Kids Planet
FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

Policies and Procedures

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1. Educational Program Policy

Research accentuates that quality educational programs significantly influence children's development in all areas. We have the opportunity to provide a supportive learning environment and program, gaining inspiration from the children and families. Thoughtfully planned experiences and environments encourage the children to feel a sense of control over their actions, be curious and investigate, and explore their understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them.

PURPOSE

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services aims to enhance children's learning and development through the pedagogical practices of educators and families in a positive learning environment, which is promoted across the five learning outcomes from Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Educators will gather and interpret information about children as individuals to inform the preparation of the environment and implement experiences that are engaging and meaningful, supporting children's holistic development.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, and Educator Assistants of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the National Law and National Regulations, approved Family Day Care Services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. The program should focus on addressing the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, while considering the individual differences of each child.

There are two nationally approved learning frameworks in Victoria which outline practices that support and promote children's learning:

- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia ('Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)')
- My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia ('Framework for School Age Care').

There is also two approved learning frameworks specific to Victoria:

- Victoria: the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/earlyyears/veyldf/Pages/Index.aspx

OUR SERVICE IS COMMITTED TO THE EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK (EYLF)

The approved learning frameworks included principles, practices and learning outcomes that guide educational leaders and educators in their curriculum decision making, and assist them in planning, delivering and evaluating quality programs in early childhood settings.

In compliance with the Early Years Learning Framework and National Regulations, the program will contribute to the following outcomes for each child:

- The child will have a strong sense of identity,
- The child will be connected with and contribute to his or her world,
- The child will have a strong sense of wellbeing,
- The child will be a confident and involved learner, and
- The child will be an effective communicator.

Our Service also supports the Early Years Learning Framework through the following:

- Each child's learning will be based on their interests and strengths and guided by educators.

- Educators must work in collaboration with families to provide relevant learning experiences for each child, based on their interests and family experiences.
- Every child will be equally valued. Their achievements & learning will be celebrated.
- Educators will observe and record the strengths and learning of each child.
- Educators will work closely with children and families to produce ideas for the curriculum.
- Learning Outcomes will be linked to the curriculum during and after each child's learning has occurred.
- The curriculum will be constructed on the children's interests, educators extending children's interests, spontaneous experiences and family contribution.
- Where appropriate, the service will liaise with external agencies and support persons to best educate and care for children with additional needs.
- Where appropriate, the curriculum (play and learning experiences) will build and develop each child's Learning Stories, Portfolio and Observations of each child's strengths and development.
- The curriculum will be evaluated and reflected upon continuously by educators

THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- Ensure that a suitable program based on an approved learning framework is delivered to all children at all FDC Services.
- Ensure Educators work together with Educator Assistants (where applicable) in preparing and/or implementing the curriculum which adheres to the service philosophy.
- Ensure modifications are made in the environment for children with special needs. The Approved Provider will assist with making appropriate, professional referrals where necessary with family permission.
- Ensure each FDC Service plans for a balance between indoor and outdoor experiences with large blocks of unstructured time for uninterrupted child-initiated play.
- Promote children's physical activity by supporting the development of their gross motor skills and fostering the emergence and refinement of fundamental movement skills through a range of intentionally planned and spontaneous active play learning experiences.
- Ensure key physical activity is embedded into each FDC Service's curriculum.
- Support families through positive, respectful and reciprocal relationships through regular communication.
- Ensure the educational program is displayed in a place that is accessible to parents and families.
- Ensure a copy of the program is available at all times.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Implement an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting, and evaluating children's learning which will underpin the educational program and involves educators in critically thinking about what is achievable and why.
- Document children's experiences and their responses to the environment making children's learning visible to educators and families and promote shared learning and collaboration.
- Provide experiences that include both structured and unstructured learning times catering for children's individual needs and interests and are age appropriate.
- Ensure materials and equipment reflect the cultural diversity and family values that exists in our society.
- Respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning.

- Provide experiences that actively promote and initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising.
- Provide experiences that support and develop all developmental areas and curriculum areas including music, math, and science.
- Plan and implement the intentional teaching of Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) to support the physical development of children of all ages.
- Gather information from families upon enrolment regarding the child's needs, interests, and family backgrounds. This information is treated as confidential and allows Educators to provide experiences that interest and extend children's current development. We feel that it is important to develop a partnership between parents and Educators to ensure that consistency between home and the Service occurs and that the best possible care and education is provided.
- Ensure information about the child's participation in the program is available for families.
- Ensure families receive a copy of children's learning progress
- Ensure families receive a copy of children's learning progress.
- Encourage communication with families about physical activity, gross motor, and fundamental movements skills development.
- Explore ideas and theories using imagination and creative play.
- Allow large blocks of uninterrupted time to allow children to develop their ideas and play.
- Use the learning outcomes to guide planning for children's learning.
- Intentionally scaffold children's understanding and learning.
- Provide children with ongoing encouragement and positive reinforcement.
- Provide opportunities for children to be active and engaged daily through a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences within the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Make use of spontaneous 'teachable moments' to extend children's learning.
- Respond to children's displays of learning dispositions by commenting on them and providing encouragement and additional ideas.
- View children as active participants and decision makers, working with each child's unique qualities and abilities.
- Further extend critical thinking skills through provocations.
- Plan realistic curriculum goals for children based on observation and assessment of individual needs and interests.
- Seek opportunities within the routine for spontaneous play and experiences.
- Ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued with equitable access to resources and opportunities to demonstrate their learning.
- Use a variety of methods to assist reflection on children's experiences, thinking, and learning.
- Ensure critical reflection clearly exams all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives, identifying children's learning, spontaneous play, teaching strategies, and changes that may be needed in the environment.
- Assisting children to develop daily habits, understanding, and skills that support health and wellbeing.

Our Family Day Care Service aims to promote children's participation in physical activity by:

- Fostering children's Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) including, running, galloping, hopping, jumping, leaping, side-sliding, skipping, overarm throwing, catching, striking a stationary ball, kicking, underarm throwing and stationary dribbling through role modelling skills.
- Providing active play experiences that encourage children to explore, be creative, and challenge their development.
- Providing space, time, and resources for children to revisit and practice FMS and engage in active play.
- Engaging in opportunities for Educators and Educator Assistants to attend professional development to enhance their skills and knowledge about the importance of physical activity for children.
- Providing positive instruction, role modelling, and advice to children as they develop and improve their FMS.
- Working in collaboration with families and professionals to provide active experiences that are inclusive of all children.

The program will provide a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences and materials that are selected to achieve the following goals:

- Foster a positive self-concept.
- Develop and support social skills.
- Develop and support children's cognitive skills such as the ability to think, reason, question, and experiment.
- Develop and support language development.
- Enhance physical development and skills.
- Support sound health, safety, personal hygiene, and nutritional practices.
- Support creative expression.
- Supports respect for cultural diversity of staff and children.
- Supports respect for gender diversity.

2. Children's Health and Safety Policy

It is Kids Planet Family Day Care Services commitment to provide a safe environment for children so that they can explore, discover and learn and for Educators so that they can nurture and educate children in a safe and pleasant environment.

PURPOSE

We aim to protect the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

It is Kids Planet Family Day Care Services is dedicated to ensuring that each child's health and safety needs are met through the implementation of operative hygiene practices to control the spread of infectious diseases, the prevention and management of injuries and illness and providing a safe and secure physical environment for children. In any occurrences where children show any signs of illness or injury, educators will refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy.

The importance of children's nutritional and physical health needs will be promoted by educating children about a healthy lifestyle which will be reinforced through the everyday routine and experiences.

It is Kids Planet Family Day Care Services believes in quality education and care in an environment that provides for their protection through adequate supervision, safe experiences and environments, and emergency vigilance. Educators are dedicated to understanding their legal and ethical responsibility to protect the children enrolled at the service.

Arrangements for Laundering of Soiled Items

- Soiled clothing will be returned to a child's home for laundering. Educators will remove soiled content and placed into a plastic bag. Items will be stored securely in a sealed container and not placed in the child's bag.

Choosing Appropriate Resources and Equipment

- All new equipment will be checked by the nominated supervisor against Australian Safety Standards.
- Children will be carefully introduced to new toys & pieces of equipment and taught how to use and care for them appropriately.
- Equipment that should only be used under supervision will be stored in a safe place out of children's reach.
- The use of pools and toys or equipment which involves the use of water will be used under the direct supervision of educators. All equipment will be emptied of water when not in use, and stored in such a manner that it cannot collect water.
- Equipment will be checked daily by the educators to ensure it is in a clean and safe condition which will be recorded on the appropriate indoor and outdoor safety checklist.

Safety Checks

A daily inspection of the premises will be undertaken before children begin to arrive. This inspection will include the:

- Education/home
- Fences/Fence Line
- Gates
- Paths
- Buildings
- All rooms accessible by children
- Fixed equipment
- Sand Pit

This must to be done in order to identify any dangerous objects in the grounds ranging from sharps to poisonous or dangerous plants and animals.

In the event of a sharp object being found (for example a syringe) educators will wear gloves and use tongs to pick up the object and place it in the 'sharp object box'. This box will be disposed of as per the recommendations of our local council.

Similarly, trees in the grounds must be checked regularly for overhanging, dead or dangerous looking branches as well as check for any infestations or nests.

Non-fixed play equipment in the service grounds it can be no more than one meter high and must be supervised at all times by an educator.

The Indoor and Outdoor Daily Safety Checklists will be used as the procedure to conduct these safety checks. A record of these will be kept by the educator. Any required maintenance or repairs should be immediately fixed or repaired.

The following can be used as a guideline to produce Checklists for the service's individual needs.

Checklist: Outdoor

- **Building maintenance** – regularly maintain and check for hazards, check building is in a safe, clean and hygienic condition. Records of any damages and subsequent repairs are kept.
- **Doors** –have finger jam protectors.
- **Dust mites, pet allergens** – regular dusting and vacuuming.
- **Fences** off securely and effectively all sides of outdoor play areas from roads, water hazards, and driveways. Maintain fences have correct height. Install childproof self-locking devices on gates.
- **Garbage** – safe and prompt disposal. Use lidded secure bins that prevent child access and maintain in a clean and safe condition. Encourage recycling.
- **Garden** and renovation debris removed. Regularly trim branches and bushes.
- **Garages and sheds -** keep locked.
- **Heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting** – comfortable, safe, maintained, guarded and are kept out of reach of children.
- **Hygienic**, regularly cleaned and maintained conditions protect against vermin, bacteria, mildew, lead, asbestos and other dust allergens.
- **Non-slip** floors, stairs, steps, grounds and nonporous indoor floors for easy cleaning.
- **Renovation** dangers e.g. lead, asbestos, holes and excavations – reduce risks.
- **Pesticide** residue - dangerous chemicals should not be used to remove vermin.
- **Safety glass** is installed according to the Australian Standards on all glass doors and windows accessible to children, and safety decals on both sliding doors and plate glass doors at child and adult eye level.
- **Security** - minimising unauthorised access with appropriate fencing and locks.
- **Spills** – clean away as they occur.
- **Under Service access** (including buildings on stilts and footings) – lock or block access.
- **Window fly screens** securely fitted, maintained and permanent.
- **Hazards and driveways**. Maintain fences, have correct height, install childproof self- locking devices on gates.
- **Bikes and wheeled toys** – it is recommended that correctly fitted helmets be worn every time children use 'bikes' and wheeled toys.
- **Car park** – ensure family members are aware of pedestrian safety rules such as holding their child's hand and alighting children from the safety door. Encourage families to always supervise their children in the car park to prevent accidents and injuries, which could occur as a result of reversing vehicles.
- **Finger entrapment –** all holes or openings in playground equipment must be between 8-25 mm.
- **First aid kit is approved**, maintained, and accessible throughout outdoor play.
- **Hazardous Plants** – identify and remove or make inaccessible to children.
- **Machinery, tools and equipment** – ensure all engine operated or other hazardous equipment, tools or machinery are stored securely and are inaccessible to children.
- **Pet and animal droppings** cleared or inaccessible to children in outdoor areas, exclude dogs from children's play areas, finger proof pet enclosures, supervise pet interactions with children.

- **Pool safety, fencing and gate compliance**, paddling pools emptied immediately after use, turn upside down, disinfected if soiled.
- **Safe play rules and adequate safe play areas** - talk with children about how to play safely. Maintain safe layouts for outdoor play areas to avoid collisions between children.
- **Sandpits** - cover when not in use, regularly clean, rake, and remove sand soiled by faeces or blood. Hose sandpits at end of day after removing contaminated sand and material.
- **Soft fall** - appropriate ground cover under outdoor climbing and play equipment, meets standards.
- **Sun protection** clothing, hats, and sunscreen, for unshaded areas - minimise play at peak sun exposure times. Install a sunshade over sandpits and play areas.
- **Ensure children are visible and supervised at all times**. High-risk areas and climbing and other outdoor play equipment. Make hazardous equipment, machinery, chemicals, and any other materials inaccessible to children.
- **Water hazards** - cover and make inaccessible to children, e.g. ponds, dams, spas, creeks, nappy buckets.
- Water troughs are to be used under adult supervision only and will not be used without a stand, keeping it off the ground. Children are to remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough
- **Play equipment** that is higher than 50cm has soft fall installed underneath at least 25cm in depth under and 1.9m from the perimeter of the equipment. Place outdoor play equipment away from paths and solid garden edging.
- **Surfacing** used underneath and around equipment complies with Australian and New Zealand Standards AS/NZS 4422, 1996, and is maintained regularly; materials may need to be raked, redistributed and checked weekly for spiders, sharp objects or animal litter.

Checklist: Indoors

- **Access for children and adults with disability** - ensure safe access into, within and out of the Service, security, toilet and washing facilities, and check for hazards for wheelchairs and people with impaired sight, hearing or mobility.
- **Barriers** - age appropriate, child proof, self-locking barriers to balconies, stairways, kitchen, bathroom, laundry, garage, other levels in the Service, front and back garden.
- **Children at risk** – maintain extra security and supervision for children at special risk.
- **Choking hazards** e.g. small toy parts, beads, nuts, blind and curtain cords, plastic bags, sandwich bags and balloons.
- **Decorations and children's artwork** – do not place near ceiling fans, air conditioners or heaters. Avoid use of tacks, pins, and staples.
- **Emergency evacuation** – develop an evacuation plan and emergency contact numbers display, inform families, and practice evacuation procedures.
- **Fire** – fire blanket, extinguisher, fire exits, smoke detectors, electrical safety switch.
- **First aid** kit with approved contents is maintained and accessible. Ensure First Aid certificates are current for relevant educators.
- **Furniture and nursery equipment** - stable, maintained and meets safety standards.
- **Guard and make inaccessible to Children:** heaters, coolers, fireplaces, stoves, microwaves, power points, and office equipment. Ensure heaters are away from children's cots.
- **Hazardous indoor and outdoor plants** identify, remove or make inaccessible to children.

- **Heaters –** ensure that children cannot come in contact with hot surfaces. It is preferable to use heating where combustion products are ducted outside. If gas heating is used ensure there is adequate ventilation while the heater is operating.
- **Hot water** - ensure the hot water supply is regulated so as to keep it below the temperature at which a child can be scalded (the current KidSafe recommendation is below 43.5°C).
- **Machinery, tools and equipment** – ensure all engine operated or other hazardous equipment, tool or machinery are stored securely and are inaccessible to children.
- **Noise** – reduce excessive exposure.
- **Non-slip, non-porous** floors, stairs.
- **Pets and animals** – inform families of pets being kept on premises and plans to obtain new pets. Ensure pets are vaccinated, wormed, don't have fleas, clean, and healthy. Keep pet accessories such as pet food, litter boxes, pet toys away from children. Exclude dogs from children's play areas. Keep children-pet interactions minimal and supervise interaction times.
- **Record details** and notify parents of any child accident.
- **Safe play rules and adequate play spaces**: discourage running indoors and safe furniture layout to avoid collisions.
- **Safety glass used and installed** according to Australian Standards, and Australian Building Codes on all glass doors and windows accessible to children, **safety decals** on sliding doors and plate glass doors at child and adult eye level.
- **Security** – ensure all entry doors are locked at all times and place bells on doors.
- **Smoke free environment** in all areas.
- **Educators personal items** – ensure educator's personal items such as bags, sharp instruments, toiletries and medicines are kept secure and are inaccessible to children.
- **Stairways,** ramps, corridors, hallway, external balcony must be enclosed to prevent a child falling.
- **Store in locked cabinet** any unsafe items, e.g. chemicals, medicines, razors, knives and electrical equipment.
- **Supervision and visibility of children –** ensure children are visible and supervised at all times. High risk areas are children in high chairs, playpens and play areas, on change tables, and in nappy change and toilet areas.
- **Toys** – meet safety standards, age appropriate, maintained, and non-toxic.

Cleaning of Buildings, Premises, Furniture and Equipment

General Cleaning

- Educators will clean the care Residence at the end of each day and throughout the day as needed.
- Accidents and spills will be cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the service always maintains a high level of cleanliness and hygiene.

When purchasing, storing and/or using any dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, educators will:

- All dangerous chemicals, substances and equipment must be stored in a locked place or facility which is labelled, secure and inaccessible to children. These materials may include, but are not limited to, all cleaning materials, detergents, poisonous or dangerous substances, dangerous tools and equipment including those with sharp and razor edges and toiletries.

- Store all dangerous chemicals, substances and medicines in their original containers provided by the manufacturer. All labels and/or use by dates should be kept intact at all times.
- Any substance found to be stored in a different container than originally provided, or with destroyed labels and/or unknown use by dates where appropriate will not be used under any circumstances.
- Educators should follow the instructions of manufacturers, particularly of any product which may need to be stored in a refrigerated environment pursuant to the aforementioned directives.
- Any substances that need to be refrigerated must be stored in a labelled, child resistant container, preferably in a separate compartment or in a part of the refrigerator inaccessible to children.
- Appropriate personal protective clothing should be worn in accordance to the manufacturer's instructions when using and disposing of hazardous substances or equipment.
- Containers should be disposed of correctly following local council guidelines, and not reused under any circumstances.
- All hazardous chemicals must be supplied with a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) formerly called a Material Data Safety Sheet. educators will adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for use, storage, and first aid instructions recorded on the SDS.
- Seek medical advice immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhaled, skin or eye exposure has occurred, or call the Poisons Information Line on 13 11 26, or call an Ambulance on 000.
- In the case of any child becoming injured by a chemical, substance or equipment, the educator will initiate our emergency, medical and first aid procedures, notify the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety immediately and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines.
- Adhere at all times to manufacturer's advice and instructions when using products to clean furniture and equipment at the service.
- In any major emergency involving a hazardous chemical or equipment, a hazardous gas or a fire or explosion hazard, call the emergency services, dial 000 and notify the appropriate authority that administers workplace health and safety and any other person or authority as required by regulations or guidelines.

Hand washing

In order to assist in preventing the transmission of germs is effective handwashing. Adults and children should wash their hands:

- When hands are visibly dirty
- When coming inside from being outside
- On arrival
- Before you eat
- Before you prepare food items
- After touching raw meats like chicken or beef
- After contact with any body fluids like blood, urine or vomit
- After changing infant or adult nappies
- After touching animals or pets-
- After blowing your nose or sneezing
- After meals

- After going to the toilet

Disinfectants

Disinfectants are usually unnecessary as very few germs can survive exposure to fresh air and natural light. In an outbreak situation, public health units may specify the use of a particular disinfectant. In this situation, for the disinfectant to work effectively, there still needs to be thorough cleaning using a detergent beforehand.

Essentially, there is no ideal disinfectant. Disinfectants cannot kill germs if the surface is not clean. It is more important to ensure: Surfaces have been cleaned with detergent and warm water than to use a disinfectant. To kill germs, any disinfectant needs:

- A clean surface to be able to get to the germ.
- To be able to act against those particular germs.
- To be of the right concentrate.
- Enough time to kill the germs, this is at least 10 minutes.

Detergents

Proper cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rising then drying and airing time kills most germs from surfaces as they are unable to multiply in a clean environment. Cleaning equipment should be stored and taken care of so it can dry between uses and not multiply germs itself.

Nappy change area

Nappy change areas need to be cleaned after each use with disinfectant. Refer to Nappy Changing Policy

Clothing

- Educators clothing should be washed daily.
- Educators should also have a change of clothes available in case of accidents.
- Dress-up and play clothes should be washed weekly.

Toy Cleaning

Educators are required to clean the children's equipment and toys weekly in order to minimise cross contamination and the spread of illnesses. Educators will wash a toy immediately if it has been sneezed on, mouthed, and soiled or if it has been discarded after play by a child who has been unwell. The educator will have washable toys for the younger children.

Recommended cleaning materials:

- Most toys can be washed with normal dishwashing liquid, rinsing with clean water.
- Get into corners with a toothbrush and allow to air dry (if possible in the natural sunlight)
- Leaving items such as LEGO and construction blocks to drain on a clean tea-towel overnight is idyllic.

Wooden Toys:

- Should be wiped over with a damp cloth – please do not immerse in water as this can destroy the equipment

Play Dough

Educators will reduce the risk of the spread of disease when playing with play dough by:

- Encouraging hand washing before and after using play dough
- Storing the play dough in a sealed container in the refrigerator between uses
- Making a new batch of play dough each week, and

- If there is an outbreak of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, discarding the playdough at the end of each day during the outbreak.

Rattles and Baby Toys:

- Must not be immersed in water as it can get inside, rendering the toy useless.
- Wipe thoroughly with hot water or a cloth with diluted vinegar.

