

Fees and Finance Policy

Reason for the Policy: MI Kids will ensure that information about any fees charged by the service is provided to parents in a written form and will promote financial viability and enhanced outcomes for children, whānau / families and Home Kaiako by establishing an effective financial system.

Background Information:

Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, regulation 47

Licensing Criteria for Home-based Education and Care Services, criterion GMA 2

Early Childhood Education Funding Handbook, last updated on 20 June 2024

Section 10 and 19 of the Education and Training Act 2020

Objectives:

- To ensure enough cash flow to meet strategic and organizational objectives and to provide excellence in providing a comprehensive service to all our learning community.
- To ensure Ministry of Education reporting requirements are met;
- To ensure that the schedule for fees and the system for paying fees is transparent and easily understood.
- To ensure that parents are updated with information prior to any change in the educator's fees.
- To ensure that a high standards of quality care and education is provided at the service, and it is important for this that the fees to be paid by the parents in full and on time.
- To support high aspirations for every learner by partnering with their whānau and communities to design and deliver education that responds to their needs, and sustains their identities, languages and cultures (NELP, Priority 2)
- MI Kids will provide 20 hours ECE free of charge. Our Home Kaiako may require payments from parents to 'top up' the amount of 20 Hours ECE funding pass-through from MI Kids service provider to match their hourly fees for hours outside of 20 Hours ECE. In choosing some additional options extra charges may be incurred.
- MI kids will keep the records of fees, donations, optional charges and home-based educator top up payments charged to parents.
- MI Kids will employ a coordinator who will not be working as a person responsible in more than one service at a time, and in no more than two licensed services in any month.

Company's Financial Livelihood and Auditing

ML Kids receives Government funding for children attending our service. The use of bulk funding is audited by an independent audit firm and reported to the Ministry of Education by the 30th of June every year. The amount and details of the funding

expenditure is available to all stakeholders (staff and parents). Additional audits are undertaken directly by the Ministry of Education when required.

Procedure:

- MI Kids service will provide information about amount and details of Ministry funding to parents by sending them an email with an annual report on a regular basis.
- A fees schedule is given to parents and caregivers at the time of enrolment.
- The invoices are sent from Home Kaiako to the parents/caregivers and the office will have a copy.
- Whanau/families are notified about changes to the fees schedule at least 4 weeks in advance through newsletters and/or email.
- At MI Kids, our Home Kaiako receive all fees directly from parents (minus any WINZ childcare or ECE subsidies which are administered by MI Kids and paid directly to the Home Kaiako).
- An enrolment fee of \$25 is payable to MI Kids at the time of enrolment, as per current Fees Schedule. This is a one-off fee and is non-refundable.
- Home Kaiako set their own hourly rate per child, between the current minimum and maximum price per hour, suggested in the current service's Fees Schedule. This will be discussed when parents first meet with Home Kaiako.
- Home Kaiako may decide to charge reasonable waiting list fees for children who will be using 20 Hours ECE at MI Kids service. These fees must apply to all children, not just those receiving 20 Hours ECE. These fees do not prevent children from accessing 20 Hours ECE. These fees will be refunded by Home Kaiako, if the enrolment place for a child is not available in the required time.
- Home Kaiako may decide at their discretion to offer a family a fee reduction when more than one child from the same family attends (as per the Fees Schedule).
- Our service offers Free ECE Hours (for all children three-year-old and over) in line with the MOE stipulations;
- We will ensure parents do not pay a compulsory fee for hours covered by 20 Hours ECE to the educators. However, our Home Kaiako will charge parents a top-up payment for the children, who receives 20 hours of care free of charge, when a portion of the 20 Hours ECE funding 'passed through' to the educator by MI Kids is lower than the Home Kaiako's regular hourly fee. The top-up payment must be no more than the difference between the educator's hourly fee for hours outside of 20 Hours ECE and the service provider's pass through.
- Records of the agreement to the educator's top up payments will be part of the Enrolment Agreement Form. Parents will agree to this top-up payment as a condition of enrolment. Once agreed to, the payment is enforceable as a compulsory payment.
- Parents who are eligible for MSD's childcare subsidy or guaranteed childcare assistance payment (GCAP) can use these subsidies to pay for home-based educator top up payments. MSD pays these subsidies to the service provider (not the parent), and they must be passed on in full to the educator.
- Our Home- based Educators' Standard Fees include aspects of provision that are required by regulation and additionally, all meals & snacks. Extra charge for

aspects of education and care, which can be separated out and measured (optional charges) might be required by Home Kaiako. There may be an additional charge for any extra services or items (specific teaching resources such as a dance or music teacher, clothing items such as sun hats; nappies, special diet food products, etc.), required by parents, if they agreed so with their Home Kaiako and have chosen these options in their child's Enrolment form.

