PUKETE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

TE WHARE TAKIWA O PUKETE

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Important Changes to OSCAR Payments and Invoicing

Kia ora whānau,

We are writing to let you know about some upcoming changes to the way we invoice and receive payments for our OSCAR programmes.

These changes are part of a wider review of our systems and processes to ensure they are efficient, sustainable, and allow our team to spend as much time as possible doing what matters most, supporting and caring for your tamariki.

Some of these changes will come into effect from **Monday 20 July 2026**, at the beginning of Term Three. While these changes are important for the long-term sustainability of our programmes, we also recognise that any change can take time to adjust to.

We recognise that moving from paying after care has been provided to paying in advance is the most significant change for many families. We appreciate this may require some adjustment, and our team is committed to making the transition as smooth as possible. If you have any concerns or questions, we encourage you to speak with us before these changes take effect.

We are committed to working alongside our whānau throughout this transition and providing support wherever it is needed.

What is changing?

Cash payments - From **Monday 20 July 2026**, we will no longer accept cash payments for OSCAR programme fees.

EFTPOS payments - Over time, EFTPOS payments will also be phased out, with online payment methods becoming our primary way of receiving payments.

We appreciate that this may not suit every family. If these changes will create difficulties for you, please get in touch so we can discuss your individual circumstances.

Weekly invoicing in advance
From **Monday 20 July 2026**:

- All bookings will be invoiced **weekly and in advance**.
- Fortnightly and monthly invoicing options will no longer be available.
- Invoices will no longer be issued in arrears.
- For example, an invoice issued on the Monday of Week One will cover care for Week Two.
- The first invoice for any new booking will be generated immediately when the booking is confirmed.

We believe this approach provides greater consistency for families, helps keep accounts up to date, and significantly reduces the amount of time our team spends managing administration. It also aligns more closely with standard practice across the OSCAR sector.

Direct Debit
Looking ahead, Direct Debit will become our preferred payment method.

We do not yet have a confirmed implementation date, but we wanted to give families plenty of notice. Further information will be provided well in advance of this change.

Why are we making these changes?
As a charitable, not-for-profit organisation, we work hard to keep our programmes affordable while continuing to provide safe, high-quality care and experiences for children.

Like many community organisations, we continue to face increasing operating costs. While recent fee adjustments have helped, we know that increasing fees alone is not a sustainable solution. We also need to ensure the systems behind our programmes are efficient and financially sustainable.

Our current payment processes require significant administrative time, particularly when following up overdue accounts. Over time, the level of unpaid programme fees has continued to grow, with outstanding accounts now totalling approximately $30,000.

For a charitable organisation of our size, this represents a significant amount of funding that would otherwise be available to support our programmes, our staff, and ultimately the children and families we serve. While we understand that families can experience genuine financial hardship, carrying this level of unpaid fees is simply not sustainable in the long term.

By introducing these changes, we will reduce administration costs, improve cash flow, and ensure more of our time and resources can be focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for children and families.

If you need support
We understand that every family's circumstances are different.

If you currently have an outstanding balance, or if these changes will create financial difficulty for your household, we encourage you to contact our Finance and Accounts team as early as possible. We are committed to working with families wherever we can, and if a payment arrangement is needed, we would much rather have that conversation than see financial pressures continue to build.

Please contact:
Zoe Ooi, Finance Manager, zoe@pukete.org.nz ,or
Angela Torr, Finance & Accounts Administrator, angela@pukete.org.nz

They will be happy to discuss your account confidentially and work with you to find a suitable solution.

We expect there may be a few teething issues as we introduce these new processes, and we appreciate your patience and understanding while we work through them together. Our team is ready to assist, answer questions, and resolve any issues as they arise.

We recognise that these changes may require some adjustment for many of our families. Thank you in advance for your understanding, your cooperation, and the trust you continue to place in us. Every decision we make is with the long-term sustainability of our programmes in mind, so that we can continue providing high-quality care and support for children and families for many years to come.

Thank you for your continued support of Pukete and for the trust you place in us to care for your tamariki. We genuinely value the partnership we have with our whānau and look forward to continuing to provide a positive, supportive environment for your children.

Ngā mihi nui,

Scott Tiffany
General Manager

Sent on behalf of
Sarah Gibb
Chairperson