Ride-on Vehicles and Outdoor Toys:

- Must be cleaned.
- Please take care not leave them exposed to the elements as this reduces their lifespan.

Puzzles and Games:

- Wooden puzzles as per 'Wooden Toys' above.
- Cardboard should be wiped over with a slightly damp cloth.

UV/Sun Safe Policy

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life (Cancer Council Australia).

PURPOSE

By implementing a 'best practice' Sun Safe Policy, our Family Day Care (FDC) Service can help to protect all children and staff from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and teach children good sun protection habits from an early age to reduce their risk. To ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators and staff to minimise unsafe UV exposure.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistants, children, families, students, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our FDC Service will work in compliance with the National SunSmart Early Childhood Program to ensure children's health and safety is maintained at all times whilst at the Service. This policy applies to all activities at a FDC residence, or whilst engaging in regular outings and excursions.

MONITORING UV LEVELS

Sun protection is required when UV levels reach level 3 or above. FDC educators will monitor the UV levels daily through one or more of the following methods:

- using the smartphone SunSmart global UV app available at iTunes App Store and Google Play store
- using the SunSmart widget on the Service's website available at www.cancer.org.au
- viewing the Bureau of Meteorology website http://www.bom.gov.au/
- visiting www.myuv.com.au

1. Outdoor Activities

The service will use a combination of sun protection measures whenever **UV Index levels reach 3 and above.** This will include:

- From mid-August to the end of April (when Victoria's UV levels are typically above three) sun protection is required at all times. Extra sun protection is needed between 11am and 3pm and during this period outdoor activities should be minimised. Minimising outdoor activities includes reducing both the number of times (frequency) and the length of time (duration) children are outside.
- From April to September (excluding June and July) outdoor activity can take place at any time. However, from 10am – 2pm sun protection is required.
- In June and July when the UV index is mostly below 3, sun protection is not required. Extra care is needed for services in warmer areas and for all children who have very fair skin.
- All sun protection measures (including recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be considered when planning excursions and incursions.

2. Shade

The educator will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Regular shade assessments should be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade.

3. Hats

Educators and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. A sun safe hat is:

- Legionnaire hat.
- Bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm).
- Broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).

Please note: Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended. Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

4. Clothing

When outdoors, educators and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes wearing:

- Loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline.
- Longer style skirts, shorts and trousers.
- Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing.

Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.

5. Sunscreen

All educators and children will apply SPF50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours. Sunscreen is stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored.

6. Babies

- Babies under 12 months will not be exposed to direct sunlight and are to remain in dense shade when outside. They will wear sun safe hats and clothing and small amounts of SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to their exposed skin.
- check the baby's clothing, hat and shade positioning regularly to ensure they continue to be well protected from UV.

If babies are kept out of the sun or well protected from UV radiation by clothing, hats and shade, then sunscreen need only be used occasionally on very small areas of a baby's skin. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended

RISKS OF SUMMER PLAY

Australia has a hot climate and inevitably playground equipment and surfacing can heat up rapidly and retain heat. Many playground surfaces and equipment can exceed temperatures greater than 50°C and if young children come into contact with these surfaces, they can be burned severely within seconds.

The FDC educator and coordinator will:

- ensure risk assessments are conducted to identify any potential hazards to children during summer months that could cause harm or injury to children. Risk minimisation control measures will be put in place to protect children. Potential hazards could include:
    - hot equipment- slides, poles, guardrails, any metal surfaces
    - hot surfaces- rubber and synthetic grass, walkways, concrete surfaces
    - sun burn
    - access to bodies of water (filled water troughs/containers/trays/pools)
- use a thermometer or their hand to test surface temperature and make an informed decision about permitting children to play on equipment or in the outdoor space. If the surface temperature is determined to be too hot or is recorded as at or above 50°C it is recommended by Kidsafe Australia that children do NOT play on the surface
- ensure children wear shoes when playing in the outdoor area [children may remove shoes when playing in sand or mud pit]

7. Role Modelling

Educators will act as role models and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by:

- Wearing a sun safe hat (see Hats).
- Wearing sun safe clothing (see Clothing).
- Applying SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors.
- Using and promoting shade.
- Wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard1067 (optional).

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

8. Education and Information

Sun protection information will be promoted to educators, families and visitors. Further information, support and free resources are available from the Cancer Council website www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart or call the SunSmart Information Line on 02 9334 1761.

9. Policy Availability

The sun protection policy, updates and requirements (including hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be made available to educators.

10. Review

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will monitor and review the effectiveness of our sun protection policy regularly, at least once every 12 months.

Delivery and Collection of Children

The following procedure must be adhered to at all times to ensure the safety of the children.

Arrival:

- All children must be signed in by their parent or person who delivers the child to the educator.
- An educator is to check the sign in sheet ensuring families have signed their child in. If families have not signed the child in, educator is to comply with Regulation 158.
- An educator will greet and receive each child to ensure the child is cared for at all times.

Departure:

- All children must be signed out by their parent or person who collects the child from the educator.
- Children can only be collected by a parent, an authorised nominee named on their enrolment record, or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee to collect the child. Children may leave the premises if a parent or authorised nominee provides written authorisation for the child to leave the premises.
- Children will not be released into the care of a person not authorised to collect the child e.g. court orders concerning custody and access. If an unauthorised person is not willing to leave the premises without the child the educator will call the police.
- Educators will ensure that the authorised nominee pick-up information for each child is kept up to date in the child enrollment form.
- No child will be released into the care of anyone not known to educators. Parents must give prior notice where:
    - the person collecting the child is someone other than those mentioned on the enrolment form (e.g. in an emergency) or
    - There is a variation in the persons picking up the child, including where the child is collected by an authorised nominee who is unknown to educators.
- If educators do not know the person by appearance, the person must be able to produce some photo identification. If educators cannot verify the person's identity they may be unable to release the child into that person's care.
- If the person collecting the child appears to be intoxicated, or under the influence of drugs, and educators feel that the person is unfit to take responsibility for the child, educators will:
    - discuss their concerns with the person, if possible without the child being present
    - Suggest they contact another parent or authorised nominee to collect the child.
    - Educators will inform the police of the circumstances, the person's name and vehicle registration number if the person insists on taking the child. Educators cannot prevent an incapacitated parent from collecting a child, but must consider their obligations under the relevant child protection laws.
- At the end of each day educators will check all beds and the care residence including outdoors and indoors to ensure that no child remains on the premises after the service closes.
- Children may leave the care Residence in the event of an emergency, including medical emergencies.
- Details of absences during the day will be recorded using the harmony software.

To ensure we can meet Work Health and Safety requirements and ensure the safety of our children, individuals visiting educators residence must sign in when they arrive at the service, and sign out when they leave.

WATER SAFETY POLICY

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This policy relates to managing water safety including any activity involving water play, excursions near water, safety around hot water and hygiene practices with water at Family Day Care (FDC) approved residences. Children will be supervised at all times during water play experiences to help keep children safe in and around water and support children's learning in a safe environment.

PURPOSE

To ensure the safety and supervision of children in and around water. This includes water play, excursions near water hazards, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Family Day Care Service environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistants, children, families, students and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

WATER HAZARDS

The National Regulations make reference to '*water hazards'* however the term is not expressly defined. In this policy, a water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth and a 'water hazard' may include:

- large bodies of water such as dams, creeks, river or pooling water, swimming pool, portable pools and spas, jetted bathtubs (or Jacuzzis)
- fishponds
- smaller bodies of water such as baths, nappy/mop buckets
- sinks, basins
- water features, such as a wishing well
- containers for feeding animals
- water troughs, containers
- beach

DROWNING

Drowning is one of the major causes of unintentional death for children 0-4 years. According to the Life Saving Society of Australia an annual average of 30 drowning deaths of children aged 0-4 years occur in swimming pools and 5 drowning deaths of children 0-4 years in bathtubs/spa baths.

(Kidsafe, 2020).

Although home swimming pools are the most common site for drowning, children can drown in just a few centimetres of water. Adult supervision of young children is therefore critical when any child is in or around water.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for managing water safety, including during any water-based activities and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

Legal requirements for pools, spas, paddling pools and other water troughs vary across each state and territory. Family Day Care approved providers must ensure they adhere to National Regulations, Council requirements and national safety standards when approving an educator and assessing the residence *before* providing care approval. Changes to improve safety of children at Family Day Care (FDC) residences around any water hazard, water feature or swimming pools has been highlighted in the NQF Review 2019 under regulation 116 effective from October 2023.

Swimming or water-based activities must only take place at patrolled beaches or public swimming pools where appropriately qualified lifeguards are on duty at all times. Lifeguards must hold relevant qualifications such as a Bronze Medallion and are not to be included in educator to child ratios. A risk assessment must be conducted prior to children participating in water-based activities such as swimming, boating, canoeing, surfing. FDC educators with a swimming pool at the FDC residence are not permitted to conduct swimming lessons within session times.

FAMILY DAY CARE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

- adhere to all obligations under the *Education and Care National Law and Regulations*
- ensure that each FDC educator and educator assistant hold current ACECQA approved first aid qualification that was attained within the previous three years (Regulation 136)
- ensure each FDC educator and educator assistant successfully completes cardio pulmonary resuscitation training (CPR) each year
- assess each proposed FDC residence before education and care is provided, to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children. Consideration must be made for residences with water hazards, swimming pools or spas as to their suitability according to the number, ages and abilities of children.
- ensure any swimming pool at the FDC residence complies with fencing requirements for fencing a swimming pool under relevant fencing laws, regulations and standards in participating jurisdiction
- conduct, record and keep monthly inspections of each FDC residence with a water hazard, water feature, swimming pools or spa, including fencing and surrounds- (either the approved provider or a person nominated by the approved provider) – see: Water Hazard Safety Inspections
- ensure the inspection is conducted in person or remotely using technology that enables the person to conduct the inspection without visiting the residence in person [conditions apply]
- provide a copy of the inspection within 7 days with a written report to the family day care educator identifying any safety risks or issues. Should any issue be identified, an estimated time needed to rectify the safety issue will be determined
- ensure additional consideration and risk assessments are conducted for FDC educators located in regional, remote and rural areas where creeks, rivers and canals are located. In additional consideration must be made when managing risk where other water hazards exist such as: water troughs for animals, dams and waterways.
- ensure premises adjacent to or providing access to any water hazards that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times (e.g., dams, swimming pool) are to be isolated from children by a child resistant barrier or fence
- ensure a diagram showing the areas of a FDC residence indicating areas of the residence for the provision of education and care to children. The diagram must also indicate the existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pools.
- ensure no person engages in swimming whilst education and care is provided by the FDC educator (including other children who live at the residence)
- ensure swimming pools or spas have a safety device has been installed to alert or deter a child from entering the water.
- ensure detailed risk assessments are completed for any identified water hazards and water-based activities
- ensure boundary barriers around pools and spas comply with Australian Standards including
    - self-locking gates
    - making spas inaccessible with locked pool cover and isolation barriers at least 1.2m high
    - ensure pool barriers are at least 1.8m high

    - ensuring any doors that form part of the pool barrier have a self-closing mechanism and child resistant lock
    - making pool filters inaccessible to children
- ensure a diagram showing the areas of a FDC residence indicating areas of the residence for the provision of education and care to children is clearly displayed for families to view. The diagram must also indicate the existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pools.
- inform all families of FDC educator residences that have swimming pools or spas and the risk mitigation strategies that have been implemented to provide safety for their child whilst in the care of the educator
- provide direction and education to educators, ~~e~~ducator assistants and families on the importance of children's safety and supervision in and around water
- ensure health and safety practices are incorporated to ensure safe storage of water and water play
- ensure any items around the perimeter of the pool (for example, tables, chairs, pot plants etc.) are not able to be used as a climbing aid for children
- ensure a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) chart is displayed near any swimming pool, wading pool, or body of water
- ensure any containers that hold or collects water, such as nappy buckets, ponds, spas must be safely covered or made inaccessible to children
- ensure educators maintain a back-up communication device that is kept in a permanent location and is always available in an emergency.
- notify the regulatory authority of any serious incident whilst a child is being educated and cared for by the FDC service

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS/ EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- ensure a diagram showing the areas of the FDC residence indicating areas of the residence approved for the provision of education and care to children is clearly displayed for families to view. The diagram must also indicate the existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pools.
- complete risk assessments that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities
- ensure all water hazards have Australian Standard barriers- fencing; self-closing mechanism and child-resistant locks and that fencing complies with relevant fencing laws, regulations and standards in participating jurisdiction
- complete and assist in record keeping of monthly inspections of swimming pools, spas and water features
- take action within the given time frame to rectify any identified safety issue and mitigate risks associated with it before it is rectified
- ensure pools or spas have a safety device installed to alert or deter a child from entering the water
- ensure a back-up communication device is available at all times, located in a permanent location in FDC residence
- ensure adequate supervision is provided when participating in water activities including:
    - supervising children near water at all times
    - never leave children alone near any water
    - direct and constant monitoring of children
    - scanning and moving around the environment

- observing play and anticipating behaviour

- conduct a risk assessment in accordance with the regulatory requirements (regulation 101) prior to taking children on an excursion, clearly identifying any water hazard and indicating how this is assessed and managed
    - seek approval by the Approved Provider before any outing/excursion is conducted
    - ensure all emergency procedures are adhered to whilst on any excursion as per *Excursion Policy*
- gain prior written authorisation from parents, indicating any water hazard and educator to child ratios that will be applied to ensure supervision requirements are met, prior to any excursion.
    - for children who are less than 3 years- 1 adult to each child
    - for children who are at least 3 years but not yet 6 years- 1 adult to 2 children
    - for children 6 years and over- 1 adult to 4 years
- ensure children in a bath (if required) are
    - directly supervised at all times and;
    - remain within arm's reach of educator
- ensure fish / frog ponds and water features that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times and/or pose an unacceptable risk to children are guarded or effective barriers are in place
- complete a daily *Water Safety Check* of premises to ensure that all hazards are known and minimised (including items close to a pool fence that could provide climbing access). When a hazard or potential hazard is detected, the educator will complete a risk assessment to address any concerns and children will be excluded from the area until the hazard has been rectified.
- utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program
- allow the children the opportunity to experiment with water, sand, and mixing materials
- incorporate water safety awareness into the educational program
- monitor all taps on the premises that children have access to and ensure they are turned off securely when not in use
- safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers, e.g., mop buckets, nappy bucket
- empty wading pools immediately after every use and store to prevent the collection of water, e.g., upright
- check for and empty any water that has collected in holes or containers after rainfall or watering gardens
- ensure water troughs are not used without a stand to keep it off the ground.
- ensure children remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough
- ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied into the garden areas after **each** use
- ensure wading pools are hygienically cleaned, disinfected and chlorinated appropriately:
    - on a daily basis remove leaves and debris, hose away surface dirt and scrub inside with disinfectant
    - wash away disinfectant before filling pool
    - add Chlorine to pool before children used the pool
    - check chlorine levels frequently
    - children with diarrhoea, upset stomach, open sores or nasal infections should not use the pool

- all children should wear appropriate swimwear / bathers, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toilet hygiene practices while in the pool
- remove all children immediately, empty and disinfect the pool should a child pass a bowel motion whilst in the pool

- discourage children from drinking from these water activities (as above)
- ensure laundry, storerooms have signage to remind the educator/adults to close doors behind them
- ensure buckets of water for soaking toys or clothing are inaccessible to children
- teach children about staying safe in and around water
- notify the approved provider if any serious incident occurs whilst a child is being educated and cared for by the educator

OPERATIONAL SAFETY

- Water tanks will be labelled with "Do Not Drink" signage and the children will be supervised in this area to make sure they are not accessing this water for drinking
- The educator will discuss with the children the use of water tank water and how it differs from drinking water
- Hot water accessible to children will be maintained at the temperature of 45.C° which will be tested annually (AS 3498)
- Hot drinks are not to be consumed near children by educators
- Water for pets at the FDC residence must be changed daily and only be accessible to children when the educator or educator assistant is supervising.

IMPORTANT: Parents will be notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in an incident/accident at the FDC Service or while under Service care.

Details of the incident/accident will be recorded on an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*.

Regulation 176: If the incident/accident, situation or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the child or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours by the Approved Provider.

FDC Educators will follow emergency procedures and contact emergency services if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for or is involved in a serious incident or accident.

Trampolines

There is an Australian Standard for domestic trampolines (AS 4989). Educators with trampolines must purchase a domestic trampoline that complies with Australian Standard to ensure quality materials and design. Safe use instructions provided by the Standard include:

- installing, maintaining and using according to the user's guide
- ensuring a clear falling space and impact area for trampolines and provide a soft surface with a minimum of 1500mm around the trampoline
- understanding trampolines are not suitable for children under 6 years of age
- allowing only one child at a time to use the trampoline
- supervising children on a trampoline at all times
- checking the net, springs, bed and frame regularly to ensure that each part is secure and in good condition. Additional safety recommendations include:

- setting up trampolines (above ground level) on a flat, soft surface such as mulch, sand or well-maintained grass
- securing the trampoline legs to the ground to increase stability and prevent it being moved, or as required by Family Day Care coordinator
- ensuring that the area above the trampoline is also clear - a minimum of 8m from ground level is recommended
- providing access to the trampoline with linking ladders, planks or chairs.

Maintenance inspection

Educators are required to regularly inspect all equipment for wear and tear and take appropriate action to remove from the care environment or replace equipment.

Kitchens

- Children must not gain access to any harmful substance, equipment or amenity
- The kitchen has a barrier to prevent unsupervised entry by children into the kitchen.
- The preparation of bottles for children under the age of 2 years is both safe and hygienic at all times and separate from nappy change area.

Maintenance of Fire Equipment

All fire equipment at educators' care Residences will be maintained as per the legal standards.

Nutrition, food & beverage, dietary requirements:

Kids planet family day care services recognises the importance of a well-balanced diet for children. We aim to make sure that children under our educators (carers) receive the best possible healthy and safe environment for their wellbeing. Practices for nutrition, food & beverage, dietary requirements to be followed are:

Minimising risk

- Safe eating practices will be implemented to minimise risk of choking e.g. babies will be nursed when feeding from bottles until they are comfortable holding their own bottles.

Communication with families

- The family day care educator will consult and collaborate with families to best ensure children's nutritional needs are met.
- Food and dietary preferences as indicated by families [such as vegetarianism, religious needs] will be accounted for in the menu planning.
- The family day care educator will communicate with parent/s/families about the child's daily intake and output of food and fluids.
- Any diagnosed allergies of the child will be clearly written on the enrolment form.
- In consultation with parent/s/families, the family day care educator will develop an action plan for children with food allergies. Parents of a child with a known food allergy are to provide the family day care educator with medical action plan.

Food and beverages provided by the family day care educator

- The family day care educator will provide age and developmentally appropriate and adequate foods. These foods will meet children's nutritional requirements that are consistent with the recommendations of the Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and/or the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
- Food and beverages will take into account each child's growth and development needs and any specific

cultural, religious or health requirements.

- Food and beverages will be provided on a regular basis throughout the day.
- The family day care educator will plan and implement a menu that reflects current dietary guidelines.
- The weekly menu will be displayed, made accessible to parents, and accurately describe the food and beverages provided by the family day care educator each day.
- Families will be provided with opportunities to contribute to the menu planning.
- Access to safe drinking water will be provided at all times.
- Food provided by the family
- The family day care educator will encourage families to provide the child in care with suitable age appropriate foods that meet the child's nutritional needs.
- If food that does not meet the nutritional needs of the child is provided by the family, the family day care educator will inform parents that the food they provide must adhere to the *Nutrition, food and beverages and dietary requirements policy.*

Special occasions and celebrations

- Snack foods such as cakes, biscuits and takeaway foods will be limited in line with healthy eating and drinking directions from the National Heart Foundation
- The family day care educator can support the celebration of special occasions and cultural festivals but will ensure that food brought from the child's home adheres to the family day care service's *Nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements policy*.

Children and food safety

- Individual serving plates and bowls will be used.
- Encourage children to eat and drink at the table to promote hygiene and safe eating practices.
- All children will be supervised when they are drinking from nursing bottles.
- Educators are encouraged to sit and eat with children to role model healthy eating practices and also enable educators to guide acceptable eating behaviours.

Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-free Environment

Family day care educators will provide an environment that is free from the use of tobacco, illegal and illicit drugs and alcohol.

The use of, or being intentionally under the influence of, alcohol or recreational drugs/other mind-altering substances at the service whilst children are in care is not tolerated. The family day care educator found to be in breach of this policy shall cease work immediately.

Any breach of these procedures will result in termination of the family day care educator's registration as a member of the Family Day Care Service and the grievance procedures set out in this service policy manual will not apply.

- The family day care educator will not smoke whilst children are in care.
- The family day care educator will not be affected by alcohol or drugs, including prescription drugs, so as to impair their capability to provide care and education to the children.
- Family day care educators will use best endeavours to ensure children in care are not exposed at any time to tobacco smoke, alcohol or illicit drugs.
- The family day care educator must ensure no person at the family day care residence and/or Residence smokes, takes illicit drugs or drinks alcohol on the premises during care hours.

- All alcohol will be placed in a cupboard or storage unit out of the reach of the children.
- The family day care educator will inform families and visitors to the residence and/or Residence of the tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment.

climb, not jump, off the trampoline. Refer to the Kidsafe SA brochure on trampoline safety. Conduct a risk.

3. Supervision Policy

Supervision is defined as 'the active awareness of the responsibility to act in the best interest of all involved in the service to provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment that promotes, supports, builds on and challenges children's learning and development.'

