Educator Information Kit

HOME BASED CHILDCARE

Introduction.
This handbook introduces you to Family Day Care. We hope we can help you decide whether or not being an educator is a suitable occupation for you. Please contact Far North Coast Family Day Care (hereinafter referred to as "Far North Coast FDC") Co-ordination Unit for further information.

What is Family Day Care?
Family Day Care is a childcare service where children are cared for in small family groups in the homes of registered educators. These educators are supervised, supported and encouraged by a team of qualified staff employed by Far North Coast FDC.

Family Day Care allows for flexibility of hours and location. Family Day Care can cater for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers as well as older children before and after school or pre-school, in an environment similar to which they are accustomed at home.

The Co-ordination Unit provides support and guidance to Family Day Care educators to help them provide quality childcare at home. Educators are not employed by the scheme, they are self-employed.

Our Vision aims to support, empower and respect all families, educators, staff and management committee, promoting partnerships to provide quality care for our children – our future.

PHILOSOPHY

Far North Coast Family Day Care represents the true essence of Quality Home Based Education and Care. Our qualified Educators believe in a nurturing, natural home environment to foster a warm and caring relationship within an intimate small group. Far North Coast Family Day Care is not only the right choice it's the first choice.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and we embrace our responsibility to develop an awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture by embedding Aboriginal perspectives into our pedagogy.

We value the importance of quality education and care. Through child centred play based learning programs we promote each child's sense of Belonging, Being and Becoming.

We advocate for the rights of the child by valuing children's voices and seeing them as capable involved learners. In doing so, we foster their curiosity and their sense of agency.

We recognise the Importance of respectful collaborative partnerships and connections between all stakeholders within our service and the wider community in providing quality outcomes for each child.

We are committed to being actively involved in continuous improvement through critical reflection. We scaffold our professional pedagogy with the National Quality Framework, The Early Years Learning Framework and My Time Our Place.

We accept that we have a responsibility to educate all stakeholders regarding environmental sustainability and the importance of lessening our carbon footprint.

(Updated February 2020)

Aims of the Service.
Family Day Care aims to provide childcare of the highest quality which allows every child to grow and develop to their fullest potential within a safe and secure family environment.

Licence.
The NSW Department of Education and Communities regulates the operation of Far North Coast FDC. The
Scheme is licensed under the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2019.

The regulations set out minimum standards under which educators and schemes must operate. Prior to starting as an Educator you will be given a copy of these Regulations, they will be explained and you will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Guidelines and Procedures have also been developed to assist educators to understand their responsibilities under the Regulations and ensure compliance.

National Quality Framework.
On 1 January 2012, the National Quality Framework was established and applies to long day care, family day care, preschool (or kindergarten) and outside school hours care services. The National Quality Framework aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services through:

- a national legislative framework
- a National Quality Standard
- a national quality rating and assessment process
- a new national body called the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

The National legislative framework is established through an applied laws system and consists of:

- the Education and Care Services National Law
- the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

A Regulatory Authority in each state and territory will be primarily responsible for administering the National Quality Framework, including approving, monitoring and quality assessing services. It will be the first point of contact for services.

National Quality Standard.
The National Quality Standard sets a new national benchmark for the quality of education and care services. The National Quality Standard is divided into seven Quality Areas:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and leadership.

The National Quality Standard aims to promote:

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children
- A focus on achieving outcomes for children through high-quality educational programs
- Families' understanding of what distinguishes a quality service.

National Quality Rating and Assessment Process.
Approved services will be assessed and rated against each of the seven Quality Areas of the National Quality Standard and the National Regulations.

What is expected of Educators?
To comply with all legal requirements including:

- Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2019.
- National Quality Standards
- The scheme's funding agreement with the Federal Government
- The scheme agreement, policy guidelines and procedures

To ensure the well-being of children in care by:

- Maintaining a healthy, safe, stable and stimulating environment
- Establishing practices which ensure the safety, health and well being of every child in their care and which place the child's needs first.
- Working co-operatively with parents to ensure the best outcomes for children

To be part of the scheme by:

- Working cooperatively with staff to ensure the best outcomes for children and their families
- Keeping up-to-date with the Scheme's practices
- Meeting all administrative requirements of the Scheme.
- Educators must commit to a minimum of three full days care per week, or five full days if using a dual Educator.

To conduct their business as professional child care service by:

- Acting in an ethical and professional manner
- Attending training and being committed to professional development
- Ensuring ongoing consultation with families in relation to their children

Role of the Co-ordination Unit.
The Co-ordination Unit is here to help you deliver the best service you can to families.

Many families choose Family Day Care because they believe it is the best environment for their small children. They place their children in Family Day Care in the knowledge that educators are carefully selected and go through the checks to ensure they are appropriate people to care for children. Parents also like the assurance that trained professionals who will visit their children will monitor their educator.

