

COASTWIDE



FAMILY HANDBOOK

COASTWIDE FAMILY DAY CARE

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Coastwide Family Day Care Family Handbook

Welcome to Coastwide Family Day Care

This handbook aims to provide you with background information about Coastwide Family Day Care and includes detailed information about our Policies and Procedures.

We hope that this information will introduce our child care service and support your child's journey in Early Childhood Education and Care.

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What is Family Day Care?

Family Day Care is education and care service provided in a home or in-venue environment. Educators are qualified and highly trained early childhood professionals, registered to provide education and care for a maximum of four non-school aged children.

Some Educators also offer before and after school care and vacation care for up to three school-aged children, up to 13 years of age. This ratio also includes the Educator's own children.

Educators are registered with Coastwide Family Day Care which is sponsored by Coastwide Child and Family Services Inc. Coastwide Child and Family Services Inc is licenced by the NSW Department of Education and Training as an Approved Provider.

Family Day Care offers families flexible child care arrangements to suit their needs, including; full-time or part-time care, casual care, weekend care, overnight care, before and after school care, school vacation care, emergency care and occasional care.

To support the well-being of all children, Educators and Coordination Unit staff undergo '*Child Protection*' training and are mandatory reporters. Each Educator has a responsibility to ensure their service ensures the safety and wellbeing of every child.

All Family Day Care services are safe, secure and healthy environments for children and their families. Educators provide a smoke, drug and alcohol free child care environment, follow pet management plans, undergo regular Workplace Health and Safety training and meet all legislative requirements.

Coastwide Family Day Care Philosophy

With almost 35 years of experience delivering quality educational outcomes for children, Coastwide Family Day Care is proud to celebrate its philosophy.

Our Philosophy

- ❖ **Play-based learning environments** - We believe children learn best through play and are capable of building knowledge from their world. We create play environments which are safe, nurturing and stimulating to evoke curiosity, experimentation and exploration.
- ❖ **Celebrating diversity** - We believe children deserve to feel loved, accepted and acknowledged as part of a group regardless of difference. We create inclusive environments which foster positive self-esteem and encourage the opportunity for children to reach their full potential.
- ❖ **Our Guiding Principles** - Our educational practices are guided by The National Quality Framework, The Early Learning Years Framework for Australia and My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Aged Care in Australia.

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Code of Conduct

Educators strive to create a safe, hygienic stimulating environment, which enhances children's autonomy, initiative, self-worth and which respects their dignity.

- ❖ **Objectives** - Educators honour each child's strengths, competence and self-esteem and ensure their work is based on each child's interests and needs, acknowledging the contribution children make.

Educators strive to develop positive relationships with families, which are based on mutual trust and open communication.

Educators acknowledge the uniqueness of each family including the significance of culture, customs, language and beliefs and the contribution they make to the service.

- ❖ **Implementation Strategies**

Educators engage only in practices which are respectful of, and provide security for children, reflect consideration of every child's perspective, in no way degrade, endanger, exploit, intimidate or harm children psychologically or physically.

Educators undertake ongoing training and base their work on the best theoretical and practical knowledge about early childhood development as well as on particular knowledge of each child's individual development.

Educators treat all members of the service with courtesy and respect and represent themselves and their service in a positive manner in the community.

Educators ensure that all records and information about individual children and families, are kept in a secure place and are only accessed by or disclosed to those people who need the information to fulfil their responsibilities to the Service.

Code of Ethics

Ethical conduct is founded in respect for, and the valuing of children, families, Educators, Coordination Unit staff, and the extended Family Day Care community.

We strive to uphold the highest standards in ethical conduct in accordance with the ECA Code of Ethics (2016), The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991), The Declaration on the Rights of indigenous Peoples (2007) and associated Coastwide Family Day Care Policies.

Coastwide Family Day Care Policies and Procedures

Educators are guided by the Coastwide Family Day Care Policies and Procedures and we encourage you to regularly review our Policies and Procedures.