PURPOSE

Educators have a duty of care to ensure children are supervised at all times, as they maintain a safe and secure environment adhering to National Regulations. Supervision, together with thoughtful design and arrangement of children's environments, assists in the prevention and severity of injury to children.

Educators will actively supervise children, identifying risks and minimising injury. Effective supervision of children provides with Educators with the opportunity to support and build on children's play experiences.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

Management will ensure:

- That the education/care Residence and facilities are designed and maintained to facilitate supervision of children at all times while maintaining the rights and dignity of all children.
- Regulatory Authorities are notified of any serious incident, within 24hours of the incident or the time that the person becomes aware of the incident.
- Minimum Educator qualification requirements are recognised under the National Quality Framework.
- Kids Planet Family Day Care Services maintains the required educator-to-child ratio working directly with children at all times, based on the ages and number of children being educated and cared for by the educator.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will:

- Ensure that all Educators are aware of the children and their environment.
- Ensure Educators avoid activities or actions that will distract them from supervision, such as speaking to other Educators for long periods of time, taking personal phone calls, checking mobile phone or administrative tasks.
- Ensure Educators are aware if they need to move away, another Educator is to replace them.
- Educators are positioned allowing them to watch the maximum area possible.
- Ensure Educators move around the environment to ensure best view of the area and to avoid standing with their back to the children or being occupied.
- Assess and plan ongoing supervision taking into consideration the layout of the premises and grounds, any higher risk activities, the presence of any animals, the location of activities and the location of bathroom and nappy change facilities. The supervision plan and strategies will be displayed for families in all rooms and in the outdoor area.
- Ensure that a Risk Assessment & Management Plan is carried out before an authorisation is requested for

an excursion. The risk assessment will consider and identify the number of adults required to ensure continuous adequate supervision throughout the excursion.

- Ensure that parents are notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in a serious incident/situation at the Service. Also, details of the incident/situation is recorded on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record
- Ensure that if the incident, situation or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the child or if an ambulance was called in response (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours.

Educators will:

- Have a sound understanding of their duty of care and responsibilities in ensuring children are within a safe environment.
- Maintain correct ratios adhering to the National Education Regulations throughout the education and care environment.
- Ensure that all children are in sight or hearing at all times.
- That no child will be left alone while eating or at nappy change and toileting times.
- Supervise children during rest time in accordance with the Sleep and Rest Time Policy.
- Ensure that hazardous equipment and chemicals are inaccessible to children.
- Certify that interactions with children are meaningful and respectful.
- Encourage children's individuality whilst respecting their strengths and needs.
- Scan the environment during interacting with individuals or small groups.
- Implement reliable supervision strategies and not perform other duties while responsible for the supervision of children.
- Listen closely to children whilst supervising areas that may not be in a direct line of sight.
- Scan and look around the area to observe all the children in the vicinity.
- There is a mixture of activities to allow for appropriate supervision.

Consideration will be given to the design and arrangement of children's environments to support active supervision by:

- Using supervision skills to recognise areas of risk therefore reducing the potential for injury or incident to children and adults.
- Guiding Educators to make decisions about when children's play needs to be interrupted and redirected.
- Supporting Educators with specific strategies.
- Providing direct, constant and proximal monitoring to children undertaking activities that involve some risk.

Supervision Procedure

Educators/staff can identify high-risk experiences and develop strategies, depending on the age and development of children, where the constant supervision of children is required or where children may only require supervision from a distance. They will do this by:

- **Practicing awareness -** a skill that requires a knowledge of children, including knowing each child's range of skills, interests, ability to interact with others and developmental stage. Knowledge of children helps Educators to monitor and enhance skills that promote children's positive behaviour.

- **Planned positioning** - a skill that requires being able to see all of the children. Educators position themselves to be aware of the entire environment and to see all children in care. All children are monitored by sight or sound at all times.
- **Being alert to the surrounding environment** - a skill that involves regularly glancing and listening within the environment to see children's involvement and what is happening.
- **Use redirection** - a skill used as an aid in preventing undesirable and unsafe behaviour. Children are redirected to other areas/activities when undesirable behaviour is Immanent or occurs. This technique helps ensure the safety of all children. For this to be effective, Educators need to be knowledgeable of the children in their care and any behaviour plans that are current.
- Provide close supervision for all children in areas that are near equipment where injury may occur, requires the use of the above methods and being in close proximity to the children. Children waiting to be picked up due to illness or injury are kept safe, comfortable, and under close supervision.
- Educators are aware of the different ages, personalities, behaviours and characteristics of the children in their care to ensure that supervision is relevant and effective.
- Implement consistent supervision strategies and not perform other duties while responsible for the supervision of children.
- Being aware of the importance of communicating with each other about their location within the environment.
- Actively supervising bathroom facilities.
- Being aware of blind spots within the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Having a sound understanding of the supervision plan, outlining designated positions for educators to supervise the children.
- Minimise hazards within the environment to ensure children's safety is maintained.

4. Sleeping Requirements Policy

PURPOSE

The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires approved providers and nominated supervisors to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children's sleep and rest having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children. Our Sleep and Rest Policy will assist management and FDC educators ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs whilst attending the FDC service.

Our Family Day Care educators will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) for infants will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by the national authority on safe sleeping practice for infants and children- Red Nose (formerly SIDS and Kids). Our policy sets out quality practice and is informed by recognised and evidence-based principles. Safe Sleep practices are informed by Red Nose and guidance from ACEQCA.

We have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard. In meeting the Service's duty of care, it is a requirement that all educators and educator assistants implement and adhere to this policy and associated procedure to ensure we respect and cater for each child's specific needs and ensure all risks are appropriately addressed at all times.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers, students and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns, which nominated supervisors and educators need to consider within the service. As per Standard 2.1 (element 2.1.2) of the National Quality Standard, each child's comfort must be provided for and there must be appropriate opportunities to meet each child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.

Our service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquility, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of children's day, we feel that it is important for children to participate in a quiet/rest period during the day in order to rest, relax and recharge their body. Effective rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in an early childhood environment.

Educators will consult with families about their child's individual needs, ensuring they are aware of the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or opinions associated with sleep requirements.

SLEEP AND REST SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The approved provider, in conjunction with FDC educators, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment to ensure all protentional hazards are identified and specify how any risks identified are managed and minimised in sleep and rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines (reg. 84A).

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised during sleep or rest. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. If a risk concerning a child's safety during sleep and rest is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must update the *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Our risk assessment will consider and include the following information:

- the number, age, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- the sleep and rest needs of individual children being educated and cared for (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest)
- the suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods
- the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
- the location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas
- the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use the cots, bed and bedding equipment
- any potential hazards
    - in sleep and rest areas
    - on a child during sleep and rest periods (such as jewellery, clothing)
- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation)
- overnight care and the potential of other children or people to access children during periods of sleep and rest or access of the child to other parts of the FDC residence

(ACECQA 2023)

BASSINETS

Effective 1 October 2023, approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure bassinets are not kept on the education and care service premises. (Regulation 84D). There are no Australian Standards for bassinets and risks include the bassinet topping over or suffocation. All staff and educators will be made aware of this regulation and policy as part of their induction process. Families will be informed children will not be accepted into care in a bassinet and under no circumstances will a bassinet be permitted to remain on the premises.

APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- all nominated supervisors, coordinators, FDC educators and educator assistants are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction program and ongoing sleep and rest training is provided as part of their engagement/employment
- families are aware of this Sleep and Rest Policy
- a sleep and rest specific risk assessment is conducted at least annually to ensure all protentional hazards are controlled in sleep areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines
- all nominated supervisors, coordinators, FDC educators and educator assistants are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction program.
- nominated supervisors, coordinators, FDC educators, and educator assistants follow the policy and procedures
- opportunities are provided to all employed and engaged FDC educators and educator assistants to participate in Red Nose professional training and a record of all such training is recorded
- sleep and rest environments in FDC residences will be safe and free from hazards including cigarette and tobacco smokes
- safe sleep practices are documented and shared with families
- information is provided to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices (see Red Nose)
- up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practices is maintained and information communicated to educators and families
- educators closely monitor sleeping infants and that all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed. This involves physically checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals [add time intervals e.g., 10 minutes] and ensuring that they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so they can easily monitor a child's breathing and the colour of their skin. It is recommended that educators will not perform administrative duties that would take their attention away from sleeping/resting children- (Note: CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors do not replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children)
- educators provide children with safe sleeping equipment and environment, including adequate ventilation and adequate lighting to enable effective supervision
- educators provide a safe sleep environment by removing any soft items from the cot, such as loose blankets, pillows or toys
- educators keep the sleep and rest environment free from cigarette or tobacco smoke
- provide information to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices (see Red Nose)
- equipment and furniture used by educators are safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)
- cots used by educators meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172) and will carry a label to indicate this

- beds, cots and mattresses are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only
- sleep surfaces are checked for firmness in accordance to Australian Standard AS/NZS 8811:1:2013
- all portable cots used at the educators care residence will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for children's portable folding cots, AS/NZS 2195, and will carry a label to indicate this
- bassinets are not used or stored within the service
- educators do not accept children into care in a bassinet
- to discuss sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the FDC Service
- nominated supervisors and FDC educators are not expected to endorse practices requested by a family if they differ from Red Nose safe (formerly SIDS and Kids) sleeping recommendations.
- if any requirements differ from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required and shared with educators
- educators follow the *Administration of First Aid Policy* if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation
- the Nominated Supervisor will ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety
- the Nominated Supervisor will ensure the parent and the regulatory authority are notified as soon as possible and within 24 hours of a serious incident
- if any requirements differ from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required and shared with FDC educators.

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- have a thorough understanding of the service's policy and procedure and embed practices to support safe sleep into everyday practice
- ensure children's safety is paramount
- have a documented procedure for the supervision of sleeping children whilst also maintaining adequate supervision of children in their care
- ensure reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of each child
- ensure there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation including providing school aged children with comfortable spaces away from the main activity area for relaxation and quiet activities
- they respond to children's individual cues for sleep (yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying etc)
- ensure every reasonable precaution has been taken to protect children from harm and from hazards likely to cause injury. Hazards posing a risk of suffocation, choking, crushing or strangulation risk to children must be removed from the sleep and rest environment. (Sec. 167)
- ensure all equipment and furniture used are safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)
- ensure there are adequate numbers of cots and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards
- ensure children are only to sleep in rooms that have been safety checked as part of the FDC residence assessment process by the Approved Provider/Coordination unit. Regular safety checks of the sleep and rest environment are made, and any hazards are identified and rectified immediately

- all cots used in the FDC Service meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172) and will carry a label to indicate this
- all portable cots used in the FDC Service meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for children's portable folding cots, AS/NZS 2195, and will carry a label to indicate this
- bassinets are not used or stored within the service
- children are not accepted into care in a bassinet
- sleep surfaces are check for firmness in accordance to Australian Standard AS/NZS 8811:1:2013
- beds, cots and mattresses are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only
- any clothing or jewellery that could pose a risk of strangulation or chocking is removed prior to the infant or child placed in a sleeping space
- soft toys and comforters are not used in the sleep space for infants
- pillows, inclined sleepers or other soft items should not be used in the sleep and rest environment for children under 2
- consultation takes place with families about children's sleep and rest needs
- they record sleep and rest patterns daily to share with families
- they are sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience
- sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from hazards
- areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting
- the sleep and rest environment is free from cigarette or tobacco smoke
- the room temperature is monitored to ensure maximum comfort for the children
- a relaxing environment for sleeping children is created by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, and turning down lights
- ensure sleeping spaces are not dark- there needs to be sufficient light to allow supervision and to physically check children's breathing, lip and skin colour
- safe sleep practices are shared with families: educators are not expected to endorse practices requested by a family, if they differ from Red Nose safe (formerly SIDS and Kids) sleeping recommendations
- that sleeping infants are closely monitored and that all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed closely. This involves checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals at least once every 10 minutes and ensuring that they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so they can easily monitor a child's breathing and the colour of their skin. It is recommended that FDC educators not perform administrative duties that would take their attention away from sleeping/resting children. (Note: CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors do not replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children)
- If the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation
- ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety following an incident
- a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the Safe Sleep Record
- they assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required

- factors to be considered may include:
    - age of child
    - medical conditions (colds, respiratory condition)
    - individual needs or health issues
- children who are sleeping or resting have their face uncovered at all times
- children are encouraged to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping
- lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing
- amber teething necklaces, bibs or similar must be removed prior to sleeping to minimise choking or strangulation hazards
- ensure any soft items are removed from the cot, such as loose blankets, pillows or toys
- that beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair
- beds and mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution between each use
- beds, cots and mattresses, and associated linen and pillows are stored safely after cleaning
- bed linen is used by an individual child and is washed before use by another child
- children rest/sleep with their beds/mattresses head to toe to minimise the risk of cross infection
- they acknowledge children's emotions, feelings and fears in regard to sleep/rest time
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when sleeping and resting
- that children who **do not** wish to sleep are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, whilst those children who **do** wish to sleep are allowed to do so, without being disrupted. If a child requests a rest, or if they are showing clear signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day, there should be a comfortable, safe area available for them to rest. It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided.
- they maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educator assistants and families
- provide information to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices. (See Red Nose)
- they do not allow any visitor to the FDC residence to be left alone with any child/children
- when sleeping at the FDC residence overnight, a child will be under the supervision of the FDC educator and have access to the FDC educator at all times
- the area where a child/ren sleep overnight will be in part of the residence that has been assessed and approved by the FDC Service. Regular assessments are conducted at least annually
- procedures for overnight or extended care include-
    - how they will monitor the child/ren during the night
    - risks and physical safety of the child's sleeping environment
    - access to other parts of the house during the night
    - night-time emergency evacuation procedures/lockdown

SUPERVISION CHILDREN OF ALL AGES IN COTS

FDC Educators and Educator Assistants will:

- ensure sleeping spaces are not dark- there needs to be sufficient light to allow supervision and to physically check children's breathing, lip and skin colour
- ensure sleeping infants are closely monitored and that all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed
- ensure physical checks of a sleeping child occur at least every 10 minutes (Note: CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors do not replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children)
- physically check that the infant/child from the side of the cot (or floor mattress/toddler bed) to include:
    - breathing- rise and fall of child's chest
    - skin and lip colour
    - head position
    - body temperature
    - airway
    - head and face- ensure they remain uncovered
- ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the Safe Sleep Record [include children of all age groups on Sleep/Rest record]
- consider the circumstances and any risk factors that may mean physical checks need to be more frequent for some babies or children (e.g.; children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs that may require higher level of supervision)
- consider higher levels of supervision and conduct more frequent checks on babies or children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs
- ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the Safe Sleep Record [include children of all age groups on Sleep/Rest record]
- initiate first aid immediately including calling and ambulance and beginning resuscitation if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing
- ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety following an incident
- ensure they do not allow any visitor to the FDC residence to be left alone with any child/children

USE AND MAINTENANCE OF COTS/BEDDING

- ensure beds, cots and mattresses are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only
- ensure all equipment and furniture is safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)
- ensure cots comply with the following:
    - spaces between bars and mattress sides are as per regulations/guidelines (not more than 25mm apart)
    - spaces do not pose any danger to children- arm and leg traps/finger traps
    - cots are not painted with any paint that contains lead
    - paint work of cots is not chipped when babies are teething
    - cots have high sides- from top of mattress to top side of cot should be at least 500mm

- there are no toys, bumpers, pillows, doonas, loose bedding or fabric in the cot that could cause suffocation
- there are no sharp edges
- sleep surfaces are checked for firmness in accordance to Australian Standard AS/NZS 8811:1:2013
- bolts and screws are tight and regularly checked
- plastic packaging is removed from mattresses
- waterproof mattress protectors are strong, not torn, and a tight fit
- mattresses are not elevated or tilted

- banned/recalled products are removed immediately from the FDC Service if required
- ensure there are no choking hazards- cords, strings, bunting in the sleep environment
- use firm, clean, and well-fitting mattresses on portable cots
- beds and mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution between each use
- children's beds and cots are arranged to allow easy access for children and staff cots/stretchers are stored safely, bed linen is used by an individual child and is washed before use by another child

BABIES AND TODDLERS

Recommendations sourced from ACECQA and Red Nose

- Babies should always be placed on their back to sleep when first being settled. Once a baby has been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own, they can be left to find their own preferred sleep or rest position (this is usually around 5–6 months of age). Babies aged younger than 5–6 months, and who have not been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own, should be re-positioned onto their back when they roll onto their front or side.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a baby from being placed on their back, the alternative practice should be confirmed in writing with the Service, by the child's medical practitioner.
- Babies over four months of age can generally turn over in a cot but may not always be able to roll back again. When a baby is placed to sleep, educators should check that any bedding is tucked in securely and is not loose. Babies of this age may be placed in a safe baby sleeping bag (i.e., with fitted neck and arm holes, but no hood). At no time should a baby's face or head be covered (i.e., with linen). To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they should be positioned with their feet at the bottom of the cot.
- Ensure any bed linen is securely tucked underneath the mattress so it cannot ride up and cover the baby's chest of cover his/her head.
- If a baby is wrapped when sleeping, consider the baby's stage of development. Leave their arms free once the startle reflex disappears at around three months of age and discontinue the use of a wrap when the baby can roll from back to tummy to back again (usually four to six months of age). Use only lightweight wraps such as cotton or muslin.
- If being used, a dummy should be offered for all sleep periods. Dummy use should be phased out by the end of the first year of a baby's life (in consultation with parents). If a dummy falls out of a baby's mouth during sleep, it should not be re-inserted.
- Babies or young children should not be moved out of a cot into a bed too early; they should also not be kept in a cot for too long. When a young child is observed attempting to climb out of a cot, and looking like they might succeed, it is time to move them out of a cot. This usually occurs when a toddler is between 2 and 3 ½ years of age but could be as early as 18 months.

- Additional supervision is required if a child is wearing a baby sleeping bag whilst sleeping outside a cot. The sleeping suit should be removed as soon as the child wakes to avoid risk of falling and injury. (Red Nose).

PRE-SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

FDC Educators and Educator Assistants will:

- be respectful for children's individual sleep and rest requirements
- discuss children's sleep and rest needs with families and include children in decision making (children's agency)
- provide a tranquil and calm environment for children to rest by turning off lights, playing relaxing music, reading stories, cultural reflection
- ensure children are comfortably clothed
- encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes
- introduce relaxation techniques into rest routine- use of a relaxation tape
- ensure children sleep or rest with their face uncovered
- closely monitor sleeping and resting children
- provide quiet activities for children- puzzles, books, drawing if they do not fall asleep
- ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the Safe Sleep Record [include children of all age groups on Sleep/Rest record]
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATONS FOR CHILDREN IN CARE OUT OF CORE HOURS OR OVERNIGHT

- The FDC educator will follow an agreed and documented practice for supervision of sleeping children tailored to their unique layout and safety of their residence
- Plans should include how they will be monitored during the night; the child's access to other parts of the house; other people's access to the child's sleeping environment; night time evacuation procedures
- strict adherence to child protection measures is required for authorised FDC educators and adult household members
- any adult household members, or adults who reside in the FDC residence, are required to hold a current Working with Children Check.
- adults who stay regularly but are not full time (e.g.: one or two nights a week) still require having a WWCC
- a *Household Members Register Form* recording details of family members and regular visitors staying at the service is to be submitted to the FDC Service/FDC Coordinator
- parents must provide written authorisation before any child is permitted to sleep overnight at the FDC residence
- specific information about sleeping arrangements, including sleeping in the same space as a sibling, even if this is a normal family arrangement, must be stated in the written authorisation
- a specific suitable sleeping space should be provided for the child/ren to sleep in (not a thoroughfare or lounge area) *where possible*
- individual beds and bedding should be provided for children who regularly stay overnight
- no child is to sleep on a waterbed or beanbag
- children staying overnight will have access to the FDC educator at all times

- children are not to be taken from the premises without written authorisation of a parent or authorised nominee as stated in the child's enrolment record
- the FDC educator holds responsibility and supervision of the child/ren at all times. Supervision must not be delegated to any other family member
- a Risk Assessment for *Safe Sleep and Rest* is to be completed prior to children sleeping overnight at the FDC residence and reviewed at least every 12 months or after becoming aware of any incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children is compromised.
- educators are to ensure National Regulations and service policies are followed at all times when children are cared for, including overnight care
- educators are to ensure medical condition plans are followed at all times, including when overnight care is provided
- emergency evacuation plans and procedures are to take into consideration care that may be provided outside of core hours, including overnight care
- an FDC coordinator is to be available at all times when education and care is provided for children, including overnight care or care outside of core hours.

PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedures
- be informed that amber teething bracelets or necklaces are not to be worn at our FDC Service due to the risk of strangulation or choking
- be provided with regular information and communication about safe sleep practices from Red Nose and any changes to our policies or procedures
- be informed that if any requirements for sleep for their child differs from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required
- be provided with regular information about Safe Sleep practices from Red Nose
- be requested to provide FDC educators with regular updates on their child's sleeping routines and patterns, especially for infants
- be required to provide specific bedding for their child each day (as detailed in enrolment information).

5. Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals Policy

By maximising responsiveness of the prospective hazards of chemicals and equipment, we aim to condense the risk of harm to Educators, children and families by ensuring hazardous products are safely stored and controlled.