Staff are able to support educators in ensuring quality care of the children and their families. Some of the ways we do this are by providing:

- Assistance to meet regulatory requirements – health and safety checks, training, guidelines and procedures
- Professional advice on all childcare related matters
- Assistance with administration – forms, child care benefit, record keeping
- Assistance with running a business – advice and information, recommended fees, payment statements
- Placement of children
- Alternate care arranged during educator holidays and service closure

- Training
- Networking with other educators and other childcare professionals
- Play sessions and other activities
- Assistance in emergencies
- Assistance with conflict resolution and mediation of disputes
- Access to Scheme Toy Library and Book Resources
- Assistance with the implementation of the National Quality Framework

Child Numbers.
Educators can care for up to 4 children who have not yet started school or up to 7 children under 13 years.

Child Protection.
All Family Day Care Educators and Co-ordination Unit staff are mandatory reporters of children who are at risk of harm or abuse. Regular Child Protection training is compulsory for educators and staff who will assist and report any concerns educators have for the welfare of children in their care.

Educators and all adult household members over the age of 18 years must undergo a Working with Children Check and Police check . All adult household members must read and sign a

The Working with Children Check and national police check is a process of checking the backgrounds of people in child related positions. It includes:

- A check of relevant criminal records
- A check of relevant Apprehended Violence Orders
- A check of relevant employment proceedings
- An assessment of risk where a relevant record is found
- Report to the scheme
- A check of any criminal offences that has lead to conviction

The prohibited Employment Declaration is a mechanism for ensuring that Prohibited Persons (convicted sex offenders and Prohibited Persons) do not engage in child-related employment. It is an offence for a Prohibited Person to apply for, undertake remain in child-related employment, paid or unpaid.

How Will Family Day Care Affect My Family?
Many people consider Family Day Care as a work option to enable them to be at home with their own children, whether they are pre-schoolers or at school. Starting Family Day Care will bring change to your children's lives, as it would start any new job. There will be a period of adjustment, feelings to cope with and, perhaps, behavioral changes to consider. Not only is it hard to share toys it is especially hard for young children to share their parents. Your child will see you cuddling other children and paying them attention.

The way you present the idea to your children is critical. If you make your decision carefully, and are positive and confident it will assist in a smooth transition. Other educators and the staff will be able to give you suggestions to help you ensure Family Day Care has a positive effect on your children.

Do I have to Change My Home?
All homes have to meet the scheme's health and safety standards. These will be discussed at the time of the home inspection.

Educators find a variety of ways to set up their homes. Some use the majority of the space in their homes while others primarily use a separate area set up specifically to care for children. Both situations are acceptable. You will be much more successful if your space is attractive, large enough and comfortable.

Your job will be easier if you set up your home to simplify everyday routines. Some problems can be prevented by having selected things where children can reach them (toys, spare clothes, hats, water cups) and others where they can't (house plants, TV, older children's projects and toys). Having your environment set up so children can make choices encourages their independence and gives them opportunities to feel competent.

The changes you make to your home need not be permanent. If you are flexible and willing to experiment, you can learn what will work for everyone.

Safety in the Home.
You will want to feel confident that all areas children will use – indoors and out – are safely childproofed. Check around and think, "What could a child possibly get into here? How might they possibly hurt themselves?"

All play material, furniture, shelving; outdoor equipment – everything children come into contact with – should be checked every day for loose parts or any safety hazard.
Broken toys and missing pieces discourage play and should be fixed or discarded.

The health and safety standards Educators premises must meet include:

- Pool fenced to current Australian Standards and Council requirements.
- Poisons and dangerous substances to be locked away.
- Tools, machinery, knives, bottles, matches, exercise equipment etc. are inaccessible
- Steps, balconies and landfalls are made safe.
- Outdoor play area is appropriately fenced – boundary fencing min height 1.8mtrs with all other fencing being a min height 1.2mtrs.
- Glass to a height of 1 metre must be safety glass, laminated or have a barrier to prevent children striking or falling against the glass. Front both indoor and outdoor play areas.

The Co-ordination Unit will be able to provide you with more information and the document – 'Guidelines for Home Safety Inspections' which will assist you to assess the safety in your home.

First Aid, Asthma & Anaphylaxis Course Providers.

Educators must have a current first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis certificate HLTAID004
The following providers or any other registered training organisation offering Workcover accredited first aid training are suitable.
ACE: 66811 463
Red Cross: 6622 3244
St Johns Ambulance: 6621 8044

Fire Extinguisher and Fire Blanket Providers.
The following providers are suitable for the purchase and checking of fire equipment. They may also be purchased through retail outlets. Please ensure that extinguishers and blankets are able to be date tagged.

Fire Stop: 6681 6000
Northern Rivers Fire Protection: 6681 4040

Chubb: 6627 1200

What Equipment and Materials Will I Need?
What you will need depends on the ages and stages of development of children. Most Educators start out with a small amount of equipment and their imaginations. As time goes by, toys and equipment are built up. You do not need to spend a lot of money on toys and equipment if you set up your home creatively.

Our scheme also provides equipment for craft activities and a toy library as well.

