for Parents).

13. Refund of Fees

Fees are not refundable under any circumstances including, a child's absence for any reason, public holidays, closure of the service for staff training days or due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances, etc.

14. Confidentiality

The *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* of the service will be complied with at all times in relation to a family's financial/personal circumstances.