PURPOSE

Our Service aims to use environmentally friendly products, ensuring we provide a safe environment where chemicals and hazardous equipment are safely stored and managed away from children and are handled appropriately.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Management will ensure:

- That every practical provision is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the Service from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury. (National Law section 167.)

- All dangerous goods and hazardous substances are identified within at the educators work Residence are labelled correctly and stored in a locked up safe place away from children.
- A risk assessment has been conducted in consultation with the Health and Safety Representative prior to using any dangerous or hazardous substance.
- Educators adhere to the Service procedures for dealing with chemicals.
- Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and the Chemical Register is readily available and updated.
- Appropriate training and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided for employees who may be exposed to dangerous goods and hazardous substances.
- Relevant signage is displayed, highlighting the hazardous nature of chemicals used or stored in the workplace.
- There are emergency procedures and practices for accidental spills, contamination and corresponding first aid plans for all dangerous goods handled and stored in the Service.
- Action is taken to remove any pests or vermin by a licensed exterminator, who will provide the Service with a certificate of currency. Initially, using non-chemical methods such as physical removal, maintaining a clean environment, and use of any non-toxic products will be implemented.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will ensure:

- That there is an educator on the premises with ACECQA approved first aid qualifications at all times.
- There are appropriate storage facilities in the Service in which dangerous products are stored.
- Dangerous products will be stored in areas of the Service that are not accessible to children or in cupboards fitted with childproof locks.
- To develop a hazardous substances register and a risk assessment for any dangerous materials stored in bulk within the education and care premises.
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are maintained at the Service. Safety Data Sheets must be kept on all chemicals used on the premises. Work Health and Safety (WH&S) officers to keep this information up to date at all times – with a review of the folder annually. No SDS is to be more than 5 years old.
- Chemicals used by staff in spray bottles are clearly labelled with contents.

Educators will:

- Seek medical advice if needed by contacting the Poisons Information Line – 13 11 26 or by calling 000.
- Wear Personal Protective Clothing when handling dangerous materials.
- Strictly adhere to the 'Directions for use' on the product label.
- Dispose of all products safely, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions on the product label, Work Health and Safety regulations and Council by-laws.
- Consider minimising the use of dangerous products in the education and care service and use alternate "green cleaning" options.
- Complete daily and quarterly WHS checklists to ensure that any dangerous products used within the education and care service have current Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and are stored appropriately.
- Store all dangerous products in well-labelled and original containers that preferably have child resistant lids and caps.
- Only administer children's medications with family authorisation and in accordance with medical directions. See Medication Policy.

- Ensure medication is stored in an area inaccessible to children.
- Ensure any medications or dangerous substances that requires refrigeration, be placed in a labelled childproof container, preferably in a separate compartment of the fridge.
- Be encouraged to attend professional development sessions to maximise their awareness of dangerous products, potential hazards and source chemical free methods to reduce possible hazards in the education and care service.
- Be made aware on initial orientation at the Service, correct storage and usage procedures for potentially hazardous materials.
- Ensure cleaning and hazardous products are not be stored close to food products.
- Read the label before using any cleaning material, sprays or chemicals and be aware of appropriate first aid measures.

6. Child Protection Policy

Our Family Day Care (FDC) Service is committed to providing a child safe environment where children's safety and wellbeing is supported and children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Our FDC Service embeds the Child Safe Standards (CCS) and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging. We will ensure all management, FDC educators, staff and volunteers understand the meaning, importance and benefits of providing a child safe environment and critically, understand their obligations and requirements as mandatory reporters.

Our FDC Service adheres to the National Model Code and Guidelines for taking images or videos of children released by ACECQA 1 July 2024.

PURPOSE

All Family Day Care (FDC) educators, educator assistants, coordinators, staff and visitors are committed to identifying possible risk and significant risk of harm to children and young people at FDC residences. We comprehend our duty of care responsibilities to protect children from all types of abuse and neglect and will adhere to our moral and legislative obligations at all times. We believe children's safety is the paramount consideration for early childhood professionals and embed child safety in our daily practices, policies and procedures.

We aim to implement effective strategies to assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children. Our FDC Service will act in the best interest of each child, assisting them to develop to their full potential in a secure and child safe environment. We understand our statutory duty of care to comply with both the Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, staff, educators, educator assistants, students, individuals residing at the FDC residence, volunteers and visitors of the FDC Service.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

The World Health Organisation ([WHO], 2006, p. 9) defines child abuse and neglect as:
"All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power." (Australian Government, Australian Institute of Family Studies)

Child abuse is any action towards a child or young person that harms or puts at risk their physical, psychological or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident or can be a number of different incidents that take place over time.

DEFINITIONS

Duty of care

Duty of care refers to your responsibility to adequately protect children in care from harm. This common law concept applies to all staff members within any Victorian early childhood service and is usually expressed as "*a duty to take reasonable steps to protect children from injury that is reasonably foreseeable.*" Victoria State Government (2021).

Duty of care means:

- acting on concerns quickly and in the child's best interests
- protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care
- seeking appropriate advice or consulting when unsure
- reporting suspected child abuse to Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection or Victoria Police
- providing ongoing support to a child and their family
- sharing information, upon request, to assist DHHS Child Protection or Police to protect and/or promote the wellbeing and development of a child
- notifying the regulatory authority when required
- attending DFFH Child Protection Case Planning meetings
- Staff may breach their duty of care towards a child if they fail to act in the way a reasonable/diligent person would in the same situation.

Mandatory reporting is the legislative requirement for selected classes of people to make a report to Child Protection and/or Victoria Police where they form a reasonable belief, that a child has been or is at risk of significant harm, as a result of physical or sexual abuse, and the child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from that abuse. It is a criminal offence to fail to report in these circumstances. In Victoria (VIC) mandatory reporting is regulated by the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005.*

Mandatory reporters in Victoria, are people who deliver the following services, wholly or partly, to children as part of their paid or professional work:

- registered medical practitioners
- nurses, including midwives
- Victorian police officers
- registered teachers and school principals
- out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- early childhood workers
- youth justice workers
- registered psychologists
- school counsellors
- people in religious ministry.

https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/child-protection

Reportable conduct

The Reportable Conduct Scheme requires employees in approved education and care services (kindergartens, after school hours care services) and Children's services (occasional care providers) to notify the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) and the regulatory authority of any allegation of employee misconduct involving children. There are five types of reportable conduct:

- sexual offences committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- significant neglect of a child

TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The VIC Government identifies the following types of abuse and neglect:

- physical child abuse
- child sexual abuse
- grooming
- emotional child abuse
- neglect
- family violence
- children exhibiting inappropriate sexual behaviour

Staff within early childhood services play a vital role in protecting children from harm by responding to and reporting any incidents, disclosure or suspicions. Educators and staff are best placed to identify signs and behaviours that may indicate that a child has been subject to abuse or identify a community member, staff member, contractor or volunteer may be a perpetrator. Understanding the signs of child abuse is critical in supporting children's safety and wellbeing.

Vitoria State Government-Child protection in early childhood PROTECT provide definitions and physical indicators: Identify signs of child abuse

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

A Working with Children Check is mandatory for all employees working or volunteering with children within Education and Care Services. Working with Children Check Screening Unit Victoria will notify organisations in writing if an employee, student or volunteers Working with Children Check has been suspended or revoked. Our FDC Service will not employ or engage a person who does not hold a valid Working with Children Check.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Our FDC Service is committed to keeping children and young people safe and are compliant with the Child Safe Standards (CSS) and principles and Reportable Conduct Scheme. (See: *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*).

Our FDC Service has policies and practices in place that include robust screening of all FDC educators, educator assistants and staff members prior to employment, supervision, training and other human resources practices to reduce the risk of child abuse for new and existing staff members, processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse, strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse and strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

FAILURE TO DISCLOSE AND FAILURE TO PROTECT

Failure to disclose or take action in relation to suspected child sexual abuse can constitute a criminal offence. The law requires any adult who holds a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria, by an adult against a child (aged under 16) disclosed this information to police.

FORMING A REASONABLE BELIEF/REASONABLE GROUNDS

A person forms a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection, or their safety or wellbeing is at risk when they are more likely to accept rather than reject their suspicion and the belief is formed through disclosures, observations, or other information. Proof is not required to support your claim.

Reasonable grounds for forming a belief may include where:

- a child states they have been abused
- a child states they know someone who has been, or is being, abused
- someone who knows the child states that the child has been abused, is being abused, or is at risk of abuse
- you observe a child's behaviour, actions or injuries that may place them at risk of harm or abuse
- you are aware of persistence violence, parental substance misuse, disability that is impacting on the child's safety, stability or development
- you observe signs or indicators of abuse.

Staff should make sufficient enquiries to form a belief; however it is not the role of staff to conduct an investigation into child protection concerns or criminal offences. DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police will determine what is to be investigated.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our FDC Service strongly opposes any type of abuse against a child and endorses high quality practices inf relation to protecting children. FDC educators have an important role to support children and young people and to identify concerns that may jeopardise their safety, welfare, or wellbeing including:

a duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to children

obligations are met under child protection legislation

obligations are met under work, health and safety legislation.

Our FDC Service promotes a culture of child safety and wellbeing within the Service. To ensure best practice, all FDC educators, educator assistants and staff will attend approved child protection training. FDC educators, educator assistants and staff will continue to maintain current knowledge of child protection law and mandatory reporter requirements by completing Child Protection Awareness Training annually.

MAKING A REPORT/ NOTIFICATIONS

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

Dial 000 if a child is at immediate risk and Police or medical assistance is required

- report all instances (alleged or witnessed) of child abuse, including assault or sexual abuse (including grooming) to relevant authorities including Victoria Police, DFFH Child Protection, Quality Assessment and Regulatory Division (QARD), and Commission for Children and Young People
- follow the Four Critical Actions to take to respond to an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse
    - responding to an emergency
    - reporting to authorities

- contact parents or carers
- provide ongoing support

- notify QARD via the National Decision Tree (within 24 hours) of any incident or allegation where it is reasonably believed that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service
- notify QARD through the NQA-ITS (within 24 hours) of any complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred or is occurring at the Service
- notify QARD through the NQA-ITS (within 24 hours) of a serious incident, which may include physical or sexual abuse where emergency services attended the Service
- ensure documentation is completed to assist in making reports to relevant authorities including an incident, injury, trauma and illness record
- notify the Commission within three (3) business days of becoming aware of reportable conduct made against an employee or volunteer and ensure they are investigated, and appropriate action taken
- Services will contact their local Child Protection intake provider to report concerns

FDC EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- contact the police on 000 if there is an immediate danger to a child and intervene if it is safe to do so
- respect what a child discloses, taking it seriously and follow up on their concerns through the appropriate channels
- be aware of their mandatory reporting obligations and responsibilities to report that a child is at risk of abuse, harm, neglect or ill-treatment to the approved provider or nominated supervisor
- report all instances (alleged or witnessed) of child abuse, including assault or sexual abuse (including grooming) to relevant authorities including Victoria Police, Child Protection, Commission for Children and Young People
- follow the Four Critical Actions to take to respond to an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse

    - responding to an emergency
    - reporting to authorities
    - contact parents or carers
    - provide ongoing support

- prepare accurate records recording exactly what happened, conversations that took place and
- what was observed to pass on to the relevant authorities to assist with any investigation
- share information with other professionals working with children as part of the information sharing and family violence reform schemes

- understand their legal obligations to report or take action in relation to suspected child abuse under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- notify the approved provider if there are any allegations of reportable conduct involving a staff member, volunteer or contractor as soon as practicable
- refer families to appropriate agencies where concerns of harm do not meet the threshold of significant harm. These services may be located through Orange Door. Family consent will be sought before making referrals.
- NOT investigate suspicion of abuse or neglect but collect only enough information to substantiate concerns and pass on to Child Protection or appropriate authority
- understand that allegations of abuse or suspected abuse against them are treated in the same way as allegations of abuse against other people

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important that any notification to Child Protection remains confidential, as it is vitally important to remember that no confirmation of any allegation can be made until the matter is investigated. The individual who makes the notification should not inform the suspected perpetrator (if known). This ensures the matter can be investigated without contamination of evidence or pre-rehearsed statements. It also minimises the risk of retaliation on the child for disclosing.

PROTECTION FOR REPORTERS

All reporters are protected against retribution for making or proposing to make a report under amendments to the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005 and Crimes Act 1958* effective April 2021. The identity of the reporter is protected by law from being disclosed, except in certain exceptional circumstances. Provided the report is made in good faith:

- does not breach standards of professional conduct or ethics
- cannot lead to defamation and civil and criminal liability

A report is also an exempt document under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982.*

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ COORDINATOR WILL ENSURE:

- that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met and child's safety and wellbeing are prioritised at all times
- FDC educators, educator assistants, residents, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of
- and adhere to this policy and associated procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- families are aware of this Child Protection Policy and procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- all children being educated and care for by the FDC Service are adequately supervised (Sec. 165)
- FDC educators, educator assistants, staff volunteers, students and visitors adhere to the National Model Code and Guidelines and not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or videos when educating and caring for children at the Service [effective September 26, 2025]

- FDC educators, educator assistants, coordinators only use electronic devices issued by the Service for taking images or videos of children enrolled at the FDC Service
- that the premises, including toilets and nappy change facilities are maintained to
- facilitate clear supervision of children whilst maintaining their rights and dignity
- students, volunteers and/or visitors are never left alone with a child whilst at the Service under any circumstance
- all FDC coordinators and any responsible person in day-to-day charge of the FDC Service has successfully completed the child protection training approved by the regulatory authority
- educators and staff are provided with training and ongoing supervision to promote a child safe culture and ensure they understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility, and they adhere to the Child Safe Standards (annually- best practice)
- a thorough recruitment process is implemented to employ people who are committed to children's safety and ensure their views align with the FDC Service's Code of Conduct, Statement of Philosophy and child safety policies and procedures (see Recruitment Policy)
- the recruitment process includes pre-employment screening, reference checks
- all prospective applicants are required to complete a prohibition notice declaration to acknowledge they do not hold any prohibition notices that would prevent them from working with children
- all FDC educators', staff, volunteers' and students' Working with Children Checks are validated and checked prior to engagement of work BEFORE the person begins working or interacting with children
- a record is kept and updated of the number of each WWC Check number and expiry date and staff and FDC educators are reminded to renew their WWCC prior to expiry
- to emphasise child safety throughout the FDC Service with regular discussions at team meetings
- and with children and families (NQF Safe Culture Guide (2025)
- to regularly check if staff understand child safety policies and procedures via quizzes/surveys (NQF Safe Culture Guide 2025)
- FDC educators are provided with a reporting procedure and professional standards to safeguard children and protect the integrity of educators, staff and volunteers
- records of abuse or suspected abuse are kept in line with our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- records relating to child sexual abuse that has or is alleged to have occurred are kept for at least 45 years (recommendation not mandatory)
- ensure our complaint handling processes are child-focused providing support and guidance for
- children to know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe (See Dealing with Complaints Policy)
- ensure following any critical incident, children, staff and families are provided with access to support they may need- counselling, debriefing, access to community services

- ensure critical reflection on the incident is conducted with staff and educators to inform required changes to policy, procedures, practices (including supervision) and risk assessments
- all FDC educators, educator assistants, staff, volunteers and students are:
    - provided with a copy of the current Child Protection, Child Safe Environment, Code of Conduct and Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policies
    - required to participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
    - provided with access to all relevant legislations, regulations, standards and other resources to help meet their mandatory reporting obligations
    - supported to a foster a child safe culture within the Service by complying with Child Safe Standards (CSS)
    - provided with support to adhere to a zero-tolerance stance against child abuse
    - provided with regular up-to-date knowledge and training on how to identify, understand, report, and respond to child maltreatment, abuse and harm including the Reportable Conduct Scheme
    - aware that neglecting to report child protection concerns may be deemed a criminal offence
    - provided with training and information are provided to all educators about the Child Information Sharing, Family Violence Reforms and Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Management Framework (MARAM) [not compulsory for FDC services]
    - supported and empowered to make a report to (DFFH) Child Protection, Victoria Police or seek a referral to Orange Door by having clear procedures in place
    - provided with regular training and resources about the different ways children may express concerns, distress and disclose harm as well as the process for responding to disclosures from children- including a complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting sexual behaviours that may be harmful to the child or another child (ACECQA 2023)
    - provided with regular training and resources about trauma-informed care, effective supervision and monitoring, appropriate and inappropriate discipline and online abuse
    - required to participate in regular performance reviews
    - aware of appropriate positive and consistent approaches to guide behaviour and ensure no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances (Sec. 166)
    - aware of our Service policy and associated procedures for the safe use of digital technologies and online environments.

FDC EDUCATORS/EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- adhere to the FDC Service's policies and procedures

- promote the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of children at the Service by creating and maintaining child safe environment and adhere to the Child Safe Standards (CSS)
- foster a culture of openness, respect and cultural safety where children and young people feel safe to disclose risk of harm to children or report abuse
- participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
- provide valid Working with Children (WWC) Check details during their employment and engagement at the Service
- advise the approved provider of any circumstances that may affect their WWC Check or fit and proper status
- not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or video of children at the Service
- participate in regular up-to-date training on how to identify, understand, report, and respond to child maltreatment, abuse and harm through annual child protection training (best practice)
- complete online training- Protecting Children: Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations Training (PROTECT)
- participate in training about the Child Information Sharing, Family Violence Reforms and Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Management Framework (MARAM)
- allow children to be part of decision-making processes where appropriate
- provide ongoing monitoring and follow-up for children's health and wellbeing.

STUDENTS/ VOLUNTEERS/ VISITORS WILL:

- adhere to the Service's policies and procedures
- participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
- provide valid Working with Children (WWC) Check details during their engagement at the Service
- advise the approved provider of any circumstances that may affect their WWC Check or fit and proper status
- promote the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of children at the Service by creating and maintaining child safe environment and adhere to the Child Safe Standards (CSS)
- participate in child protection training as required
- not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or video of children at the FDC Service.

DOCUMENTING A DISCLOSURE

A disclosure of harm emerges when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. When a child discloses that he or she has been abused, it is an opportunity for an adult to provide immediate support and comfort and to assist in protecting the child from the abuse. It is also a chance to

help the child connect to professional services that can keep them safe, provide support and facilitate their recovery from trauma. Disclosure is about seeking support and your response can have a great impact on the child or young person's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

WHEN RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE OF HARM, THE PERSON RECEIVING THE DISCLOSURE WILL:

- give the child or young person their full attention
- remain calm and find a private place to talk where you can give the child your full attention (ask child or young person if you can move to a place where you can hear them properly)
- not make promises that can't be kept. For example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else
- honestly tell the child or young person what you plan to do next
- tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that they'll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe
- only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter because probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries
- let the child or young person take his or her time
- let the child or young person use his or her own words
- tell the child or young person that the abuse of maltreatment is not their fault
- support culturally and linguistically diverse children and children with additional needs to express themselves in the child's preferred way of communicating (NQF Safe Culture Guide)
- not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved
- not confront the perpetrator
- document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured including:
    - time, date and place of the disclosure
    - 'word for word' what happened and what was said, including anything they (the staff member/educator) said and any actions that have been taken
    - date of report and signature

Source: *Responding to children and young people's disclosures of* abuse (2025). Australian Institute of Family Studies

BREACH OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

A breach is any action or inaction by any individual within the Service, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of the policy. All educators, students, volunteers and staff working with children are mandatory reporters under the *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)* and have a duty of care to support and protect children. Any allegations of criminal offences against children must be reported to the Police immediately. Failure to report child sexual abuse to the police is a criminal offence.

MANAGING A BREACH IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Management will investigate any breaches to this policy in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner by:

- liaising with the Child Protection, Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) and Victoria Police for appropriate processes to ensure chain of evidence is not destroyed or compromised
- not undertaking and investigating the allegation whilst the CCYP or the Police are conducting an investigation
- follow directions from the Child Protection, CCYP and Victoria Police that may include removal of the educator or staff member (who is the subject of allegations) immediately from a role with contact with children or young people until authorities conclude their investigation.

Management may undertake an investigation if Child Protection or the Police are not conducting their own investigation or if their action has concluded. Management will:

- give the educator, staff member, student or volunteer the opportunity to provide their version of
- events
- document the details of the breach, including the versions of all parties
- record the outcome clearly and without bias
- ensure the matters in relation to the breach are kept confidential
- reach a decision based on discussion and consideration of all evidence.

OUTCOME OF A BREACH IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Staff members or educators who fail to adhere to this policy may be in breach of their terms of employment. Visitors or volunteers who fail to comply to this policy may face termination of their engagement. Depending on the nature of the breach outcomes may include:

- disciplinary procedures if required including dismissal of employment
- emphasising the relevant element of the child protection policy and procedure not followed
- providing closer supervision
- providing further education and training
- providing mediation between those involved in the incident (where appropriate)
- reviewing current policies and procedures and developing new policies and procedures if necessary

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME-ALLEGATIONS AGAINST EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS OR STUDENTS (OR CONTRACTORS)

Report to 000 if you have immediate concerns for a child's safety.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme has been designed to ensure that the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) will be aware of every allegation of certain types of employee misconduct involving children in relevant organisations, including approved education and care services (kindergartens, after school hours care services) and Children's services (occasional care providers).