Policies have been agreed in consultation with Educators, the Coordination Unit and the Board of Management of Coastwide Child and Family Services Inc. To find out more about our Board of Management please visit our website, www.cfdc.com.au.

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Policies are designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in our care and reflect the requirements of National Regulations, National Law and the Coordination Unit's Public Liability Insurance.

Family Day Care Educator Recruitment and Training

Educators registered with Coastwide Family Day Care share a commitment to providing the best possible educational outcomes for children.

Educators who share this commitment are recruited and supported with professional development opportunities which maximise their abilities to guide and encourage children to realise their potential as early learners.

We believe our service is enhanced by recruiting Educators with diverse experience, skills, values and cultures. Educators are supported by ongoing mentoring, peer support and networking.

The Role of the Coordination Unit

The Coordination Unit plays a diverse role, supporting Educators and families to ensure the highest quality of education and care. With almost 35 years of experience delivering quality educational outcomes for children, Coastwide Family Day Care is proud to celebrate the services we offer.

This includes family enrolments and ongoing support, access to quality educational programming and early intervention service referrals, as well as the administration of Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate claims.

The Coordination Unit also organises play sessions and special interest excursions for children in care. We encourage feedback via our website, regular surveys and are always keen to hear what you think of our service.

The Enrolment Process

Our enrolment process is completed on-line. We are committed to matching every family to Educator(s) who have availability to meet your care needs. We encourage you to visit when the service is open if possible.

Once you let us know your choice of Educator(s), we will ask you to complete the on-line enrolment process, confirming days and hours of care required.

A one-off family enrolment fee is due once care is confirmed.

Priority of Access Guidelines

We are required to follow the Federal Government's *Priority of Access* Guidelines when allocating placements. All child care services are required to follow these guidelines.

Paperwork and Evidence, what's required and why

We are required under Law to hold the following information to support your enrolment in an Approved Education and Care Provider.

- ❖ Proof of each child's ID
- ❖ Information relating the immunisation status of each child in care (Australian Immunisation Record)
- ❖ Health Management Plans, where applicable
- ❖ Parenting Orders, where applicable

We are also required to provide documentation to the Federal Government regarding your Aboriginality, country of birth, languages spoken at home and family status.

It is also a legal requirement to record your Medicare number and, if you are claiming CCB / CCR, we also need to record and provide the Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CRN) of the CCB claimant and the CRN of each child in care.

Emergency Contacts and Permissions

We ask for two emergency contacts as part of your enrolment process and these are used if, and when there is an emergency. As part of your enrolment you will be asked to indicate what permission are given:

- ❖ Collect my child
- ❖ Consent to an excursion
- ❖ Consent to medical treatment/administration of medication

Please remember to update your emergency contacts if these change.

You will also be asked as part of your enrolment to give permission for your Educator, or a staff member from the Coordination Unit, to administer paracetamol or ibuprofen in case of a fever and to seek medical / dental treatment or ambulance transportation if necessary.

Prior to administering paracetamol or ibuprofen, verbal consent from you, or one of your emergency contacts, will be sought. If you, or your one of your emergency contacts, are unavailable permission will be sought from the Coordination Unit.

Medical Conditions and / or Additional Needs

If your child has medical conditions or additional needs you will be asked to provide a copy of a *Health Management or Information and Management Plan* at enrolment and you will be sent a *Medical Conditions Policy*. Your Educator(s) will be provided a copy of this plan to discuss with you.

Once your child starts care, your Educator will collaborate with you to complete a *Medical Risk Minimisation Plan and Communication Plan* related to your child's medical condition or additional needs.

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General Medication Permissions

You will also be asked on enrolment to give permission for the administration of general medication or preventative measures, such as; sunscreen, insect repellent, nappy creams, etc. When you start care with your Educator(s) please discuss with them any specific requirements that you may have relating to the brand and / or ingredients.

Routine Excursions

You will be asked as part of your enrolment to give, or deny permission, for your child to attend your Educator's Approved Routine Excursions.

Your Educator will discuss the routine excursions they attend on meeting with you at their service. All excursions are approved by the Coordination Unit to ensure the safety of all children in care.

