

# Coffs Harbour Family Day Care

## PARENT HANDBOOK

# 2018

“The Cottage” 2 Peterson Road  
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

Phone: 02 6652 7819

Fax: 02 6651 7214

Email: [admin@coffsfdc.org.au](mailto:admin@coffsfdc.org.au)

Web: [www.coffsfdc.org.au](http://www.coffsfdc.org.au)



coffs **family** daycare



# CHFDC STAFF STRUCTURE



**Janet Coleman**  
BUSINESS  
MANAGER



**Liz Parker**  
SERVICE  
CO-ORDINATOR



**Peter  
Metcalfe**  
ADMINISTRATION  
ASSISTANT



**Kylie  
Wilson**  
CHILD  
DEVELOPMENT  
CO-ORDINATOR



**Rebecca  
Wales**  
CHILD  
DEVELOPMENT  
CO-ORDINATOR

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## Philosophy Statement

At Coffs Harbour Family Day Care we recognise that it is in the early years of development that children form who they are as individuals, the foundation on which children base the rest of their lives on. Children are full of potential, confident and capable of building their own theories.

We believe respect for each child and their family is paramount and is expressed through listening, observing, and interacting with families. We recognise that the family is the child's first and most important teacher. Parents are viewed as partners, collaborators, and advocates for their children. We involve and invite parents into every aspect of the curriculum. We embrace cultural diversity, respecting family's diverse values, beliefs, cultural backgrounds, traditions, life experiences and knowledge. Families are encouraged to share their culture, language and experiences with educators and staff.

We recognise and value the relationships children have with Family Day Care educators. Passionate and resourceful educators are essential to providing learning environments that are inclusive and respectful to all. Our educators are role models who have their own personal philosophies and ideas, supporting each individual child, and providing the best possible outcomes for children.

We help children develop a sense of belonging by creating an environment where they can build connections with peers, staff, community and their natural environment. We are committed to professional teamwork, and ongoing professional development to extend our skills and abilities. All staff value and respect one another and the contributions they make to create a cohesive team. We recognise our responsibility in ensuring and maintaining current workplace policies and procedures.

We provide a learning environment where children learn and develop by exploring their world through stimulating and challenging play. We plan for children's learning around their interests and their own specific needs, guided by the National Quality Standards, the Early Years Learning Framework and the School Aged Care Learning Framework-My Time, Our Place. This provides opportunities for children to reach their potential, in all areas of their development: physical health and wellbeing, social, emotional, language and cognitive, and spiritual.

We encourage environmental sustainability by empowering people to take responsibility for making informed decisions towards a sustainable future, whereby we gain knowledge and understanding of the environment as it relates to our society. We pride ourselves on promoting and involving the children in water conservation, recycling, and growing seasonal foods.

We liaise with and utilise existing resources in the community, collaborating with all stake holders to generate a culture of continual reflection and high quality practices in Family Day Care.

We recognise that Family Day Care is a unique child care setting where Family Day Care educators look after a small group of children in their own homes, providing a service which can meet the needs of each individual child and their family.

The Coffs Harbour Family Day Care Philosophy upholds the Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics.



## What is family day care?

Family day care is an approved form of child care that is provided in a family day care educators own home. Family day care educators are early childhood education and care professionals, registered with a family day care service. The family day care service is responsible for approving, supporting, training and advising its educators. Family day care provides a quality education and care service that is accessible, flexible and affordable. It is available seven days per week for full-time, part-time, casual, emergency, special needs, before & after school as well as vacation care. Children from 6 weeks to 13 years of age can access the service.

## Role of the Service

The Coffs Harbour Family Day Care Service is funded by the Federal Government. The service's major role is to provide a support service for educators and families. The coordination unit arranges child placements and administers Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate on behalf of the families.

The service is an Incorporated Community Based Non-Profit Organisation managed by the 'Committee of the Association', which consists of parents, educators and community representatives. The role of the 'Committee of the Association' is to oversee the operations of the service and ensure compliance with the regulatory requirements, effectiveness & efficiency with committee meetings being held monthly.