[see: *Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy* (Victoria only)- Child Care Centre Desktop]

EDUCATING CHILDREN ABOUT PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Our program will educate and support children to learn about their rights and encourage them to express their views and feelings. Children will learn:

- about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in both physical and online environments
- about what is appropriate and inappropriate contact at an age-appropriate level and understanding

- about body safety, using correct names of private body parts to help recognise inappropriate touches and respect for personal space
- about their right to feel safe at all times
- to say 'no' to anything that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- about how to use their own knowledge and understanding to feel safe
- to identify feelings that they do not feel safe
- help them identify trusted educators, adults and friends
- the difference between 'good' and 'bad' secrets
- that there is no secret or story that cannot be shared with someone they trust
- that educators are available for them if they have any concerns
- to tell educators of any suspicious activities or people
- to recognise and express their feelings verbally and non-verbally
- that they can choose to change the way they are feeling.

7. Child Safe Environment Policy

Our Family Day Care (FDC) Service is committed to the safety, wellbeing and support of all children and young people. Management, staff, educators and volunteers take every reasonable precaution to protect children in our care and treat all children with the utmost respect and understanding at all times. We are dedicated in promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Our FDC Service embeds the new Child Safe Standards (VIC) [effective July 2022] and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

We acknowledge that staff within an early childhood service are in a unique position to monitor behavioural and emotional changes, physical injuries, and the general wellbeing of a child due to the development of safe environments and trusting relationships with children and families. Our Family Day Care educators are trained to identify signs and behaviours that may indicate child abuse and thoroughly understand their obligations and responsibilities to respond to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of child abuse as mandated reporters.

Our FDC Service takes a 'zero' tolerance approach to child abuse and are committed to raise awareness about the importance of child safety in our environment and the community.

'Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.' Victoria State Government- Education and Training (2019).

PURPOSE

Our FDC Service has a legal and ethical responsibility to provide and maintain a child safe organisation where all children are safe, respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount, and we aim to take all practical steps to protect children from harm, ensuring a healthy and child safe environment. Our FDC Service ensures FDC educators provide children and visitors with an environment free from the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, Educator Assistants, children, families, and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for providing a child safe environment and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed. (Regulation 168, Regulation 170). The National Law requires management to ensure all children being educated and cared for are adequately supervised and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

Our focus is to build a child safe environment which is reflected in our FDC Service policies and procedures and understood and practiced by all FDC educators and staff.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Our FDC Service is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to comply with both the Victorian New Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse. We have a dedicated *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* which explains our organisation's approach to meeting the Standards.

Our FDC Service has a zero tolerance to child abuse, and we are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We promote diversity and tolerance and aim to form equitable and positive relationships with children. We ensure children participate in decisions affecting them and listen and respect their suggestions and ideas. We respond to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.

Our FDC Service strongly opposes any type of abuse against a child and endorses high quality practices in relation to protecting children. All FDC educators and staff understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from abuse and neglect and maintain up-to-date knowledge of child protection law (Reg 84). FDC educators and staff will undertake child protection awareness training annually and whenever significant changes are made to the child protection law or reporting requirements. FDC educators and staff will comply with our Code of Conduct at all times.

RECRUITMENT

Our FDC Service maintains a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process to ensure the best staff possible based on skills, qualifications, experience and suitability for the position available. All engaged FDC educators participate in robust interviews and have reference checks completed to ensure the applicant's suitability to the role, previous experiences and their commitment to child safe values and practices. All FDC educators and staff are provided with a comprehensive induction process which outlines our Code of Conduct, current policies including Child Protection, Child Safety and Wellbeing, Reportable Conduct Scheme, Work Health and Safety Policy and other related policies to ensure a child safe environment.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

Working in conjunction with the Child Protection Act and National Regulations, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is paramount within our FDC Service and community. A Working with Children Check (WWCC) is a requirement for people who work in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked.

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will ensure they have read each person's Working with Children Check before engaging educators, staff or volunteers in the Service. Management is responsible for the periodic review and maintenance of up-to-date records of employees' Working with Children Check, including the Working with Children Check number and the date on which each clearance expires.

CHILD PROTECTION

Children and young people always have a right to be safe and protected. To comply with legislation and ensure a child safe environment, educators are required to complete annual child protection training and other relevant professional training to ensure they understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility.*

All educators and staff are mandatory reporters and must make reports if they suspect on reasonable grounds, a child is at risk of significant harm. All educators and staff are provided with up-to-date training about child protection law and their obligations under this law and to ensure they are confident in following the reporting guidelines within Victoria and adhere to our *Child Protection Policy*. (Reg 84).

Through continual education and training, educators and staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe. Training gives educators and staff confidence to identify, respond and report child abuse.

Nominated supervisors and persons in day-to-day charge must complete a course in child protection approved by the Regulatory Authority on an annual basis.

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME

The Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisation's responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their employees and volunteers. The Approved Provider must notify the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) about any allegations of misconduct involving a child. Reportable conduct applies to all employees, engaged educators, volunteers, students (over the age of 18) and contractors at our FDC Service.

Our FDC Service will ensure an appropriate level of confidentiality of information relating to the reportable allegations as per the Children's Guardian Act 2019. We take our legislative responsibilities as part of the Reportable Conduct Scheme seriously and will respond to any reportable allegation or conviction against employees or volunteers that may arise.

As an Information Sharing Entity our FDC Service is obligated to share confidential or sensitive information about a person with other ISEs to support safety and wellbeing as part of the Child Information Sharing Scheme and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and MARAM reforms.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT – SUPERVISION AND SAFETY CHECKLISTS

Children's safety is embedded in our day-to-day practices. We ensure FDC educators provide effective and adequate supervision of children at all times. Educators will employ 'active supervision' strategies within the environment and when participating in excursions or transporting children. Consideration will be made for the different ages and abilities of children and the activities that may require different levels of supervision.

Sleeping infants and toddlers will be closely monitored at regular intervals and will always be within

sight and hearing distance of the educator so a child's breathing, and the colour of their skin can be

monitored.

Through conducting risk assessments, FDC educators assess and manage risks in the physical environment collaborating with children to develop behaviour guidelines for play including adventurous play to ensure their safety. FDC educators have a sound understanding of their duty of care and responsibilities in ensuring a child safe environment.

FDC educators conduct regular safety checks to maintain basic standards of safety within their residence. We believe that child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels within our Service. Children are encouraged to speak up about their safety and the safety of their friends by telling the educator if they feel unsafe in a particular situation or environment.

FDC educators will complete the daily indoor and outdoor checklists to assist and record inspections of the physical environment where foreseeable risks may be evident and cause harm or injury to a child.

Any findings that require attention will be either dealt with immediately.

STORAGE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Our FDC educators endeavour to provide a safe environment where necessary chemical and hazardous equipment are safely stored away from children and handled appropriately.

EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE & MAINTENANCE RECORD

There are several factors that can contribute to a hazard, such as a deprived program, insufficient supervision and dilapidated equipment. To ensure a child safe environment free from hazards, we have implemented practices and continue to monitor Service policies and procedures that uphold Australian Safety Standards.

The premises and all equipment and furniture used within each FDC residence are audited to ensure all aspects are safe, clean and in good repair as part of the annual assessment. We understand that hazards are specific to developmental stages; FDC educators are aware that toys and equipment need to be checked to ensure they are safe and developmentally appropriate for children. Regular checks occur within each FDC residence to ensure that all toys, furniture and equipment are in good condition and working order.

RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

It is a legislative requirement that Management and FDC educators implement a risk management system where they identify and manage hazards and risks within the workplace to ensure a child safe environment. The key principles of risk management include:

1. Identifying all hazards or potential hazards in the service/residence
2. Assess the risk of harm or potential harm for each hazard
3. Control or manage the risk – Risk Rating Matrix
4. Monitor and improve safety – Risk Assessment Action Plan
5. Evaluate and Review

It is the responsibility of FDC educators to complete a risk assessment where children's safety may be jeopardised and when organising an excursion/incursion or any transportation of children. Risk assessments must be approved by the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor. Children's safety must be incorporated into everyday practice. Common hazards which may require a risk assessment include:

- cross-infection and infectious disease
- administration of medication
- anaphylaxis procedures and management
- building and equipment (including storage)
- inadequate space for conducting activities and experiences
- hazardous chemicals
- electrical appliances
- food preparation and storage
- environmental influences such as shade, noise etc
- sun safety
- children's behaviours
- water safety
- fire equipment
- pets and/or animals
- inadequate supervision of children
- children's activities and experiences
- Work Health and Safety such as manual handling (e.g., safe lifting children from cots and highchairs)

- non-compliance risk
- hot drinks
- transportation of children (regular outing and regular transportation)
- excursions

To maintain a child safe environment, we will adhere to Service policies and procedures and conduct the following checklist and audits: risk assessment, daily checklist, excursion risk assessment

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Management will ensure that FDC educators display copies of the emergency and evacuation floor plan in prominent positions near each exit of the residence, including indoor and outdoor areas.

Educators and educator assistants are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and regulatory requirements. Rehearsals for emergency and evacuation procedures, including lock downs, are conducted at least once every 3 months.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE AUTHORISATION

Our FDC Service prioritises children's safety at all times. FDC educators will only release children to an authorised person as named on the child's enrolment form. We request families provide current court orders, and parenting plans to ensure our records are up to date.

National Regulations require our educators keep a record of children and visitor's arrival and

departures, with the signatures of the person responsible for verifying the accuracy of the record and the identity of the person collecting the child.

FDC educators will work in collaboration with our *Delivery of Children to and Collection from an Education and Care Service Premises Policy* and *Student and Visitors Policy* to ensure children feel safe and secure.

To ensure children's safety, educators have a clear understanding of their legal obligation to check identification when a person is collecting a child.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Management, educators, staff, volunteers and students will adhere to our FDC Service's Code of Conduct Policy. We will:

- provide adequate supervision of children at all times
- take reasonable action to protect children and young people for risk of harm
- ensure the premise is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol
- adhere to our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- not discriminate against any child, because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- be responsible for their own, and others health and safety
- be a positive role model to children
- respect children's privacy and dignity at all times
- not put children at risk of abuse- refusing food/play, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos)
- report any allegations of child abuse to the Approved Provider as mandatory reporter
- notify the approved provider and/or the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident or complaint as per the National Regulations

ONLINE SAFETY

Our FDC Service is committed to create and maintain a safe online environment with support and collaboration with staff, families and community. Management ensures FDC educators install anti-virus and internet security systems to block access to unsuitable web sites, newsgroups and chat rooms on computers used by children.

Our FDC Service ensures backups of important and confidential data is made regularly and either stored securely offline, or online. Software and devices are updated regularly to avoid any breach of confidential information.

Families are provided with information about our software program which is password protected and used to share observations, photos, videos, daily reports and portfolios. Passwords are not to be shared with others as per our written agreement.

Written authorisation is requested as part of the enrolment process for children to use computers/tablets; have their photo taken and published as part of promotional marketing or on the app program used by the FDC Service. The identity of a child is not published on any platform.

Only educational software programs and apps that have appropriate content and have been examined prior to allowing their use and used at the FDC residence. Children are always supervised using any technology.

CONTINUOUS REVIEW

To ensure we maintain a culture of continuous improvement, we will ensure our child safe practices are regularly reviewed, evaluated and improved. We aim to ensure all FDC educators, staff and volunteers understand and effectively implement our policies and procedures to provide a child safe environment.

We will regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of our Child Safe policies and procedures and invite children, staff members, families and communities to contribute to their development.

Any updates or revisions will be communicated to all stakeholders.

FAMILIES

Our FDC Service ensures families are always welcome and feel comfortable asking questions on how we prioritise child safety. We provide a range of opportunities for consultation and collaboration about decisions about their child's safety whilst at our Service including:

- policy and procedure review
- child protection
- Child Safe Standards (VIC)
- allegations/grievance procedures
- sun safety
- written authorisations - parenting orders
- code of conduct
- inclusivity and supporting children with diverse needs.

8. Child Safety And Wellbeing Policy

Our Family Day Care (FDC) Service is committed to the safety, wellbeing and support of all children and young people in all aspects of operation within our FDC Service. Services within Victoria are required to comply and adhere to the Child Safe Standards under the Child Wellbeing Safety Act 2005 (Vic). The Victorian Child Safe Standards were reviewed in 2019 with an aim to better align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations to ensure a greater focus on the safety and wellbeing of all children, improve Aboriginal cultural safety and empower children and young people. Our FDC Service is committed to implementing an inclusive and culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

PURPOSE

Our *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* will ensure the FDC Service meets all obligations and requirements under the Child Wellbeing Safety Act 2005 (Vic). Our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy will work together with the Service's *Code of Conduct Policy, Recruitment Policy, Child Safe Environment Policy, Reportable Conduct Policy* and other related policies to develop a child safe culture within the service and community. This policy will provide direction and guidance for all FDC educators, staff and visitors (including students and volunteers) to comply with and adhere to the 11 Child Safe Standards to ensure a child safe environment for all children. Eleven new Child Safe Standards were released in 2021, with Services having to comply to the new standards from July 2022. The 11 new Standards will replace the previous 7 Child Safe Standards and Principles.

The 11 Child Safe Standards aim to create a culture where:

- the safety of children is promoted,
- child abuse is prevented and
- allegations of child abuse will be taken seriously and acted upon.

SCOPE

This policy applies to families, staff, FDC educators, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, management, students, volunteers and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING STATEMENT

Our FDC Service is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to comply with both the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

Our FDC Service is committed to implementing and abiding by our *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* based on Child Safe Standards in Victoria (2022), which accentuates our *zero tolerance* for child abuse and raising awareness about the importance of child safety in our service and the community.

We are dedicated to protecting children from abuse and neglect and promote a child safe environment, maintaining children's wellbeing. We adhere to our comprehensive *Child Protection Policy*, standing by our mandatory reporting responsibilities to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse and neglect.

We work to ensure there is clear awareness between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour concerning adults and children. We require clear precincts between children and employees, volunteers and the community to maintain children's safety.

We are dedicated to promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

We are committed to ongoing professional development for educators and staff to maintain their ability to distinguish and respond to situations of abuse and neglect, ensuring educators and staff are responsive to their responsibilities in keeping children safe.

We work in collaboration with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and have confidence in educating children about their right to be safe. We believe in teaching children what to do if they feel unsafe and encouraging them to express their view and thoughts on matters that directly affect them.

As FDC educators we listen to and empower children to act on any concerns, they or others may raise which is reflective in our policies and procedures in keeping children safe.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our FDC Service is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes the safety of all children and embeds the Victorian Child Safe Standards. All FDC educators, staff and volunteers are responsible for

promoting a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

DEFINITIONS

Child/Children refers to both children and young people under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse refers to a sexual offence committed against a child, an offence committed against a child under section 49M (1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) such as grooming, physical violence against a child, causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child, serious neglect of a child (Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005. Vic)

Complaint: Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. [AS/NZS 10002:2014 Complaint Management Standard]

Information Sharing Obligations refers to the Child Information Sharing Scheme and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme.

Significant Harm refers to circumstances causing concern for the safety, welfare and wellbeing a child or young person present to a significant extent. This means it is sufficiently serious to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of the family's consent.

What is significant is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child's or young person's safety, welfare, or wellbeing. In the case of an unborn child, what is significant is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child.

Reasonable grounds refer to the need to have an objective basis for suspecting that a child may be at risk of abuse and neglect based on:

- firsthand observation of the child or family
- what the child, parent, or other person has disclosed
- what can reasonably be inferred based on observation, professional training and/or experience that causes the mandated reporter to believe the child has been abused or is likely to be abused or,
- signs of physical or sexual abuse leading to the belief that the child has been abused.

Failure to disclose refers to the failure of a mandated reporter who has reasonable belief that a child under 16 has had a sexual offence committed to them by an adult to make a report to the police.

Failure to protect refers to a person of authority in the organisation who has the power or responsibility, but who negligently fails to reduce or remove the threat of substantial risk of child sexual abuse.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

In Relation to Standard 1: *Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.*

Through the identification and journey of establishing a culturally safe organisation, our FDC Service will:

- show respect and a commitment to reconciliation by developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- promote cultural safety for Aboriginal children
- will reflect on the current level of cultural competence of our educators and staff
- model and provide guidance to educators and staff to ensure compliance with a zero tolerance of racism within the FDC Service
- build and strengthen our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and contributions

- encourage educators and staff to attend professional development to support educator and staff knowledge and understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives
- identify and challenge our own cultural assumptions, beliefs and commitments to cultural competency
- engage with local Aboriginal families and communities through Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups
- invite Elders and Traditional Owners to speak to children, educators, staff and families about the histories and cultures of the local area
- develop an Acknowledgement of Country in collaboration with Elders, community members, children and families which will be displayed and given during special events and incorporated into the program on a regular basis
- develop awareness and meaningful understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians
- encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to access children services
- show sensitivity and respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages by incorporating verbal and visual languages into the Service environment.
- ensure our *Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy* is adhered to, so all children, families, educators and staff are welcomed and treated equitably and with respect.
- ensure our *Respect for Children Policy* is adhered to as educators develop positive relationships with children based on respect and fostering children's self-esteem and development

FOUNDATION STEPS or FUTURE STEPS

Our FDC Service will reflect and review our cultural practices to determine the Service's journey and stage of cultural competence. Foundation Steps are to be identified for services that are just starting out on their cultural competence journey. Foundation Steps are to be documented to outline changes required to policies, procedures and public commitments to show a plan of action to comply with Standard 1. Further Steps are to be documented for services who have already begun a journey of cultural competence and the Service indicates they are meeting all Compliance Indicators of Standard 1.

A *Child Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan* has been developed to assist services to document their progress and compliance of Standard 1 and identify actions required for Foundation Steps or to identify compliance as Further Steps.

In Relation to Standard 2: *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.*

In the planning, development and implementation of a *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy,* our FDC Service will:

- create and maintain a child safe environment and comply with the Ministerial Order No. 870- Child Safe Standards and Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015
- ensure a *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* is developed, implemented and reviewed with children, families and educators
- complete a self-audit to assess our progress in meeting the requirements of the Child Safe Standards
- develop a Child Safety Code of Conduct specific to our Service and ensure the Code of Conduct is adhered to by all educators, staff and visitors to set behavioural expectations when working with children
- ensure compliance of the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* and implementation of the 11 Child Safe Standards within the Service
- include child safety as a regular agenda item at team meetings
- adhere to a zero tolerance for child abuse

- value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers regarding our *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*
- embed the eleven Child Safety Standards into Service policies and procedures
- promote the safety of children at all times
- foster a culture of openness and respect where children and adults feel safe to disclose risk of harm to children

In Relation to Standard 3: *Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*

With a focus on children's rights to safety and participation, our FDC Service will:

- listen to and act decisively on any child safety concerns or allegations of abuse that are made
- recognise, respect and foster children's rights where their voices and views are listened to and valued
- promote the inclusion of children's voices in all decisions that affect them
- ensure every child will be equally valued. Their achievements and learning will be celebrated.
- collaborate with children and families to support children's learning
- ensure information about the child's participation in the program is available for families
- view children as active participants and decision makers, working with each child's unique qualities and abilities
- undertake critical reflection practices to reflect upon children's participation within the educational program
- ensure educators and staff adhere to the *Respect for Children Policy* and provide a child safe, comfortable and happy environment where children's concerns are always taken seriously and responded to
- support children's consent by acknowledging and respecting a child's right to refuse or say no
- never force a child to do something against their requests: This includes rest, eat, participation in group experiences and activities
- respond respectfully and appropriately to children's attempts as they participate within the educational program
- empower children to speak up and raise any concerns
- encourage children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves
- ensure children are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback
- respond or report to children about how their feedback has been acted upon
- discuss with children how their photos and images will be used within the service or outside of the service and where age-appropriate ask children's permission before taking photos or videos
- ensure all educators, staff and volunteers are committed to identifying possible risk and significant risk of harm to children and young people and adhere to the *Child Protection Policy*
- ensure the *Behaviour Guidance – Bullying Policy* is adhered to as educators and staff provide support and direction for children to raise concerns
- educate children about protective behaviours through educational programs that are at an age-appropriate level and understanding
- complete a Risk Assessment regarding the implementation of Child Protection Educational Programs
- provide opportunities for children to contribute to the development of the *Service Philosophy* and Service Policies and Procedures

In Relation to Standard 4: *Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.*

As we endeavour to inform and involve families and communities in establishing and maintaining a Child Safe approach, our FDC Service will:

- ensure new families are provided with a *Family Handbook* during the enrolment and orientation process to share information regarding service operations and governance of the Service
- ensure all families are welcomed and respected at our FDC Service and are encouraged and supported to participate in decision making
- maintain confidentiality and privacy as per our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* when working with children, families and educators in relation to Child Protection matters
- respond to requests for information from Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) to improve children's wellbeing and safety under the Child Information Sharing Scheme
- ensure families are informed of our *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* upon enrolment through the Family Handbook and orientation process.
- ensure families are invited and encouraged to participate in the development and review of Service Policies and the *Service Philosophy*
- provide regular information about the FDC Service and ongoing opportunities for families to contribute to our curriculum
- inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints
- encourage families to contribute to the continuous quality improvement progression within the Service through their involvement in the self-assessment and QIP review
- invite families to be involved with the self-assessment process and be informed of goals developed that form the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

In Relation to Standard 5: *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*

As we aim to recognise and support diversity and work to promote vulnerable children, our FDC Service will:

