

Fee Information for Families – 2019

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.

Mt Martha Preschool 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

Once fees are set for the year, they will only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if enrolments drop and the service is at risk of not being able to meet its expenses.

3. Other Charges

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

- **Activities/Equipment Levy**

There is a levy of \$30 per term which contributes towards improving our kindergarten and reduces the pressure on families to participate in major fundraising activities during the year. Not all service costs are covered by DET per capita funding and the fees charged. This levy aims to cover those outstanding

costs and/or pay for additional items for the service. The levy is retained by the service and is included in the total fees charged by the service.

A portion of this levy will also be used for a major incursion or excursion. Parents will have an opportunity to vote from a list of options providing a direct benefit from this levy to your children.

- **Optional Building Levy:** A one-off payment of \$30 towards building maintenance and upkeep is optional for families. This contribution helps the preschool to provide important maintenance and improvements required to ensure our wonderful facility is preserved for our children and for generations to come. **This payment is fully tax deductible.**
- **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*).
- **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 fee will be calculated at \$15.00 every 15 minutes, starting 5 minutes after collection time.

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

The Activities/Equipment levy eliminates the need for any major fundraising activities. Events/activities where the primary objective is social and/or related to children's activities may still be run throughout the year.

6. Subsidies

6.1 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 Veteran's Affairs Card.
- 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.

In 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.

6.2 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. 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.

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

8. Unpaid fees

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.
- No further enrolments of children from the parents/guardians will be accepted until all outstanding fees have been paid.

9. 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.

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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. 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 notified one term in advance of any required fee increase and will be offered the option to request a payment plan.



Statement of Fees and Charges – 2019

Mt Martha Preschool
Fee schedule 2019
Four-year-old (funded) kindergarten

Hours: 15 hours per week

	Fees (\$)	Activities/ Equipment Levy (\$)	Total (\$)	Families eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy		
				Fees (\$)	Activities/ Equipment Levy (\$)	Total (\$)
Term 1	\$440	\$30	\$470	\$60	\$30	\$90
Term 2	\$440	\$30	\$470	\$60	\$30	\$90
Term 3	\$440	\$30	\$470	\$60	\$30	\$90
Term 4	\$440	\$30	\$470	\$60	\$30	\$90
Total	\$1760	\$120	\$1880	\$240	\$120	\$360

Payment of fees

Invoices will be **issued prior to each term** and must be paid by the due date.

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*).

I/we acknowledge that the four-year-old program is a service which is partly funded by the State Government, with the balance of funds coming from fees. The Preschool is unable to operate without fee payment.

I/we agree to pay fees of \$1880 per year for the agreed 15 hours of Preschool each week, subject to the Preschool's policies and State Government regulations, by the due date on the invoice.

I/we agree that the fees are not refundable.

- I/we acknowledge that if fees are not paid by the due date, the Committee of Management will implement the late payment of fees procedures, as outlined in the *Fee Information for Families*, which could result in the withdrawal of my/our child's place at the service and no further enrolments until the outstanding fees are paid.

I/we agree that if our financial circumstances change and I/we are unable to pay as agreed, we will immediately notify the Administration Assistant to request alternative payment arrangements.

- I/we acknowledge that I/we have received and read the service's *Fee Information for Families*, which outlines the procedure for payment of fees.

I/we agree to provide two weeks-notice when cancelling enrolment.

I/we agree to collect or make arrangements for the collection of our preschool child if he/she becomes unwell at the Centre.

I/we acknowledge that a Late Collection Fee will be applied to non-emergency situations where I/we are late to collect our child. This fee will be calculated at \$15.00 every 15 minutes, starting 5 minutes after collection time.

I/we consent to the staff of Mt Martha Preschool seeking or where appropriate, administering such emergency medical treatment as is reasonable necessary and agree to reimburse expenses incurred by the Preschool.

I/we agree for my child to be transported by an Ambulance where it is deemed necessary and will be responsible for all charges.

I/we agree to abide by the Mt Martha Preschool policies and procedures as set out in the Information Booklet and website.

Declaration of Information

I/we declare that the enrolment information provided is complete and correct and that I/we understand the information as outlined above.

Signature (parent/guardian)_____ Date_____