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the service and become a member of the Management Committee. As an "Ordinary Member of the Association" parents can vote at the Annual General Meeting each year. At time of enrolment, parents may elect to become a member of the Association by paying a \$5.50 membership fee.

Coffs Harbour Family Day Care operates under the National Quality Framework (NQF) as other forms of childcare; incorporating national regulations, quality and qualification standards, educational frameworks and an assessment and ratings process

## Educators

The educator is required to comply with the Education and Care Services National Regulations and the service Policies and Practices. Family Day Care operates on a maximum of 7 children under the age of 13 (maximum 4 children not attending school, including the educator's own children)

All educators hold a minimum Certificate III in Children's Services or are enrolled and actively studying towards achieving the Certificate III in Children's Services. Family Day Care is conducted by educators who follow the service's recruitment/selection procedure and a comprehensive induction and training program.

Educators have the following attributes:

- Practical childcare knowledge and experience with children.
- Communicate well on various levels; be flexible, approachable, warm and caring.
- Organisational and record keeping skills.
- Are willing to work in partnership with service staff and families.



Educators must have a:

- A Working with Children Check – including other residents over 18 years.
- First aid certificate HLTAID004.
- Smoke /drug and alcohol free environment, including residents and visitors.
- Program for individual children's developmental ages/ stages – program daily or weekly, complete development records, daily reflections and observations.

## Priority of Access Guidelines

The Australian Government has Priority of Access Guidelines for allocating child care places. The guidelines apply to CCB approved centre-based Long Day Care (LDC), IHC, Family Day Care (FDC) and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services. They set out the following three levels of priority, which child care services must follow when filling vacant places:

**Priority 1** – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.

**Priority 2** – a child of a parent who satisfies, or of parents who satisfy, or of who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*.

**Priority 3** – any other child.

Within these main categories, priority will also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families on low income
- children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents

There are some circumstances in which a child who is already in a child care service may be required to change or reduce their child care at short notice to accommodate a working parent.

Where a service has no vacant places and is providing child care for a child who is a Priority 3 under the Priority of Access Guidelines, the service may require that child to leave the child care service in order for the service to provide a place for a higher priority child, but only if:

- (a) The person who is liable to pay child care fees in respect of the child was notified when the child first occupied the child care place that the service followed this policy, **and**
- (b) The service gives that person at least 14 days' notice of the requirement for the child to leave the child care service. (Ref: Child Care Service Handbook 2017-2018).

## Collection of Children

If you are going to be late collecting your child you must contact your educator as a matter of courtesy. Your child will only be released to people who are authorised in writing by you on the enrolment or in writing in other circumstances. Your child will not be released if there is no authority from you.

If the person designated to collect your child from care is under the influence of alcohol or drugs or appears otherwise unfit your child will not be released from care. In certain circumstances the police may be contacted.

## Access to Children

The Education and Care Services National Regulations clearly state that your educator is not legally permitted to allow your child to leave the premises without your permission. Details of any court order, custody and access orders concerning your child are required to be stated on the service's enrolment form. Relevant documents need to be provided to the service office and the educator.

Any natural parent not subject to any relevant court order may have access to his or her child at any time during the hours that the child is in care and receive information about the child on an ongoing basis.

## Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness

If your child is seriously ill or has contracted a contagious disease, your child will not be accepted into care. If your child becomes ill whilst in care you will be contacted immediately. Under these circumstances you will need to obtain a medical certificate stating that your child is permitted to return to care. Your child will not be administered any medication without your permission and each time that medication is administered your child's educator must make a record of the fact on a Medication Record.

In case of a serious accident involving hospitalisation; parents, the service and the NSW Early Childhood Education Directorate will be informed. All accidents / injuries / illnesses will be recorded on an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record form. If you cannot be contacted the educator will take appropriate action (as specified and acknowledged on the enrolment form) and arrange for your child to be taken to the nearest doctor or hospital. Any costs incurred will be met by you.