- Either MIKids or parents may review their decisions regarding optional charges and initiate a change to the agreement at any time. Any change to agreements on optional charges will be recorded as a change to the enrolment agreement.
- Costs for Special Outings & Excursions will be advised as they occur. These fees can be paid separately directly to Home Kaiako in advance of the trip (Optional Charges).
- We ask the parents to pay for two weeks in advance upon enrolment.
- If an account falls, our Home Kaiako cannot accept the child. The management of Multilingual Kids requires the parents to either bring the account up to date, or discuss a payment plan with the Home Kaiako. If it does not happen, or if the payment plan is not strictly adhered to, the child will not be allowed to attend the service. Once the account is brought up to date, the child may re-enrol if there is a space available.
- There is no charge for 'settling-in' visits. However, accordingly to the requirements of Licensing Criteria for Home-based ECE Services, parents should stay with their children during these visits.
- Parents/caregivers who are eligible for and receive a childcare subsidy are still responsible to ensure that their account is paid in advance at all times and any part which is not covered by WINZ subsidy. They are responsible to let Work and Income know of any changes to circumstances or their child's attendance and of any benefits they have through the 20 hours ECE scheme.
- If the child attended extra hours, these hours will be calculated based on an hourly rate according to the Fee Schedule and added to the nearest invoice.
- If a child has been collected after her enrolment time for a half of the days that she enrolled with MI Kids, parents will be advised to review their child's enrolment hours and to fill the Change of Enrolment form.
- A late pick up fee may be charged by Home Kaiako, should child be collected late after the 6:00 pm closing time.
- Fees are to be paid for all enrolled hours irrespective of attendance due to health, personal or the other reasons. Our Home Kaiako will still charge fees if a child is away for long planned absences, e.g. vacations etc. Parents will pay 100% of our weekly fee for the first week of absence, then 50% of our weekly fee for the following weeks. However, it will be up to the discretion of the educator. If parents intend to go on holiday, they are required to advise their Home Kaiako of this in writing 2 weeks before the first day of the holiday. Parents need to discuss any absences for more than 3 weeks directly with the service provider. This rule will apply to top-up payments that compensate for the difference between the usual cost of the Home Kaiako services and the 20 hours ECE payments.
- If our Home Kaiako is sick or absent, we will try to find an alternative Home Kaiako. Parents will not be charged, if we will not be able to find the alternative care options.
- If the parents decide to withdraw from the service, we required at a two- weeks written notice in advance (e.g. via a note, e-mail, text message). This will mean that the parents have to pay for the last two weeks even if the child does not attend.

- If the child is away for more than three weeks, we cancel the enrolment.
- If the booking falls on Statutory Holidays, we do not charge for these days as we are officially closed.
- There is no charge for if the service has an Emergency Closure, forced by a disease outbreak, inability to house children, if the building is damaged or threatened by fire or flood, if there is a death or serious incident on site, etc. However, ML Kids may review this requirement depending on the situation and accordingly to the current Ministry of Education guidelines.
- Payment options can be internet banking, automatic payment, cash or cheque.
- If a child attending a service is from a family with separated parents, we will give all parents and guardians access to any official records held at the service related to their child's participation in that service, unless a court order rules otherwise and this is recorded in the child's enrolment form.
- For Home Kaiako offering out-of-school care, the ML Kids will ask them for a copy of separate written notice given to parents of each child attending this home that has been signed by the parent. The conditions of enrolment should comply with the requirements of the service's Out-of-School Policy. Any charges for out-of-school care should be negotiated between a parent and an educator.

PAYMENT OF INVOICES

- All parents/caregivers are responsible for paying their accounts to their Home Kaiako regularly, as Educators rely on prompt payment of fees to meet their costs.
- Early/late fees should be discussed directly with Home Kaiako.
- Failure to pay fees may result in a cancellation of your enrolment.

Fee Debate

Any issues arisen must be resolved directly with Home Kaiako - Educator/s demonstrating mutual respect and fairness. ML Kids will mediate between parents and Home Kaiako if necessary, in accordance with ML Kids' Fees and Finance Policy.

Related Policies and Procedural Documents:

Communication and Consultation Policy; Fees Schedule; Child's Enrolment Form; Out-of-School Policy

Written In accordance with ECE Funding Handbook