Starting Care

When starting care we recommend discussing with your chosen Educator your child's routines and the settling techniques you use.

What you need to bring?

Clothing – we recommend that your child has clothing options to cater for changing patterns of weather.

- ❖ We encourage Educators to operate a Sun Smart service and recommend shirts with covered shoulders and hats will be worn whenever outside. Your free Sun Smart hat will be issued by your Educator
- ❖ Suitable footwear is essential
- ❖ Children may change their clothes to cater for their play experiences when both indoors and outdoors
- ❖ Unless your Educator provides nappies as part of their service, please make sure that you supply plenty of nappies and any creams or lotions, if required
- ❖ Please ensure that all of your child's personal belongings are clearly labelled

Meals – we recommend that you provide a healthy and nutritious lunch, snacks and a drink bottle for your child.

- ❖ Please discuss with your Educator as they may provide healthy snacks as part of their service
- ❖ Educators follow the '*Nutrition and Food Handling Policy*' as part of their registration with Coastwide Family Day Care

Toys – we recommend that your child brings a favourite toy or blanket to help them feel more secure, especially when your child begins care. Other toys will need to be discussed with your Educator.

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Child Care Fees

Coastwide Family Day Care fees range from \$6:00 to \$12:00 per hour depending on the service location, service environment, Educator qualifications and service inclusions. As self-employed small business owners, Educators set their own working days and hours.

Your Educator will confirm with you the fees they charge per session and we will provide you with a Fee Schedule once your enrolment is confirmed. We recommend that you read your Fee Schedule carefully.

Your Educator will advise of fees to be paid weekly or fortnightly in advance. Any adjustments can be made at the beginning of the following week or fortnight.

Your fees include a levy paid to the Coordination Unit which will be withheld from the CCB paid to your Educator on your behalf. Where no CCB is paid, the Educator will collect the Parent Levy as part of your child care fees. The current rate of Parent Levy is stated on the Fee Schedule.

Educators are required to give two weeks' notice regarding any fee changes. If you experience any difficulties in paying your fees please contact the Coordination Unit Office. Care may be terminated if fees are not paid as per the Fee Schedule. Backup care or care with another Educator will not be made available to parents with outstanding fees.

Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate

When using child care provided by Approved Provider all Australian Residents may be eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB).

To assess your eligibility to claim CCB you will need to register with Centrelink who will assess your family income and provide us with your percentage if eligible. Child Care Rebate (CCR) is also available.

To apply for CCB and CCR please register with the Family Assistance Office (FAO) at Centrelink. Visit www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/themes/families.

Where CCB is claimed you can also claim for up to 42 '*allowable absences*' each financial year. '*Allowable absences*' include Public Holidays, illness (without a medical certificate), holidays and any occasional absences.

Once the 42 '*allowable absences*' are exceeded, your CCB claim will only be considered when evidence is provided of;

- ❖ Illness (with a medical certificate), rotating shift work, attendance at specialised pre-school, rostered days off or pupil free days

CCB will not be paid for absences before a child actually starts care, or for last day(s) absences when they are finishing care.

The Importance of Attendance Records

It is a legislative requirement that you sign your child in and out of care. Each Educator will have their own hand over procedure, which equates legally to the transfer of responsibility, at the beginning and end of the session of care. Please discuss with your Educator.

Remember to sign your child's attendance record and record the exact time of arrival and departure. As part of our legislative requirements we regularly audit attendance records and signatures.

All absences must also be recorded and confirmed with a parent / guardian signature.

Illness and Medication

Educators follow the '*Heath and Medication Policy*' and will contact you when concerned about the health and well-being of your child whilst in care.

We recommend that children do not access care if they are ill. Your Educator will use the following list of criteria to judge if your child is not well enough to access care. We recommend that you too assess your child against this list prior to accessing care.