## Medical Conditions

If your child has been identified as having a medical condition (e.g. anaphylaxis or allergenic conditions), before care can commence the following must occur:

### Parent/Guardian

- You will be provided with a copy of the policy 'Medical Conditions' and the 'Medical Conditions' Part 1 and 2 form.
- The medical conditions documentation Part 1 needs to be completed by a registered Medical Practitioner and signed and Part 2 needs to be completed by you.
- You need to provide the Co-ordination unit and your child's educator with a copy of the Medical Conditions part 1 & 2 form and Health Management Plans.

**If your child's medical status changes whilst in care requiring a Health Management Plan the following must occur before your child resumes care:**

1. You must be provided with a copy of our Medical Conditions policy.
2. Medical Conditions Documentation Part 1 and 2 to be completed and signed by a registered Medical Practitioner and you.
3. A copy must be given to your educator and the service office before care can recommence.

## Immunisation

From 1 January 2018, only children who are fully immunised for their age OR have a medical reason not to be immunised OR are on a catch-up schedule can be enrolled in childcare. Children who have not been immunised due to their parent's vaccine conscientious objection cannot be enrolled in childcare.

### AIR Immunisation History Statement

Parents must provide an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) History Statement (that shows a child is up to date or can't be immunised for medical reasons) OR an AIR Immunisation History Form (that shows a child is on a recognised catch-up schedule), when enrolling a child in childcare. This includes long day care, family day care, occasional care and pre-school.

Parents can request a copy of their child's AIR Immunisation History Statement at any time (up to their child being 14 years of age):

- using their Medicare online account through myGov  
<https://my.gov.au/>
- using the Medicare Express Plus App  
[www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/express-plus-mobile-apps](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/express-plus-mobile-apps)
- calling the AIR General Enquiries Line on 1800 653 809

### More information

Australian Immunisation Register

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>

NSW Health

[www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation)

NSW Health 'Save the Date to Vaccinate'

[www.immunisation.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.immunisation.health.nsw.gov.au)

Australian Government Department of Health Immunise Australia Program

[www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

### Educator's Illness

If your educator and/or educator's family member(s) should become ill, you will be informed. The service will attempt to arrange alternative care if available. The service may request a doctor's clearance in case of an infectious disease before your educator can reopen the service.

### Administration

Educators are required to keep accurate records of your child always. The names, current addresses, home and work phone numbers and an alternative (emergency) contact number must be provided by you.

You must electronically sign or initial the actual arrival time and sign the actual departure time each day of your child's attendance to comply with licensing and insurance requirements.

## Child Care Benefit (CCB)

All Australian resident children are eligible to receive assistance with the cost of child care through the Child Care Benefit. This can be claimed in either of two ways:

- Weekly reduction in fees – Your Child Care Benefit payment is made directly to your educator by the Co-ordination Unit. You will be liable to pay the balance of the fee to your educator. You will need to obtain a Customer Reference Number (CRN) by contacting the Family Assistance Office (FAO) on 13 61 50 or by accessing the online services.
- Lump Sum Payment – You may elect to receive a lump sum payment at the end of the financial year. You must still register for a Customer Reference Number at the time of enrolment to be eligible for the Lump Sum Payment.

## Multiple Child Rates

You need to inform each child care service if your child or other sibling/s attends another approved service. Your fees will then be reduced by the multiple child rate, which will be listed on your Assessment Notice.

**You must notify the service office if:**

- Your child care usage at other services changes.
- Your child that uses family day care and uses another approved service.
- Your circumstances change in relation to siblings using other approved services.

## Eligible Hours

The hours of care claimed across all approved services must not exceed the number of eligible hours recorded on your Assessment Notice.