- ensure a *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing* is developed to demonstrate a strong culture of child safety within the FDC Service
- work in partnership with families and other professionals to ensure specific consideration and adaptations allow children with additional needs access and participation and achieve positive learning outcomes
- ensure all children are supported to participate in the educational program
- be responsive to each child, irrespective of their additional needs and abilities
- practice inclusivity and support children with additional needs to enable them to have equitable access to resources and participation of the educational program
- gather information about children's additional needs, cultural background and supports that may be required through the enrolment and orientation process
- support educators to implement inclusive strategies and practices in the delivery of quality education and care
- ensure the educational program and curriculum are inclusive and meet the individual needs of children with additional needs disability or developmental delay
- create an inclusive program, which is adaptable and supportive of all children
- ensure all children have the right to be treated equally and with respect

In Relation to Standard 6: *People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.*

To ensure suitable educators and staff are employed in line with Child Safe recruitment practices, our FDC Service will:

- implement a probation and induction orientation program to ensure new educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to ensuring children are safe and well within the Service
- ensure comprehensive processes are followed in relation to recruitment of new educators and staff to include a commitment to Child Safe practices
- implement effective pre-employment screening to ensure we engage educators and staff who have the skills, experience, qualifications and general 'fit' in line with legislative and regulatory requirements.
- ensure all preferred candidates undergo appropriate pre-employment checks including reference checks, Working With Children Checks (WWCC), immunisation status checks (including COVID-19 vaccination, as required), and where applicable National Police criminal history checks before an offer of employment is recommended
- ensure all educators and staff are required by law to undergo a Working with Children Check (WWCC) which is verified by the Service to ensure it is valid and current
- ensure at least 2 references are provided for a reference check. Where possible references should be from the immediate previous employer. The reference checks will ascertain, where possible, the applicant's attitudes and behaviours in previous child-related roles and ascertain whether the applicant has ever been the subject of complaints
- provide an induction process for all new educators and staff including relevant information on child safe practices adhering to the Child Safe Standards, Code of Conduct, strategies that identify, assess and minimise risks to children and mandatory reporting procedures
- ensure comprehensive job descriptions for each position will be available for all applicants, educators and staff members

In Relation to Standard 7: *Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.*

With a focus on responding appropriately to complaints and concerns, Our FDC Service will:

- ensure educators, staff and visitors follow and comply with the *Dealing with Complaints Policy* when matters are raised regarding Child Safety and Wellbeing
- follow the *Dealing with Complaints Policy* for procedures regarding receiving and managing informal and formal complaints
- safeguard the interests of all children, their families, educators, staff and visitors, using procedures to ensure appropriate privacy and confidentiality practices are upheld
- inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints
- investigate and document the grievance or complaint fairly and impartially as per the Grievance/Complaints procedure
- keep appropriate records of any complaint investigation and outcome and store these records in accordance with our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* and *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*
- notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised. Notification must include any incident where there is a reasonable belief that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at a FDC residence or any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at a FDC residence

- ensure the *Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy* is adhered to and ensure that all allegations based on reasonable grounds are reported, including allegations made against educators or staff who do not have direct contact with children, and conduct that allegedly occurred outside of their work
- review complaints and grievances as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Management Register* to ensure a pattern of similar grievances is not occurring
- ensure educators or staff will report any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any other employee that involves children or young people to management as per the *Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy*

In Relation to Standard 8: *Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.*

In order to demonstrate our commitment to education and training for our educators, staff and volunteers, our FDC Service will:

- provide all educators and staff with professional learning for the Child Safe Standards
- ensure Child Protection training is valid and updated every 12-24 months, and whenever significant changes are made to the child protection law or reporting requirements, to maintain skills and knowledge required by National Regulations and best practice
- develop a culture of learning through reflective practice within the service to drive continuous improvement
- ensure educators and staff participate in professional development to keep up to date with Child Protection *'refresher'* and Child Safe Standards training ensuring currency and compliance
- ensure a person's Working with Children Check is read before the person is engaged as an educator, volunteer or staff member at the FDC Service
- ensure the approved provider has read a person's Working with Children Check before nominating that person as a nominated supervisor or person in day-to-day charge of the service.
- ensure visitors to FDC Services are suitable and approved to work with children, including visitors engaged to provide professional development or allied health professionals

In Relation to Standard 9: *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

As we develop a commitment to providing a safe physical and online environment for children, our FDC Service will:

- ensure risk assessments are completed to contribute to the development of identifying, preventing and reducing risks of child abuse and harm
- strongly oppose any type of abuse against a child and endorse high quality practices in relation to protecting children
- ensure all educators, staff and visitors understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from abuse and neglect and maintain up-to-date knowledge of child protection law
- ensure educators and staff undertake child protection awareness training every 12-24 months, and whenever significant changes are made to the child protection law or reporting requirements
- assess and manage the risk of abuse to children as part of our daily practice
- work with an ICT security specialist to ensure the latest security systems are in place to ensure best practice
- obtain parent permission for children to use computers as part of the enrolment procedure
- ensure that children are never left unattended whilst a computer or mobile device is connected to the internet

- ensure personal mobile phones are not used to take photographs, video or audio recordings of children at the FDC Service
- only use educational software programs and apps that have been thoroughly examined for appropriate content prior to allowing their use by children
- provide parents and families with information about the apps or software programs accessed by children at the FDC Service
- ensure educators and staff participate in professional development regarding online safety
- ensure privacy filters and parental control settings are turned on and used when children are accessing digital technologies online

In Relation to Standard 10: *Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.*

With a focus on regular review of Child Safe Standards policies and procedures, our FDC Service will:

- ensure our *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* is reviewed each year as part of our cycle of self-evaluation each year
- welcome input and plan consultation from children, families, educators and staff as part of the policy review process
- include the development of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) as part of the reflection procedure
- reflect on what current practices and actions regarding Child Safety and additional actions will be included in the QIP
- review the effectiveness of the *Dealing with Complaints Policy* and procedures to ensure all complaints and grievances have been handled fairly and professionally
- track complaints to identify recurring issues within the FDC Service and/or any individual FDC residence
- reflect and review complaints provided to our service as opportunities for learning and improvement
- keep a complaints/grievance register to record details of complaints such as complainant details, investigation details and further action taken
- ensure each policy has a recommended review date stated in the 'Review' section of the policy document and changes are clearly documented through version control

In Relation to Standard 11: *Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.*

To ensure our policies and procedures demonstrate how the organisation is safe for children, our FDC Service will:

- ensure all policies and procedures will be made available for families and educators to view at all times
- ensure all policies developed will be made in consultation with management, staff, educators and families of children attending the FDC Service
- ensure policies include clear, simple statements and are presented in a logical format
- ensure Risk Assessments are completed to address risks of child abuse and harm, including a supervision risk assessment
- ensure information about our *Dealing with Complaints Policy* is easily accessible to all families
- ensure the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly visible at each FDC Service residence
- discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the verbal or written complaint
- investigate and document the grievance or complaint fairly and impartially

- notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised. Notification must include any incident where there is a reasonable belief that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the FDC Service or any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the FDCService
- provide information relating to Child Safe practices within our *Recruitment Policy* to ensure our recruitment and screening processes play a vital role in protecting children from harm
- ensure Early Childhood Intervention Practitioners (ECIP) or 3rd party visitors to the Family Day Care Service follow our *ECIP Management Policy* to ensure a Child Safe environment

ensure any ECIP or 3rd party visitors are made aware of our *Code of Conduct Policy* and child safe policies including the *Reportable Conduct Scheme Polic*y.

9. Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy

Our Family Day Care Service is committed to the safety, wellbeing, and support of all children in our care. From January 1st, 2019, the Reportable Conduct Scheme has been implemented in Victoria. This aims to complement the Child Safe Standards and other existing child safety measures and ensure that timely reports are made and investigated should there be allegations against employees, volunteers, or visitors of the Service (State of Victoria [Commission for Children and Young People], 2018).

PURPOSE

Management, educators, and staff are committed to identifying possible risk and significant risk of harm to children and young people at the Service. We understand our duty of care to protect children from all types of abuse, including protecting them from potential abuse that could occur within the service by employees, visitors, students, or contractors. It is therefore imperative that all staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which seeks to improve the responses of organisations to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their employees or volunteers.

SCOPE

This policy applies to management, educators, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and allied health/support staff of the Service.

DEFINITIONS (Source: Victorian Government, CCYP)

Reportable Conduct: There are five types of 'reportable conduct':

- Sexual offences committed against, with or in the presence of a child.
- Sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child.
- Physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child.
- Any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.
- Significant neglect of a child.

Head of the organisation: Director/Approved Provider.

Failure to disclose: Under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) all adults must make a report to the Victoria Police if they hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16 years.

Failure to protect: Under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) a person in a position of authority in an organisation must act to reduce or remove a substantial risk to a child under 16 years of age who is under their care or supervision who may become the victim of sexual abuse committed by an adult associated with their organisation.

Mandatory reporters: Professional groups, including early childhood teachers and workers, who are mandated under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (CYFA) (s. 182) who are mandated to report their concerns for a

child-to-child protection if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection (Source: Victorian Government: Child Protection Manual).

Reasonable grounds: A belief on reasonable grounds is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example,

- a child states they have been physically or sexually abused
- a child states they know someone who has been physical or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- someone who knows the child states the child has been physically or sexually abused
- professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads the mandated professional to form a belief the child has been abused or is likely to be abused
- signs of physical or sexual abuse leads to a belief the child has been abused.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Director/Approved Provider:

- Be fully aware of, and knowledgeable about the responsibilities of the head of an organisation, which include all points below.
- Will sign up and maintain a subscription for Commission updates in order to maintain current knowledge on Child Protection issues in Victoria (See Resources).
- Ensure there are systems in place to prevent child abuse.
- Ensure allegations are brought to the attention of appropriate persons for investigation and response.
- Ensure that all allegations based on reasonable grounds are reported, including allegations made against employees who do not have direct contact with children, and conduct that allegedly occurred outside of their work.
- Contact the Commission if unclear on whether or not a reportable allegation should be made about a person: Phone **8601 5281**.
- Gather the information required to complete the report. *Note: The types of information required can be found in Appendix A.*
- Notify the Commission **within three business days** of becoming aware of a reportable allegation, using the online forms found at https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/notify-and-update/ *Note: You are not able to save the form once commenced: It must be completed in one session.*
- Make a report to Victoria Police as soon as you are aware that a reportable allegation may involve criminal conduct (if any reportable allegation involves suspected criminal behaviour, notify both the Victoria police and the Commission).
- Understand that police investigations take priority over reportable allegation notifications and as such the organisation's investigation may need to be deferred until the police investigation has been completed.
- Provide the Commission with details of who is conducting the investigation.
- Begin an investigation using the CCYP Investigation Guide (see Resources).
- Manage risks to children whilst undertaking the investigation.
- Maintain detailed and objective notes on all aspects of the investigation.
- Provide the Commission with updates on the organisation's response to the allegation via the online forms.

- Assess the evidence and make a decision based on the strength of the evidence as to whether or not the Reportable Conduct occurred.
- Provide the Commission with detailed information on the reportable allegation and any action taken **within thirty calendar days** of the initial notification via the online forms. This should include (Source: CCYP Information sheet 8: Investigation findings.):
    - The findings:
        - ***Substantiated*** - This finding should be used when a decision maker has decided that the reportable conduct has been proven to have happened on the balance of probabilities. **The evidence suggests it is more likely than not that the reportable conduct happened because there is enough reliable, convincing, evidence of weight.**
        - ***Unsubstantiated - insufficient evidence*** - This finding should be used when there was some evidence of weight to support the allegation, but not enough for the decision maker to make a substantiated finding. **The evidence does not suggest that it is more likely than not that the reportable conduct happened.**
        - ***Unsubstantiated - lack of evidence of weight*** - This finding should be used when there is not enough evidence to properly investigate the allegation, or the small amount of evidence available is contradictory or confusing. **There is not enough evidence to establish whether the reportable conduct did or did not happen.**
        - ***Unfounded*** - This finding should be used when there is strong evidence that the reportable conduct did not happen. **The evidence suggests that it is more likely than not that the reportable conduct did not happen.**
        - ***Conduct outside scheme*** - This finding should be used when the decision maker has investigated the conduct and, although the conduct occurred, **it does not fit any of the types of reportable conduct listed in the Act**. An example of this might be slapping a child's hand away from a hot stove.
    - The reasons for the finding, which should explain:
        - How the investigation was done.
        - The evidence that was collected and how it was assessed.
        - Whether the evidence was relevant and reliable.
        - How the evidence supported or contradicted the allegation of Reportable Conduct.
        - How convincing the evidence was in all of the circumstances.
- Seek help from the Commission if there are any concerns or guidance is required: Phone **8601 5281**.
- Understand that the Reportable Conduct Scheme does not replace the legal requirement to report allegations to the Victoria Police.

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will ensure:

- That they, and all employees have an in-depth understanding of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- All employees are aware of who holds the position of 'head of organisation'.
- There are systems in place to prevent child abuse.
- That they, and all educators and staff maintain a current Working with Children Check.
- That they, and all educators and staff follow policies and procedures concerning Child Protection, Child Safe Environments, and Reportable Conduct.
- Allegations are immediately brought to the attention of the Head of the organisation.

- That they will notify the Commission of any alleged Reportable Conduct if the Head of the organisation fails to do so for any reason.

Educators will ensure:

- That they have a thorough understanding of their duty of care in relation to Child Protection.
- That they maintain a current Working with Children Check.
- That they have an in-depth understanding of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- They have a thorough understanding, and follow all policies and procedures concerning Child Protection, Child Safe Environments, and Reportable Conduct.
- All allegations are immediately brought to the attention of the Head of the organisation and/or the Nominated Supervisor and/or Responsible Person.
- That they will notify the Commission of any alleged Reportable Conduct if the Head of the organisation and/or the Nominated Supervisor and/or Responsible Person fails to do so for any reason.
- That they understand that failure to comply with the Reportable Conduct Scheme requirements may lead to their Working with Children Check being revoked.

Information the Commission will require for a Reportable Conduct Notification.

Three business day notification	**30 calendar day update**	**Advice on investigation**	**Outcomes of investigation**	**Additional documents**
• Name of the worker or volunteer • Date of birth • Police report • Organisation contact details • Head of organisation's name • Initial advice on the nature of the allegation	• Details of the allegation • Details of your response to the allegation • Details about any disciplinary or other action proposed • Any written response from the worker or volunteer about the allegation and the proposed disciplinary or other action	• Name of investigator • Contact details As soon as practicable	• Copy of findings and reasons for the findings • Details about any disciplinary or other action proposed • Reasons for taking or not taking action As soon as practicable	• The Commission may request further documents from the head of the organisation

Source: State of Victoria (Commission for Children and Young People). (2018*). Reporting to the Commission* [Information sheet 7].

10. Interactions with Children, Families & Staff Policy

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) identifies secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within an early childhood community many different relationships are negotiated with and between children, educators and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible impacts on how the early childhood community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

PURPOSE

We aim to build positive relationships with children, families and educators through collaboration and interactions, which is reflective in Kids Planet Family Day Care Services philosophy and the Early Years Learning Framework. Educators will encourage position relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and families at the Service, ensuring children feel safe and supported.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators (educator), the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families and Educators Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will adhere to our philosophy and code of ethics to guide:

Interactions with Children

Children need positive relationships with Educators that are trusting and responsive to their needs.
Management and Educators will:

- Create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with all Educators
- Use appropriate language and behaviour will be role modelled by Educators
- Support children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others
- Encourage children to treat all children with respect as their friend
- Provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions
- Assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions
- Guide children's behaviour positively
- Respect the rights of children
- Support children in the early childhood environments
- Speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy; this includes children using non-verbal cues
- Engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children
- Respect each child's uniqueness, are attuned to and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and will use the child's own language, communication styles and culture to enhance their interactions
- Listen to children and take them seriously; they will support and encourage children to use appropriate language in their interactions with adults and peers. Educators will extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported in observations, reflections and programming

- Communicate with children by getting down to their level, showing respect to the child whilst promoting effective communication and eye contact.
- Show empathy to children
- Ensure that the values, beliefs and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected
- No child is ever isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or pre-arranged appointment with parental consent. During this time, they will be under adult supervision
- Regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child

Interactions with Families

Effective communication is the key to developing and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with others. Educators are required to demonstrate mutual respect towards families and value the contributions made families. This enables Kids Planet Family Day Care Services to maintain positive relations and model the type of communication they want children to develop. Educators also need to use positive communication with families and children in order to create a responsive and inclusive environment for all.

Management and Educators will ensure:

- All families are treated equitably without bias or judgement; recognising that each family is unique
- Families and children are greeted upon arrival
- Two way communication is established through leading by example and asking questions
- Use common terminology when talking to parents regarding their child's development
- Never to discuss another child or family information with a parent or visitor
- Remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and are to encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children and Educators at the Services
- Endeavour to recognise and implement a number of different ways to communicate with families in their preferred chosen way
- Ensure verbal communication is always open, respectful and honest
- Provide families with up-to-date service information and notices through Daily Reports, Newsletter, communal signs, emails and sign-in sheets
- Regularly reflect on parent input into the program and make changes where necessary that will best benefit the service and children

Interactions with Staff and Educators

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services recognises that the way staff and educators interact with each other has an effect on the interactions they have with children and families.

To maintain professionalism at all times, Educators and staff will:

- Preserve professional communication in order create an effective work environment and to build a positive relationship with Children and Families. Communication amongst educators and the service staff creates a positive atmosphere and a professional Service for families. Communication between educators, staff and families ensures that important information is being passed on and that consistency occurs
- Be respectful when listening to each other's point of view and ideas
- Maintain effective communication with each other

- Refer to the Grievance Policy/Procedure if they feel a situation is not being handled with professionalism, respect and quality
- Recognise each other's strengths and valuing the different work each does
- Work collaboratively to reach decisions which will enhance the quality of the Education and care offered at the children
- Welcome diverse views and perspectives
- Respect each other's positions and opinions.
- Develop and share networks and links with other agencies
- Resolve differences promptly and positively and using the experience to learn more effective methods of working together

To enhance communication the service will:

- Provide educators with relevant information about the Service and program through an Educator handbook, induction and daily communication
- Maintain confidentiality
- Treat all educators with respect
- Be sensitive to the feelings and needs of educators
- Provide constructive feedback to educators
- Trust educators
- Value the role and contribution of each educator
- Provide opportunities for all educators to have input and evaluate the service planning program
- Appreciate and utilise educator skills and interests
- Provide support and assistance to all educators
- Show genuine interest in all educators by using active and reflective listening
- Communicate ideas and opinions clearly and professionally
- Hold regular educator visits
- Use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems
- Ensure policies and procedures are up to date regarding communication, expected behaviour and grievances
- Opportunities for professional development

11. Incident, Illness, Accident & Trauma Policy

PURPOSE

Our FDC Service has a duty of care to respond to and manage illnesses, accidents, incidents, and trauma that may occur at the Service to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, FDC educators, educator assistants, coordinators and visitors. This policy will guide educators to manage illness and prevent injury and the spread of infectious diseases and provide guidance of the required action to be taken in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness occurring when a child is educated and cared for.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistants, students, volunteers and visitors of the FDC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for incident, injury, trauma and illness and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021). In the event of an incident, illness, injury or trauma, FDC educators will implement the guidelines set out in this policy to adhere to National Law and Regulations and management will inform the regulatory authority as required.

Our Service requires FDC educators to implement risk management planning to identify any possible risks and hazards in their learning environments and practices. Where possible, FDC educators have eliminated or minimised these risks as is reasonably practicable by implementing risk management strategies and providing adequate supervision to ensure children are protected from harm or hazards. FDC educators will follow this policy and procedures to minimise the impact of incidents and injury to children.

In the event of a serious injury or accident, an ambulance will be called immediately, and the FDC

educator will follow any instructions provided by emergency services. FDC educators will ensure parents/guardians are contacted as soon as practicable and the principal office of our FDC Service will also be contacted.

Our FDC Service will ensure we review and evaluate our policies and procedures and ensure that educators' physiological wellbeing is supported following any serious incident, injury or trauma.

The approved provider or nominated supervisor must be contactable by the FDC educator at all times education and care is provided.

An *Incident Injury Report Register* will be completed to assist with a review of practices following an incident or injury at a FDC Service, including an assessment of areas for improvement.

INJURY, INCIDENT OR TRAUMA

In the event of any child, educator, volunteer or visitor having an accident at the FDC Service, residence, the FDC educator will attend to the person immediately and follow the *Administration of First Aid procedure.* The FDC educator will:

- ensure any workplace incident, injury or trauma will be investigated, and records kept as per WHS legislation and guidelines
- contact the nominated supervisor/coordinator for support and assistance
- ensure supervision is provided to other children in care at the residence
- provide details for notification to the regulatory authority to the approved provider if the incident or injury is a notifiable incident
- complete an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* and ensure parents have verified the information, signed and dated the record
- keep a copy of all records on file at the FDC residence and principal office.

DEFINITION OF SERIOUS INCIDENT

Regulations require the approved provider or nominated supervisor to notify regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident at the FDC Service through the NQA IT System.

A serious incident (Reg. 12) is defined as any of the following:

a) The death of a child:

(i) while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service or

(ii) following an incident while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service.

(b) Any incident involving serious injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service, which:

(i) a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner or

(ii) for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital. For example: whooping cough, broken limb and anaphylaxis reaction

(c) Any incident or emergency where the attendance of emergency services at the Education and Care Service premises was sought, or ought reasonably to have been sought (eg: severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis)

(d) Any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service

(i) Appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for or

(ii) Appears to have been taken or removed from the Education and Care Service premises in a manner that contravenes these regulations or

(iii) Is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the Education and Care Service premises or any part of the premises.