- ❖ Fever greater than 37.5 or more
- ❖ Two or more loose bowel movements than usual
- ❖ Unidentified and / or infectious rash, or skin infection
- ❖ Eye discharge
- ❖ Repeated vomiting
- ❖ Head lice if untreated

You will always be informed if your child has an elevated temperature or appears unwell whilst in care. Your Educator will care for your child until you can arrange for your child to be collected from care.

Administering Medication

Medication will only be administered when accompanied by a signed *Medication Administration Form*. Your Educator can provide a copy for you to complete.

- ❖ Short term medication like antibiotics must be signed daily
- ❖ Long term medication such as those needed for asthma, diabetes, epilepsy etc have a separate form and must be re-signed every 2 weeks
- ❖ Doctor's instructions must be included on how to administer the medication and management of the illness

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Fever Management

If temperature is elevated, your Educator will offer clear fluids, remove layers of clothing, contact you or your emergency contacts to gain verbal consent to administer paracetamol or ibuprofen, and request immediate collection of your child and continue with fever management until you, or your emergency contact, arrives.

Educational Programming

Coastwide Family Day Care educational programming is designed to ensure all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

Educators embrace the '*Early Years Learning Framework*' and '*My Time Our Place*' principles; secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships, partnerships, high expectations and equity, respect for diversity, ongoing learning and reflective practice.

With lower Educator to child ratios, Educators have the opportunity to develop trusting relationships with children and families, providing a secure base for exploration and learning.

Educators acknowledge that families are a child's first and most influential teachers and trusting relationships with families provide the opportunity for Educators to work in partnership with families, sharing insights and perspectives.

Educators and staff from the Coordination Unit share a commitment to respect diversity, access ongoing learning and maintain reflective practice.

High expectations and equity are at the centre of all decision-making, programming and documentation.

National Quality Framework (NQF)

The National Quality Framework (NQF) is the result of an agreement between all Australian Governments to work together to provide better educational and developmental outcomes for children using education and care services.

The NQF acknowledges that quality education and care shapes every child's future and lays the foundation for development and learning.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

The EYLF is a key component of the National Quality Framework. The EYLF guides Educators in developing quality programming and places an importance on supporting parents to best support their children's early learning.

The EYLF emphasises the importance of play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication, language, social and emotional development.

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Guiding Children's Behaviour

Your Educator is encouraged to model acceptable behaviour, set clear and consistent rules, use voice intonations, facial expressions, explanations, positive reinforcement and distraction as methods of encouraging appropriate behaviour.

Educators follow the '*Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy*' and physical punishment, exclusion and negative criticism are never acceptable.

The Coordination Unit will provide support for ongoing situations and encourage parents and Educators, in conjunction with the Coordination Unit, to work together for a positive outcome.

Environments, Excursions and Activities

Every family day care service offers families a unique education and care environment, designed to provide a balance of indoor and outdoor experiences which reflect the interests and development needs of each child.

Although each service is unique, Educators share a commitment to respond to the NQF, meet the legislative requirements whilst providing developmentally appropriate activities.

Activities and Excursions

Educators are trained to provide a stimulating learning environment for all children in their care. Excursions may be a part of each Educator's program.

As part of the enrolment process you will receive a list of the Approved Routine Excursion your Educator offers. You will have the opportunity to provide permission for your child to attend these excursions.

Each routine excursion has been approved by the Coordination Unit and your Educator will have a copy available in their service.

Your Educator may also organise non-routine excursions and you will be given the opportunity to give permission for your child to attend.

Spontaneous excursions can be a wonderful experience for your child. Family Day Care is unique in the ability to offer this flexibility. Your Educator may discuss their arrangements for spontaneous experiences or excursions which will contribute to their program.

Vehicles used to transport children are required to be correctly fitted with appropriate restraints and undergo an annual safety check at a registered Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) Inspection Station. Coordination Unit vehicles may also be involved in transportation.

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Feedback

Once you start care please remember to provide feedback about your first weeks with Coastwide Family Day Care.

Thank you for choosing Coastwide Family Day Care as your preferred child care service.

We look forward to many years of working in partnership with you, your family and child.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Coordination Unit to answer any further questions you may have or need any further assistance with your child care placement.

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