

Friday 24 April, 2020

Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Firstly I would like to thank each and every family as we have been working our way through the uncharted waters of Covid- 19, the Australian Government Childcare Relief Package and the JobKeeper package.

This has been a challenging time for all and I am very proud of how we have managed to work with our families and employees during the past few weeks and also being mindful of how children are feeling right now. Not only can the children hear what is going on around them, they can also feel the uncertainty and the key is to ensure they feel comfortable and loved.

I'm also grateful to the vast majority of families who have supported and followed the Australian Government recommendations to stay in isolation and have remained at home rather than attending the childcare centre, as you are contributing to keeping all of the children and our early learning centres and community safe. Please note that all existing enrolments, even if you are not currently physically attending the service, are being honoured. It has been wonderful to have the support and positive feedback that we have been receiving from families as well as your continual understanding and patience.

With the recent introduction of the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package by the Australian Government there has been a significant increase in the number of enquiries from families seeking to return to care or requesting additional days, unfortunately the message of free childcare to families was not clearly articulated to families from the Prime Minister Scott Morrison and how the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package and the JobKeeper Package were to work together in conjunction.

With this in mind to ensure the safety of the children and employees we have been required to manage the physical attendance of the children at each service in line with the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package and the Australian JobKeeper package.



This week the Busy Bees and Bliss Enrolment team have commenced communicating to our high priority families of *essential workers and disadvantaged and vulnerable children* to recommence care where vacancies allowed us to do so. Please note that not all requests can or will be able to be granted. The Enrolment Team will continue to work on the applications received to date and we ask for your continual support, patience and respect with our team members as we progress through these taking into account all families individual circumstances and the priority to *essential workers and disadvantaged and vulnerable children*.

We ask if you have emailed your application to the Enrolment Team that you do not email again as this will continue to delay the application, review and approval process.

We shall provide families with additional updates next Friday 1st May, 2020, please enjoy time with your family over the weekend and we are looking forward to continually working with you.

Warm Regards

Robert Hughes
Chief Executive Officer

Frequently Asked Questionsa

Q. If I have my booking on pause to the 17 May or 28 June, do I have a secure booking from the 29 June 2020?

A. Yes. You who have supported and followed the Australian Government recommendations to stay in isolation and have remained at home rather than attending the childcare centre, and you are contributing to keeping all of the children and our early learning centres and community safe. Please note that all existing enrolments, even if you are not currently physically attending the service, are being honoured.

Q. Why are other childcare services allowing all children to return to care out of isolation?

A. We have strategically managed the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package and the JobKeeper Package to ensure that we have viable centres and a business post Covid-19 and are unable to comment on how other providers are managing the Australian Government requirements and business disciplines.

Q. Do I need to pay fees?

A. If there is a debt on your account prior to the 22 March, 2020 this outstanding fee is to be paid via direct debit. No fees are being charged to families accounts from the 6 April to 28 June 2020 as per the conditions placed on operators by the Childcare Relief Package.

Q. Can I pay additional money to request to increase my child(s) bookings?

A. No, the Busy Bees and Bliss Enrolment team have commenced communicating to our high priority families of **essential workers and disadvantaged and vulnerable children** and the business as set out by the Australian Government is not compelled to accept any new enrolments or increase bookings where parents request these. Under the conditions of the Childcare Relief Package operators are not allowed to charge parents any fees.

Q. If I my child is physically attending care and a family that is deemed an **essential worker, or disadvantaged or vulnerable** requires a place, could I be asked to move my days or provide my days to this family?

A. Yes. The Service Manager may need to work with the Enrolment Team and both families following the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment Priority of Access Guidelines for Child Care Services. We ask the family that is not an essential worker, or disadvantaged or vulnerable to work respectfully with us to accommodate the family who falls in these categories.

Thank you.