A serious incident should be documented in an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* record as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident, with any evidence attached.

INCIDENT, INJURY, TRAUMA AND ILLNESS RECORD

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* record contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for at the FDC Service. The record will include:

- name and age of the child
- circumstances leading to the incident, injury, illness
- time and date the incident occurred, the injury was received, or the child was subjected to trauma
- details of any illness which becomes apparent while the child is being cared for including any symptoms, time and date of the onset of the illness
- details of the action taken by the educator including any medication administered, first aid provided or medical professionals contacted
- details of any person who witnessed the incident, injury or trauma
- names of any person the educator notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this
- signature of the person making the entry, and the time and date the record was made

FDC educators are required to complete documentation of any incident, injury or trauma that occurs

when a child is being educated and cared for by the FDC Service. This includes recording incidences of

biting, scratching, dental or mouth injury. Due to Confidentiality and Privacy laws, only the name of the child injured will be recorded on the *Incident, Injury, Trauma or Illness Record*. Any other child/ren involved in the incident will not have their names recorded. If other children are injured or hurt, separate records will be completed for each child involved in the incident. Parents/authorised nominee must acknowledge the details contained in the record, sign and date the record on arrival to collect their child. All *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Records* must be kept until the child is 25 years of age. (See: *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*).

MISSING OR UNACCOUNTED FOR CHILD

At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision is provided to ensure children are protected from harm or hazards. However, if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for, removed from the FDC residence

that breaches the National Regulations or is mistakenly locked in or locked out of any part of the service, a serious incident notification must be made to the regulatory authority.

A child may only leave the FDC Service in the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee or because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or other emergency.

FDC educators must ensure that

- the attendance record is regularly cross-checked to ensure all children signed into the FDC Service are accounted for
- children are supervised at all times
- visitors to the service are not left alone with children at any time
- a headcount of children is conducted as the visitor leaves the residence

Should an incident occur where a child is missing from the FDC Service, the educator will:

- attempt to locate the child immediately by conducting a thorough search of the residence and premise (checking any areas that a child could be locked into by accident)
- cross check the attendance record to ensure the child hasn't been collected by an authorised person and signed out by another person – e.g.: educator assistant or coordinator
- if the child is not located within a 10-minute period, the educator will notify emergency services and notify the parent/s or guardian and the Approved Provider of the Family Day Care Service
- continue to search for the missing child until emergency services arrive whilst providing supervision for other children in care
- provide information to Police such as: child's name, age, appearance, (provide a photograph), details of where the child was last sighted.

If a child is missing during or following transportation the *Missing Child During Regular Transportation Procedure* is to be followed.

The approved provider is responsible for notifying the regulatory authority of a serious incident within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

HEAD INJURIES

All head injuries will be considered as serious.

In the event of a head injury, the FDC educator will assess the child, administer any urgent First Aid and notify parents/guardians of the incident.

Head injuries are generally classified as mild, moderate or severe. Mild head injuries may result in a small lump or bruise, however, may still result in a possible concussion. Parents/guardians will be advised to seek medical advice if their child develops any new symptoms of head trauma.

Emergency services will be contacted immediately if the child:

- has sustained a head injury involving high speeds or fallen from a height greater than one metre (play equipment)
- loses consciousness
- has a seizure, convulsion or fit
- seems unwell or vomits several times after hitting their head
- has a severe or increasing headache

The FDC educator must contact the principal office of the FDC Service at the time of the incident and also after the child has been collected or transferred to hospital. An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* record must be completed and signed by the parent. The approved provider will notify the regulatory authority on behalf of the Family Day Care educator.

TRAUMA

Trauma is defined as the impact of an event or a series of events during which a child feels helpless and pushed beyond their ability to cope. There are a range of different events that might be traumatic to a child, including accidents, injuries, serious illness, natural disasters (bush fires), assault, and threats of violence, domestic violence, neglect or abuse and war or terrorist attacks. Parental or cultural trauma can also have a traumatising effect on children. This definition firmly places trauma into a developmental context: *"Trauma changes the way children understand their world, the people in it and where they belong"* (Australian Childhood Foundation, 2010).

Trauma can disrupt the relationships a child has with their parents, educators and staff who care for them. It can transform children's language skills, physical and social development and the ability to manage their emotions and behaviour.

Behavioural response in babies and toddlers who have experienced trauma may include:

- Avoidance of eye contact
- Loss of physical skills such as rolling over, sitting, crawling, and walking
- Fear of going to sleep, especially when alone
- Nightmares
- Loss of appetite
- Making very few sounds
- Increased crying and general distress
- Unusual aggression
- Constantly on the move with no quiet times
- Sensitivity to noises.

Behavioural responses for pre-school aged children who have experiences trauma may include:

- new or increased clingy behaviour such as constantly following a parent, carer around
- anxiety when separated from parents or carers
- new problems with skills like sleeping, eating, going to the toilet and paying attention
- shutting down and withdrawing from everyday experiences
- difficulties enjoying activities
- being jumpier or easily frightened
- physical complaints with no known cause such as stomach pains and headaches
- blaming themselves and thinking the trauma was their fault.

Children who have experienced traumatic events often need help to adjust to the way they are feeling. When parents, educators and staff take the time to listen, talk, and play they may find children begin to say or show how they are feeling. Providing children with time and space lets them know you are available and care about them.

It is important for educators to be patient when dealing with a child who has experienced a traumatic event. It may take time to understand how to respond to a child's needs and new behaviours before parents, educators

and staff are able to work out the best ways to support a child. It is imperative to realise that a child's behaviour may be a response to the traumatic event rather than just 'naughty' or 'difficult' behaviour.

Educators can assist children dealing with trauma by implementing trauma-informed practice including:

- getting children to identify their emotions
- debriefing with children after any incident, illness or trauma to support their understandings of the events
- providing opportunities for children to voice their feelings, ask questions and talk
- supporting children to regulate their emotions and build positive relationships
- observing the behaviours and expressed feelings of a child and documenting responses that were most helpful in these situations
- creating a 'relaxation' space with familiar and comforting toys and objects children can use when they are having a difficult time
- having quiet time such as reading a story about feelings together
- trying different types of play that focus on expressing feelings (e.g., drawing, playing with play dough, dress-ups and physical games such as trampolines)
- helping children understand their feelings by using reflecting statements (e.g., 'you look sad/angry right now, I wonder if you need some help?').

There are a number of ways for parents, educators to reduce their own stress and maintain awareness, so they continue to be effective when offering support to children who have experienced traumatic events.

STRATEGIES TO ASSIST FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS TO COPE WITH CHILDREN'S STRESS OR TRAUMA MAY INCLUDE:

- taking time to calm yourself when you have a strong emotional response. This may mean walking away from a situation for a few minutes or handing over to another educator or staff member if possible.
- planning ahead with a range of possibilities in case difficult situations occur.
- remembering to find ways to look after yourself, even if it is hard to find time or you feel other things are more important. Taking time out helps adults be more available to children when they need support.
- using supports available to you within your relationships (e.g., family, friends, colleagues).
- identifying a supportive person to talk to about your experiences. This might be your family doctor or another health professional.
- accessing support resources- BeYou, Emerging Minds, Kids Help Line

Living or working with traumatised children can be demanding so it is important to be aware of your own responses and seek support from management when required.

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* must be completed detailing the trauma the child was subjected to, the time and date and circumstances as per Reg. 87.

ILLNESS MANAGEMENT

To reduce the transmission of infectious illness, our FDC Service implements effective hygiene and infection control routines and procedures from Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services- 6th Edition.

Practising effective hygiene helps to minimise the risk of cross infection within our FDC Service include:

- immunisation- for children and adults
- respiratory hygiene- limiting airborne germs and the transmission of respiratory diseases. Educators model good hygiene practices and remind children to cough or sneeze into their elbow or use a

disposable tissue and wash their hands immediately with soap and water or use hand sanitiser after touching their mouth, eyes or nose.

- hand hygiene- handwashing techniques are practiced by all educators and children routinely using soap and water before and after eating, after changing children's nappies, when using the toilet and drying hands thoroughly with paper towel.
- parents, families and visitors are requested to wash their hands upon arrival and departure at the FDC Service or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- wearing PPE- gloves and masks to provide a protective barrier against germs
- environmental strategies- cleaning with specific products after any spills of body fluids (urine, feces, vomit, blood, breastmilk); All surfaces including bedding (mat, cushions) used by a child who is unwell, will be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected.
- nappy changing and toileting- Infection control practices including hand hygiene and proper cleaning and disinfection procedures are implemented when children's nappies are changed. Children are helped and/or supervised using the toilet and washing their hands
- exclusion – children, educators and other staff who show symptoms of infectious disease are excluded from the Service.

(Staying healthy, 6th Edition, 2024)

CHILDREN ARRIVING AT THE FDC SERVICE WHO ARE UNWELL

FDC educators will not accept a child into care if they:

- have a diagnosed contagious illness or infectious disease [specific exclusion periods may apply]
- have a temperature above 38.0°C
- have been given medication for a temperature prior to arriving at the Service (for example: Panadol)
- have had *any* diarrhoea and/or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- have started a course of antibiotics in the last 24 hours.

IDENTIFYING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

FDC educators are not doctors and are unable to diagnose an illness or infectious disease, however, as our FDC educators are familiar with the children in their care, they will watch for symptoms of sickness. If a child becomes ill whilst at the Service, FDC educators will respond to their individual symptoms of illness and provide comfort and care.

FDC educators will closely monitor the child focusing on the symptoms displayed and how the child behaves and be alert to the possibility of symptoms that may suggest the child is very sick and needing urgent medical assistance.

FDC educators will:

- understand the differences between *concerning and serious symptoms*
- if any *serious symptoms* are observed (breathing difficulties, drowsiness or irresponsiveness, looking pale or blue or feeling cold)
    - an ambulance will be called immediately
- if any *concerning symptoms* are observed (lethargy, fever, poor feeding, new rash, poor urine output, irritation or pain or sensitivity to light) educators will:
    - monitor the child carefully
    - call parents/carers

    - discuss symptoms with parents/carers and help them decide whether the child needs to see a doctor
- educators will monitor the child and will consider calling an ambulance if:
    - any concerning symptoms become severe
    - the child gets worse very quickly
    - there are multiple concerning symptoms.

(Staying healthy, 6th Edition, 2024)

In the event of any child requiring ambulance transportation and medical intervention, a serious incident will be reported to the regulatory authority (Reg. 12) by the approved provider.

If the child has symptoms that suggest they are sick and they are not well enough to enjoy activities, they should go home and parents/caregivers will be contacted. A child who is displaying symptoms of a contagious illness or virus (vomiting, diarrhoea, fever) will be moved away immediately from the rest of the group and supervised until he/she is collected by a parent or emergency contact person.

SYMPTOMS INDICATING ILLNESS MAY INCLUDE:

- lethargy and decreased activity
- difficulty breathing
- fever (temperature more than 38°C)
- headaches
- poor feeding
- poor urine output/ dark urine
- a stiff neck, irritability or sensitivity to light
- new red or purple rash
- pain
- diarrhoea
- vomiting
- discharge from the eye or ear
- skin that displays rashes, blisters, spots, crusty or weeping sores
- loss of appetite
- difficulty in swallowing or complaining of a sore throat
- persistent, prolonged or severe coughing

HIGH TEMPERATURES OR FEVERS

Children get fevers or temperatures for all kinds of reasons. Most fevers and the illnesses that cause them last only a few days. Recognised authorities suggest a child's normal temperature will range between 36.5°C and 38.0°C.

WHEN A CHILD DEVELOPS A HIGH TEMPERATURE OR FEVER AT THE SERVICE

- For infants under 3 months old, parents/guardians will be notified immediately for any fever over 38°C for immediate medical assistance. If a parent is uncontactable, emergency contacts will be contacted. If family members are unable to be contacted and emergency medical assistance is required, the Service will follow the *Administration of First Aid Policy* and contact emergency services

- FDC educators will check a child's temperature if they think the child has a fever. If it is between 37.5°C and 37.9°C educators will retest within 30 minutes (records will be kept of time, date and temperature)
- FDC educators will notify parents when a child registers a temperature of 38°C or higher
- FDC educators will follow the *Illness Management Procedure* for methods to reduce a child's temperature or fever
- The child will need to be collected from the FDC Service as soon as possible (within 30 minutes)
- FDC educators will monitor the child carefully to ensure their condition does not get worse and call an ambulance immediately if required
- Parents/carers will be provided with a *Fever* factsheet for further information
- FDC educators will complete an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* record and note down any other symptoms that may have developed along with the temperature (for example, a rash, vomiting, etc.).
- If the child has gone home from the FDC Service with a fever but their temperature is normal the next morning they can return to the Service. (Staying healthy, 6th Edition, 2024)

RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS

Respiratory symptoms include cough, sneezing, runny or blocked nose and sore throat. It is not unusual for children to have five or more colds a year, and children in education and care services may have as many as 8–12 colds a year. A runny or blocked nose is a common symptom for many respiratory conditions or diseases which may be infectious such as a cold, influenza or COVID. Some causes, however, are not infectious such as allergies (hay fever).

As each child may have different symptoms of a respiratory illness, our FDC Service will consider exclusion

based on the severity of the symptoms and the child's behaviour. Children can become distressed and

lethargic when unwell and should be at home with a parent or carer under close supervision.

A child will be excluded from the FDC Service if:

- the respiratory symptoms are severe or;
- the symptoms become worse during the course of the day (more frequent or severe) or;
- the child has other concerning symptoms (fever, tiredness, pain, poor feeding).

(Staying healthy, 6th Edition, 2024).

DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING (GASTROENTERITIS)

Gastroenteritis (or 'gastro') is a general term for an illness of the digestive system. Typical symptoms

include abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, and vomiting. In many cases, it does not need treatment, and symptoms disappear in a few days. However, gastroenteritis can cause dehydration because of the large amount of fluid lost through vomiting and diarrhoea. Therefore, if a child does not receive enough fluids, he/she may require fluids intravenously.

If a child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting whilst at the FDC residence, the educator will notify parents or an emergency contact to collect the child immediately. Parents/carers will be provided with a *Diarrhoea or vomiting (gastroenteritis*) fact sheet for further information.

In the event of an outbreak of viral gastroenteritis, the FDC educator must inform their coordinator/nominated supervisor and they will contact the local Public Health Unit.

Public Health Unit- Local state and territory health departments An outbreak is when two or more children or staff have a sudden onset of diarrhoea or vomiting in a 2-day period. (See: *Illness or Infectious Disease Register*). The FDC educator and coordinator must document the number of cases, dates of onset, duration of symptoms.

FDC educators and children that have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting will be excluded from the FDC Service until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 24 hours. If the diarrhoea or vomiting are confirmed to be norovirus, they will be excluded until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 48 hours. FDC educators who handle food will be excluded from for up to 48 hours after they have stopped vomiting or having diarrhoea. [Staying healthy, 2024.]

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* must be completed as per regulations. Notifications for serious illnesses must be lodged with the regulatory authority and Public Health Unit.

NOTIFYING FAMILIES AND EMERGENCY CONTACT- SICKNESS OR INFECTIOUS ILLNESS

- It is a requirement of the Service that all emergency contacts are able to pick up an ill child within a 30-minute timeframe
- In the event that the ill child is not collected in a timely manner, or should parents refuse to collect the child, a warning letter will be sent to the families outlining FDC Service policies and requirements. The letter of warning will specify that if there is a future breach of this nature, the child's position may be terminated.
- Parents or guardians are notified as soon as practicable and no later than 24 hours of the illness, accident, or trauma occurring
- Families will be notified of any outbreak of an infectious illness (e.g.: Gastroenteritis, whooping cough) within the Service via our notice board, online app or email to assist in reducing the spread of the illness
- When a child has been diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease, the FDC Service will refer to information about recommended exclusion periods from the Public Health Unit (PHU) and *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 6th Edition (2024).*
- Exclusion periods for illness and infectious diseases are provided to families and included in our Family Handbook and *Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy*
- Families are provided with clear information about any illness or disease via Factsheets from Staying healthy, 6th Edition.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, NOMINATED SUPERVISOR, COORDINATOR AND FDC EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- FDC policies and procedures are adhered to at all times
- each child's enrolment records include authorisations by a parent or person named in the record for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and if required, transportation by an ambulance service
- accurate attendance records are kept at all times
- parents or guardians are notified as soon as practicable and no later than 24 hours of the illness, incident, injury or trauma occurring at a FDC residence whilst in the care of an educator
- an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed accurately and in a timely manner as soon after the event as possible (within 24 hours)
- if the incident, situation or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of any person present at the FDC Service or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours of the incident
- families are advised to keep their child at home until they are feeling well, and they have not had any symptoms for at least 24-48 hours (depending upon the illness and exclusion periods)
- children or FDC educators who are diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease may be excluded as per recommended exclusion periods for common or concerning conditions

- families are notified of any infectious diseases circulating the FDC service within 24 hours of detection
- families of a child with complex and chronic medical conditions will be notified in the event of an outbreak of an illness or infectious disease that could compromise their health
- a child who has not been immunised will be excluded from the FDC Service if a vaccine preventable disease is reported within the Service community and that child is deemed to be in danger of contracting the illness. Please refer to our *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- families are notified to collect their child if they have vomited or had diarrhoea whilst at the FDC Service
- FDC educators and educator assistants:
    - hold current ACECQA approved first aid qualification including emergency life support and CPR resuscitation
    - has undertaken current approved emergency anaphylaxis and
    - has undertaken current emergency asthma management training
- first aid kits are suitably equipped and checked on a monthly basis.
- first aid kits are easily accessible when children are present at the FDC residence and during excursions
- CPR charts are displayed in a prominent position in the indoor and outdoor environment
- FDC educators or educator assistants who have diarrhoea, or an infectious disease do not prepare food for others for at least 48 hours after the symptoms have resolved
- cold food is kept cold (below 5 °C) and hot food, hot (above 60°C) to discourage the growth of bacteria
- children are excluded from the FDC Service if the educator feels the child is too unwell to attend or is a risk to other children
- educators, coordinators, visitors and children always practice appropriate hand hygiene and cough and sneezing etiquette
- appropriate cleaning practices are followed
- toys and equipment are cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis which is recorded in the toy cleaning register or immediately if a child who is unwell has mouthed or used these toys or resources
- additional cleaning will be implemented during any outbreak of an infectious illness or virus
- support, advice and tools will be provided to assist educators manage their mental health following any traumatic event/experience
- information regarding the health and wellbeing of a child or staff member is not shared with others unless consent has been provided, in writing, or provided the disclosure is required or authorised by law under relevant state/territory legislation.

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the Service's policies regarding *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness*
- provide authorisation in the child's enrolment record for the FDC educator, approved provider, nominated supervisor to seek medical treatment from a medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and if required, transportation by ambulance service
- provide up to date medical and contact information in case of an emergency
- provide emergency contact details and ensure details are kept up to date
- ensure that their child is able to be collected from the FDC Service within a 30-minute timeframe if required due to illness by either a parent or emergency contact

- provide the FDC Service with all relevant medical information, including Medicare and private health insurance
- provide a copy of their child's medical management plans and update these annually or whenever medication/medical needs change
- adhere to recommended periods of exclusion if their child has a virus or infectious illness- (exclusion for common or concerning conditions)
- seek medical advice for their child's illness/fever as required
- complete documentation as requested by the FDC educator and/or approved provider- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record* and acknowledge that they were made aware of the incident
- inform the FDC Service if their child has an infectious disease or illness
- provide evidence as required from doctors or specialists that the child is fit to return to care if required- including post-surgery
- complete and acknowledge details in the *Administration of Medication Record* if required

12. Immunisation Policy

When groups of children are together, illness and disease can spread rapidly. Immunisable diseases such as measles and whooping cough can have serious health consequences for children, especially young children. Staff members who work in a childcare setting are also at increased risk of certain infectious illnesses.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to manage and prevent the spread of infectious illnesses and diseases. Kids Planet Family Day Care Services has a duty of care to ensure that all children, families provided with a high level of protection during the hours of the care. This includes notifying children, families when an excludable illness or disease is present at an educators care residence; maintaining a record of children's immunisation status; complying to relevant health department exclusion guidelines; and Increasing educators' awareness of cross infection through physical contact with others.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators (educator), the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

Immunisation is a reliable way to prevent some infections. Immunisation works by giving a person a vaccine—often a dead or modified version of the germ—against a particular disease. This makes the person's immune system respond in a similar way to how it would respond if they actually had the disease, but with less severe symptoms. If the person comes in contact with that germ in the future, their immune system can rapidly respond and prevent the person becoming ill.

Immunisation also protects other people who are not immunised, such as children who are too young to be immunised, or people whose immune systems did not respond to the vaccine. This is because the more people who are immunised against a disease, the lower the chance that a person will ever come into contact with someone who has the disease. The chance of an infection spreading in a community therefore decreases if a large proportion of people are immunised, because the immune people will not become infected and can protect the vulnerable people; this is known as 'herd immunity.'

As of January 2016, new immunisation requirements came into force affecting childcare benefits and family assistance payments (the Commonwealth) and the enrolment of children in child care (in VIC). The Commonwealth has made changes under the 'No Jab, No Pay' measure to increase childhood vaccination rates causing families to no longer be eligible for childcare benefits and family assistance payments with exceptions for children recorded with medical contraindications or natural immunity for certain diseases and those on a recognised catch-up schedule.