## Child Care Rebate

Child Care Rebate is not income tested. You may be eligible for Child Care Rebate if:

- you use a service approved for Child Care Benefit, and
- you are eligible for Child Care Benefit, even if you earn too much to receive payment, and
- you and your partner meet the 'work, training, study test' or are exempt from it

There are four ways to receive your Child Care Rebate:

- directly to your approved child care service, fortnightly
- directly to your bank account, fortnightly
- directly to your bank account, quarterly
- by annual payment to your bank account. This payment option is only available if you receive your Child Care Benefit for approved child care as a lump sum payment

The amount of Child Care Rebate is based on 50% of your out of pocket expenses. The Child Care Rebate maximum amount is \$7,500 per child per year.



## Absences from Care

CCB (Child Care Benefit) is paid in certain circumstances when a family is charged for care that their child does not attend. Under the Child Care Management System (CCMS) each child is eligible to receive CCB for an initial 42 days of absences, per financial year, which can be used for any reason and without proof of circumstances (includes public holidays). Once the initial 42 days absence days have been exhausted, additional absences may be claimed in certain circumstances.

The Family Assistance Office (FAO) maintains a count of absences used by each child across all services for the financial year. You can obtain details of absences through the online services section of the FAO's website or through your educator.

## Public Holidays

Normal fees will be paid for public holidays when:

1. The child would normally have been in care on that day, if it were not a public holiday.
2. When a child uses care on a public holiday, an additional public holiday surcharge may apply, please discuss this with your educator.

## Payment of Fees

The fees at Coffs Harbour Family Day Care vary at each venue. Educators act as agents for the collection of fees on our behalf. You will need to establish the preferred payment method and frequency of payment with your child's educator.

**NOTE:** If your fees fall in arrears more than one week then your care may be suspended until payment is made or care may be terminated.

## Contracted Hours

You are required to enter into a contract with our service for your care requirements. Educators will negotiate contracts on behalf of our service. Your contract reflects the minimum care hours that you are required to pay for, even if your child is absent. You may terminate your contract for care and must provide one week notice. If your child does not attend care on the last day of the notice period, no CCB is payable. (ie CCB is only payable up to the last day of attendance)

## Relief Educator

A primary educator may, under certain conditions, use a relief educator to provide short term or block relief care for Family Day Care children in the absence of the primary educator in his / her home.

Written parental permission is to be obtained from you (on the Parent/Educator Agreement form) prior to your child being placed in the care of a relief educator. Relief educators must be introduced to the parents of children to be cared for, at the first opportunity.

No fee is payable if you elect not to leave your child with the relief educator. You are not obliged to accept relief care arrangements. You may choose to find alternate care with another family day educator or to make private arrangements, in which case they are not liable to pay FDC fees.

## Alternative Care

If you require alternative care for your child (e.g. educator illness or holidays) you need to contact the service office with details of the care you require.

It is your responsibility to contact the alternate educator as soon as possible. All necessary alternative care must be paid separately to the alternate educator on the day. You will need to discuss the fees with the alternate educator.

The service provides a 24 hour "On Call" service. Please contact the service office for any emergency placements on: 6652 7819

## Cancellation of Care

At least one (1) weeks' notice is to be given if your child is ceasing care. A Cease Care form must be completed. The educator is also obliged to give parents a weeks' notice for termination of care.

## Refusal of Care

Care will be refused:

- If a child is not enrolled with the service.
- For non-payment of fees.
- If the parent does not abide by the Policies of the Family Day Care service.
- If your child is unwell and not able to participate in the usual programme and planned activities.

## Childs Bag

Please include in your child/ren's bag/s

- A healthy lunch, morning and afternoon tea.
- A hat, sunscreen and several changes of clothes / nappies etc.

## Policies

- The service's Policies and Practices are always available at the educator's service and at the coordination unit, 'The Cottage' 2 Peterson Rd, Coffs Harbour.

## Service Website

- You can access newsletters and links to many resources from the service's website at [www.coffsfdc.org.au](http://www.coffsfdc.org.au)
- You are able to update your contact details on the 'Contact Us' page or via email [admin@coffsfdc.org.au](mailto:admin@coffsfdc.org.au)

## Complaints / Grievances

- Complaints or grievances should be directed to the Nominated Supervisor or the Business Manager on 66527819.