Here is a list of some equipment and materials that will assist educators in their service:

- Space – to crawl, toddle, run, climb and to be alone but in view.
- Outdoor play space
- Places for sleeping, eating and nappy changing
- A covered porch, garage or carport is ideal for rainy days or messy play
- Art and craft materials including useful junk such as egg cartons, computer paper
- Water and/or sand to scoop and pour
- Construction toys
- Good quality children's books and a quiet place to read
- Games, puzzles, vehicles, dolls etc
- Make believe props e.g. dress ups, hats, handbags, tea sets, pots and pans
- Music – instruments, CD player etc.

What Training is available?
Through training the Co-ordination Unit aims to develop professional and practical skills in Educators and increase Educator motivation and participation. There are formal and informal methods of training. The formal methods include lectures, guest speakers and discussion groups.

Certificate III
Educators joining our scheme will be required to hold a Certificate III in Children's Services or above.

Insurance.
Educators are required to have public liability insurance to $10 million. The National FDC Council offers comprehensive public liability insurance at a very competitive rate, which covers you at all times you are working as an educator, and at any location.

Educators are also advised to request an addition to their household policy, using the words to the effect that "child care on a commercial basis is carried out on these premises". This will ensure that the insurers do not renege on a claim due to your FDC business. More information on insurance is available from the Co-ordination Unit.

Taxation.
As a self-employed person, you are responsible for maintaining your own records of income and expenditure for taxation purposes. You are also responsible for payment of tax. We ask Educators to consult an accountant.

Payments.
A Recommended Fee Schedule is developed by the Committee made up of parents, Educators and Community members; however, each Educator can set their own fees. If you choose to charge fee/conditions other than recommended fee, the Educator will need to provide the Service

Manager and each parent with a signed and dated copy of the Educators Individual Fee Schedule. (As per the scheme recommended fee schedule setting policy)

Parents and Educators sign an agreement prior to commencing care, which includes hours, days and fee for care. It is often difficult to discuss money but the Co-ordination Unit and other educators are able to help you find the best way to discuss financial issues with families.

Many parents receive assistance with the cost of care through Child Care Subsidy (CCS). Families apply to the Department of Human Services. DEEWR calculates the CCB and pays this portion of the fees into the educator's bank account. The parent pays the balance of the fee directly to the educator.

Educator Networks.
Educators support each other in the job by meetings, educator activities and social events, training, phone contact, joint outings, advice and emergency care.

You will make a whole new set of friends in Family Day Care.

Starting up – Income and Expenses.
There are costs involved in starting up a Family Day Care service as there are starting any business. It takes time to build up the clients to your service and therefore to build up your income. However, childcare is in strong demand, if you are able to meet the needs of the families requiring childcare your service will be successful. There is a particularly high need for childcare for children under the age of 2 years and for those requiring a minimum of 8 hours per day.

You should take into account that while you build up your business your income may not be high. It is advisable that you take children into your service gradually over a period of time. Staggering the intake give you and your family a chance to adapt to the demands of the job.

It is difficult to give set up costs, as some homes may require more adaptations than others to make them suitable. However the following expenditures need to be taken into account:

- Public liability insurance
- Fire safety equipment (extinguisher, blanket, alarm)
- First Aid Kit
- First Aid training
- Protection for non-safety glass (barrier, film or replacement)
- Safety aids
- Fencing
- Safety switching on power circuits
- Toys and play equipment
- Educator service fee

Process to Become an Educator.

1. Application form completed with a letter of approval from your landlord (if applicable) returned to the Coordination Unit.
2. If Educator vacancies do not exist at the time you submit your application you will be informed we are in receipt of your application and we will make contact with you when our next Induction Program will start.
3. First home visit to assess suitability of home environment.
4. Educator assessment / interview.
5. Letter – successful or unsuccessful.

Successful Applications:

- First aid, asthma and anaphylaxis certificates required prior to starting.
- Documentation of Certificate III .
- Reference checks if they are satisfactory, you will be invited to attend Induction Program.
- Police Check
- During Induction training Working with Child Checks will be conducted on educator and any family member 18 years and older.
- Attend Induction Workshops:-
  - *Caring for children in the home
  - *Working as a professional
  - *Programming and play
  - *Occupation Health and Safety
  - *Administration attached to running your small business
  - *Attend playgroup or visit other educators
- Registration and safety checklist completed on your home environment and is conditional prior to becoming registered with Far North Coast FDC.
- Prior to approval as a registered educator with our scheme you need to obtain the following:-
  - *Current First Aid, Asthma and Anaphylaxis Certificate
  - *Doctors Certificate
  - *Final safety checklist completed on your home environment
  - *Clearance received from Working with Children Check
  - *Public Liability Insurance paid
  - *PRODA
  - *Commitment to start within 4-6 weeks of completing the induction workshops or you will be required to wait and attend the next available Induction workshops.

At first glance this process may appear overwhelming; however, Far North Coast Family Day Care staff will guide you in the process to becoming an Educator. The staff and Educators have many years of experience and have developed forms and systems to assist you. Please remember, you can contact the Co-ordination Unit at any time if you require any assistance or advice in regards to your service.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this booklet, please call Far North Coast Family Day Care on 66867799.