Management/Nominated Supervisor will

- Display wall charts about immunisation
- Review children's immunisation each month, updating the child's records kept at the service, and sending remainder letters and emails for families.
- Not enroll a child into the Service unless approved documentation has been provided that confirms the child is fully immunised for their age or has a medical reason not be immunised.
- Notify families when an outbreak of an immunise-able disease occurs.
- Exclude any child who is not immunised from the Service if and when an outbreak of an immunise-able infectious disease occurs to protect that child and to prevent further spread of infection. In the instance of the child being immunised and the Immunisation record not provided to the Service – the child would be viewed as not being immunised.

Families will

- Provide the service with a copy of one or more of the following documents.
  - An ACIR Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations; or
  - An ACIR Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule; or
  - An ACIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by a GP, or.
  - An Interim Vaccination Objection Form for Enrolment that has been co-signed by a medical practitioner or authorised nurse immuniser and a parent.
- Provide the service with an updated copy of their child's current immunisation record every 6 months

Victoria (VIC)
The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule **TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE** can be accessed and downloaded from: http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Home Department of Health, Victoria Immunisation Program- children https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children Telephone - 1300 882 008 Immunise Australia National Hotline: 1800 671 811 Australian Government, Department of Human Services: https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account

13. Sick Children Policy

Children come into contact with many other children and adults in the early childhood environment causing them to contract infectious illnesses. National Quality Standards require early childhood services to implement specific strategies to minimise the spread of infectious illness.

PURPOSE

We aim to maintain the health of all children, staff and their families, ensuring a healthy environment and minimising cross contamination and the spread of infectious illnesses.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy should be used in conjunction with the following Service policies.

- Control of Infectious Diseases
- Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy
- Medical Emergency Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services has adopted the Staying Healthy in family day care – Preventing Infectious disease in childcare Fifth Edition) publication, developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council. We aim to provide families with up-to-date information regarding specific illnesses and ways to minimise the spread of infection within the Service.

We understand that it can be difficult for families to know when their child is sick. Families may experience problems taking time off work or study to care for their child at home. Obtaining leave from work or study can enhance negative attitudes in the workplace which can cause stress on families. Families may also experience guilt when they send their child to care who is not well. However, it is imperative that families preserve a focus not only on the well-being of their own child but also upon the well-being of other children and the family day care at the Service.

The need for exclusion and the length of time a person is excluded depend on how easily the infection can spread, how long the person is likely to be infectious and how severe the disease can be. To protect the health of children and staff within the Service, it is important that children and staff who are ill are kept away from the Service for the recommended period.

Our Educators and Staff are not medical practitioners and are not able to diagnose whether or not a child has an infectious illness. However, if an infectious illness is suspected, Kids Planet Family Day Care Services may ask the family to collect their child from care as soon as possible or not bring the child to care.

Management and Educators may request families seek medical advice and provide a medical certificate stating that the child is no longer infectious prior to returning to care.

Children arriving at the Service who are unwell

Educators will not accept a child into care if they

- Are unwell and unable to participate in normal activities or require additional attention.
- Have had a temperature, vomiting and/or diarrhoea in the last 24 hours.
- Have been started anti-biotics in the last 24 hours.
- Have a contagious illness or disease.
- Have been given medication for a temperature (Panadol etc.)

Children who become ill at the care Residence

Children may become unwell throughout the day, in which Educators will respond to children's individual symptoms of illness.

- Educators will monitor and document the child's symptoms on the illness register.

- A child who has passed two runny stools/vomited whilst in care will be sent home and may only return once a Doctor's Certificate has been produced.
- Educators will take the child's temperature. If the child's temperature is 38°C or higher, management will contact the child's parents/guardian/emergency contacts as soon as possible to have the child picked up and provide verbal authorisation to administer paracetamol.
- Educators will attempt to lower the child's temperature by
    - Taking off their shoes and socks
    - Applying a cool washer behind their neck and on their forehead
    - Removing extra clothing layers (jumpers etc.)
    - Place the child in a lukewarm bath.
- Place the child is a quiet area where they can rest, whilst being supervised.
- Continue to document any progressing symptoms.
- Complete Illness Record, ensuring the form has been completed correctly and signed by the parent/guardian/emergency contact.

Reporting Outbreaks to the Public Health Unit

Outbreaks of communicable diseases represent a threat to public health. To prevent outbreaks, it is important to monitor the number of people who contract certain infectious diseases and their characteristics, and to work with patients and their doctors to help prevent spread to other people.

Specialist trained public health staff review this information and if necessary, contact the patient's doctor, and sometimes the patient, to provide advice about disease control and to complete the collection of information.

All information is held confidentially in order to protect the patient's privacy. Both the Victorian and Commonwealth Privacy Acts contemplate the release/disclosure of patient information where it is lawfully required or authorised.

The service is required to notify the Department of Health & Human Services by phone (call 1300 651 160) as soon as possible after they are made aware that a child enrolled at the school or facility is suffering from one of the following vaccine preventable diseases:

- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Poliomyelitis
- Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib)
- Meningococcal disease
- Rubella ("German measles")
- Measles
- Pertussis ("whooping cough")
- Tetanus
- An outbreak of gastrointestinal or respiratory illness

Common Colds and Flu

The common cold (Viral upper respiratory tract infections) is very common in children occurring 6-10 times a year on average with the highest number usually being during the first 2 years in care, kindergarten or school. Symptoms may include coughing, runny nose and a slight temperature.

In circumstances where a child appears to have a cold or flu symptoms, management will determine if the child is well enough to continue at the service or if the child requires parental care.

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services aims to support the family's need for childcare, however families should understand that a child who is unwell will need one-on-one attention which places additional pressure on staff ratios and the needs of other children.

Excluding children from care

- When a child has been diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease, the educator will refer to Staying Healthy in Childcare (5th Edition) to find the recommended exclusion period and also request a medical clearance from the GP stating that the child is cleared to return to the childcare setting.
- When an infectious disease has been diagnosed, the educator will display appropriate documentation and alerts for families including information on the illness/disease, symptoms, infectious period and the exclusion period. (This information can be obtained from Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th Edition)
- Children that have had diarrhoea and vomiting will be asked to stay away from the Service for 48 hours after symptoms have ceased to reduce infection transmission as symptoms can develop again after 24 hours in many instances.

Notifying families and Emergency Contact

- It is a requirement of the Service that all emergency contacts are able to pick up an ill child within a 30-minute timeframe.

Management and Educators will ensure

- Effective hygiene policies and procedures are adhered to at all times.
- Effective environmental cleaning policies and procedures are adhered to all times.
- All families are given a copy of relevant policies upon enrolment which will be explained by management including Control of Infectious Diseases Policy, Sick Children policy, Injury and Accident policy and Medical Emergency Policy.
- Any child who registers a temperature of 38°C or above will need to be collected from the Service and will be excluded for 24 hours since the last elevated temperature or until the Service receives a doctors clearance letter stating that the child is cleared of any infection and able to return to family day care.
- A child who has not been immunised will be excluded from the Service if; an infectious disease is reported within the Service community and that child is deemed to be in danger of contracting the illness. Please refer to our Control of Infectious Diseases Policy.
- That if the situation or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the child or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours of the incident.
- That parents are notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours. Also, details of the condition/situation will be recorded on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record.
- The educator will not pick up a child from school during school hours because a parent asked them to do so, this is outside their agreement time and we do not know the circumstances behind the reason why the parent has been asked to pick up the child from school.

Families Responsibility

- In order to prevent the spread of disease, families are required to monitor their child's health, in particular:
    - Runny, green nose
    - High temperature

- Diarrhoea
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic

- Parents will not ask educators to pick up their child from school when the schools notifies them their child is sick.
- Will pick up their child as soon as the educator notifies them of the child being sick or organize an emergency contact to pick the child up.

Returning to care after surgery

- Children who have undergone any type of surgery will need to take advice from their doctor/surgeon as to when it is appropriate to return to care.
- Children will require a medical clearance stating the child is fit and able to return to the Service and participate in daily activities.

Administration of First Aid Policy

First aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries or illnesses from becoming major. The capacity to provide prompt basic first aid is particularly important in the contact of an early childhood service where staff have a duty of care and obligation to assist children who are injured, become ill or require support with administration of medication.

PURPOSE

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services has a duty of care to provide and protect the health and safety of children, families, educators and visitors of the Service. This policy aims to support educators to:

- Preserve life.
- Ensure that ill or injured persons are stabilised and comforted until medical assistance intervenes.
- Monitor ill or injured persons in the recovery stage.
- Apply additional first aid tactics if the condition does not improve.
- Ensure the environment is safe and other people are not in danger of becoming ill or injured.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

First aid is the emergency aid or treatment given to persons suffering illness or injury following an accident and prior to obtaining professional medical services if required. It includes emergency treatment, maintenance of records, dressing of minor injuries, recognition and reporting of health hazards and participation in safety programs. Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of children, and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.

Management is responsible for:

- Safeguarding every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children at the Service from harm and/or hazards that can cause injury.

- Ensuring that an educator has a current approved first aid qualifications.
- Appointing a nominated first aid officer
- Ensuring a risk assessment is conducted prior to an excursion to identify risks to health, safety, or wellbeing and specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised
- Ensuring that first aid training details are recorded and kept up to date on educators' records
- Ensuring that parents are notified within 24 hours if their child is involved in an incident, injury, trauma or illness at the service and recording details on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record
- Ensuring the Regulatory Authorities are notified within 24 hours if a child is involved in a serious incident, injury, trauma or illness at the Service.
- Keeping up to date with any changes in procedures for administration of first aid and ensuring that all educators are informed of these changes.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will:

- Maintain a current approved first aid qualification
- Support educators and staff when dealing with a serious incident, trauma
- Monitoring the contents of all first aid kits and arranging replacement of stock, including when the use-by date has been reached
- Disposing of out-of-date materials appropriately
- Ensure safety signs showing the location of first aid kits are clearly displayed
- Ensure that all educators' approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training are current and meet the requirements of the National Act and National Regulations and are approved by ACECQA
- Ensuring a risk assessment is conducted prior to an excursion to identify risks to health, safety, or wellbeing and specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised
- Keep up to date with any changes in the procedures for the administration of first aid
- Ensure that appropriate documentation is being recorded by educators and staff in regard to incidents, injury, trauma and illnesses and the administration of first aid. Documentation of the following must be recorded;
    - Name and age of the child
    - Circumstances leading to the incident, injury, trauma or illness (including any symptoms)
    - Time and date
    - Details of action taken by the service including any medication administered, first aid provided or
    - Medical personnel contacted
    - Details of any witnesses
    - Names of any person the service notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this
    - Signature of the person making the entry, and time and date of this.

Educators will:

- Implement appropriate first aid procedures when necessary

- Maintain current approved first aid qualifications, and qualifications in anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management, as required
- Practice CPR and administration of an auto-injection device annually
- Ensure that all children are adequately supervised while providing first aid and comfort for a child involved in an incident or suffering trauma
- Ensure that the details of any incident requiring the administration of first aid are recorded on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record accurately
- Conduct a risk assessment prior to an excursion to identify risks to health, safety or wellbeing and specifying how these risks will be managed and minimised

Parents will:

- Sign Service records of accidents or injuries that have occurred, acknowledging they have been made aware of the incident and the first aid that treatment that was given to the child
- Provide the required information for the Service's medication record
- Provide written consent (via the enrolment record) for service staff to administer first aid and call an ambulance, if required
- Be contactable, either directly or through emergency contacts listed on the child's enrolment record, in the event of an incident requiring the administration of first aid.

First Aid Kit

The approved provider of the Service will ensure that first aid kits are kept in up to date and in accordance with National Education and Care Service Regulations

All First Aid Kits at the service must:

- Not be locked
- Not contain paracetamol
- Be suitable for the number of employees and children and sufficient for the immediate treatment of injuries at the Service.
- Be easily accessible to staff and educators
- Be constructed of resistant material, be dustproof and of sufficient size to adequately store the required contents
- Be capable of being sealed and preferably be fitted with a carrying handle as well as have internal compartments.
- Contain a list of the contents of the kit.
- Be regularly checked using the First Aid Kit Checklist to ensure the contents are as listed and have not depreciated or expired.
- Have a white cross on a green background with the words 'First Aid' prominently displayed on the outside.
- Be easy to access and if applicable, located where there is a risk of injury occurring.
- Include emergency telephone numbers, the phone number and location of the nearest first aid trained educators.
- Be provided on each floor of a multi-level workplace.
- Be provided in each work vehicle.

- Consideration should be given to precautionary measures such as sunscreen protection and portable water if working outdoors.
- First Aid kits must be taken on excursions and be attended by First Aid qualified educators.
- Be maintained in proper condition and the contents restocked as required.
- We will display a well recognised, standardised first aid sign to assist in easily locating first aid kits.

First Aid Kit Checklist

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will use the Checklist in Safe Work Australia's First Aid in the Workplace Code of Practice as a guide to what to include in our First Aid Kit.

http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/f50215804071fb55b197ffe1fb554c40/First+aid+CC.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

Medical Conditions Policy

To support children's wellbeing and manage precise health requirements, Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will work in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations to ensure health related policies and procedures are developed and implemented.

PURPOSE

We aim to efficiently respond to and manage medical conditions at the Service ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, staff, families and visitors.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services is committed to adhering to privacy and confidential procedures when dealing with individual health requirements.

The Approved Provider/Management will ensure:

- Educators and Staff have a clear understanding about children's individual medical conditions.
- Communication between families and Educators is on-going and effective.
- Educators receive appropriate training in managing specific medical conditions.
- Educators in care have a current accredited first aid and CPR training for specific medical conditions.
- Educators have a clear understanding about their role and responsibilities when caring for children with a medical condition.
- Families provide required information on their child's medical condition, including.
    - Medication
    - Allergies
    - Medical Practitioner contact details
    - Medical Management Plan
- A Medical Management Plan/Risk Minimisation Plan has been developed in consultation with families and the child's medical practitioner.
- Educators have emergency contact information for the child.

- Assistant educators are informed of children who have specific medical conditions or food allergies, the type of condition or allergies they have, and the Service's procedures for dealing with emergencies involving allergies and anaphylaxis.
- A copy of the child's medical management plan is visibly displayed and known to educator.
- A child is not enrolled at the Service without a Medical Management Plan and prescribed medication by their medical practitioner. In particular, medication that is life threating such as asthma inhalers, adrenaline auto injection devices and Insulin.

Families will ensure.

- They provide management with information about their child's health needs, allergies, medical conditions and medication on the enrolment form and through verbal communication/meetings.
- The Service enrolment form is completed in its entirety providing specific details about the child's medical condition.
- They notify the Service if any changes are to occur to the Medical Management Plan
- They provide the required medication and complete the long-term medication record.

Medical Management Plan

- Any Medical Management Plan provided by a child's parents and/or registered medical practitioner. This Plan should:
    - have supporting documentation if appropriate
    - include a photo of the child
    - if relevant, state what triggers the allergy or medical condition
    - include first aid needed
    - Include contact details of the doctor who signed the plan
    - state when the plan should be reviewed
- A copy of the Medical Management Plan will be displayed by Educators to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.

Risk Minimisation Plan

All children with a diagnosed medical condition must have a risk minimisation plan in place.

A meeting will be arranged with the parents/guardian as soon as the Service has been advised of the medical condition. During this meeting a risk minimisation plan will be developed in consultation with the parent/guardian to ensure:

1. That the risks relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition are assessed and minimised
2. That practices and procedures in relation to the safe handling, preparation and consumption and service of food are developed and implemented
3. To ensure that the parents/families are notified of any known allergens that pose a risk to a child and strategies for minimising the risk are developed and implemented
4. That the child does not attend the care without medication prescribed by the child's medical practitioner in relation to the child's specific health need, allergy or relevant medical condition
5. Plan(s) in conjunction with parents/guardians will be reviewed at least annually and/or will be revised with each change in the Medical Management Plan

6. Educators will ensure all relevant information pertaining to the child's health and medical condition is communicated to parents at the end of each day
7. Educators will notify parents in advance of any special activities taking place such as celebrations, sporting events and excursions so plans of safe inclusion can be made
8. Educators will ensure appropriate hygiene practices are followed when managing medical conditions in line with the Control of Infectious Diseases Policy
9. Risk minimisation plans will be reviewed in collaboration with families every 6 months

Communication Plan

A communication plan will be created after the meeting with the parents/guardian to ensure:

1. All relevant staff members and volunteers are informed about the medical conditions policy and the Individual Health Management Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan for the child; and
2. Creating an individual child communication book so that a parent can communicate any changes to the Individual Health Management Plan and Risk Management Plan for the child.

At all times, families who have a child attending care who have a diagnosed medical condition will be provided with a copy of this policy which includes a communication plan and any other relevant policies.

Anaphylaxis Management Policy

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction which is potentially life threatening. It should always be treated as a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment. Most cases of anaphylaxis occur after a person with a severe allergy is exposed to the allergen to which they are allergic, usually a food, insect sting or medication.

PURPOSE

We aim to minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring at Kids Planet Family Day Care Services by ensuring all staff members are adequately trained to respond appropriately and competently to an anaphylactic reaction.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

DUTY OF CARE

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services has a legal responsibility to provide:

1. A safe environment
2. Adequate Supervision

Educators need to know enough about Anaphylaxis reactions to ensure the safety of children.

BACKGROUND

Anaphylaxis is a severe, rapidly progressive allergic reaction that is potentially life threatening.

The most common allergens in children are:

- Peanuts
- Eggs
- Tree nuts (e.g., cashews)
- Cow's milk
- Fish and shellfish

- Wheat
- Soy
- Sesame
- Certain insect stings (particularly bee stings)

The key to the prevention of anaphylaxis in care is knowledge of those children who have been diagnosed as at risk, awareness of allergens, and prevention of exposure to those allergens.

Communication between the service, educators and families is important in helping children avoid exposure.

Adrenaline given through an adrenaline autoinjector (such as an EpiPen® or Anapen®) into the muscle of the outer mid-thigh is the most effective first aid treatment for anaphylaxis.

IMPLEMENTATION

We will involve all educators, families and children in regular discussions about medical conditions and general health and wellbeing throughout our curriculum. The Service will adhere to privacy and confidentiality procedures when dealing with individual health needs.

A copy of all medical conditions policies will be provided to all educators and families of the Service. It is important that communication is open between families and educators to ensure appropriate management of anaphylactic reactions are effective.

It is imperative that all educators follow a child's Medical Management Plan in the event of an incident related to a child's specific health care need, allergy or medical condition.

Management, Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will ensure:

- That all educators have completed first aid and anaphylaxis management training approved by the Education and Care Services National Regulations at least every 3 years and is recorded, with each staff members' certificate held on the Service's premises.
- That all educators, whether or not they have a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis undertakes training in the administration of the adrenaline auto-injection device and cardio- pulmonary resuscitation every 12 months, recording this in the staff records.
- That all educators are aware of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction, the child at risk of anaphylaxis, the child's allergies, anaphylaxis action plan and EpiPen kit.
- That a copy of this policy is provided and reviewed during each new educators induction process.
- A copy of this policy will be provided to a parent or guardian of each child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis at the Service.
- Updated information, resources and support are regularly given to families for managing allergies and anaphylaxis.

In care Residences where a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is registered the service shall also:

- Conduct an assessment of the potential for accidental exposure to allergens while child/children at risk of anaphylaxis are in their care and develop a risk minimisation plan for the child in consultation with the service and the families of the child/children.
- Ensure that no child who has been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injection device is permitted to attend the care without the device.
- Display an Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy Inc. (ASCIA) generic poster called Action Plan for Anaphylaxis for each child with a diagnosed risk of anaphylaxis, in key locations at the care Residence, for example, in the children's play or near the medication cabinet.

- Ensure that a child's individual anaphylaxis medical management action plan is signed by a Registered Medical Practitioner and inserted into the enrolment record for each child. This will outline the allergies and describe the prescribed medication for that child and the circumstances in which the medication should be used.
- Ensure that educators are trained in managing the provision of meals for a child with allergies, including high levels of care in preventing cross contamination during storage, handling, preparation and serving of food. Training will also be given in planning appropriate menus including identifying written and hidden sources of food allergens on food labels.
- Ensure that a notice is displayed prominently in the main entrance of the children's care residence stating that a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being cared for or educated at the Service.
- Ensure that assistant educators have completed training in the administration of anaphylaxis management including the administration of an adrenaline auto-injection device, awareness of the symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction, the child at risk of anaphylaxis, the child's allergies, the individual anaphylaxis medical management action plan and the location of the auto-injection device kit.
- Implement the communication strategy and encourage ongoing communication between parents/guardians and educators regarding the current status of the child's allergies, this policy and its implementation.
- Display an Emergency contact card by the telephone.
- Ensure that educators accompanying children outside the care residence carries the anaphylaxis medication and a copy of the anaphylaxis medical management action plan with the auto-injection device kit.

Educators will:

- Ensure a copy of the child's anaphylaxis medical management action plan is visible and known to staff in the Service.
- Follow the child's anaphylaxis medical management action plan in the event of an allergic reaction, which may progress to anaphylaxis.
- Practice the administration procedures of the adrenaline auto-injection device using an auto-injection device trainer and 'anaphylaxis scenarios' on a regular basis, preferably quarterly.
- Ensure the child at risk of anaphylaxis will only eat food that has been prepared according to the parents or guardians' instructions.
- Ensure tables and bench tops are washed down effectively after eating.
- Ensure hand washing for all children upon arrival at the service and before and after eating.
- Increase supervision of a child at risk of anaphylaxis on special occasions such as excursions, incursions, parties and family days.
- Ask all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, prior to their child's attendance care, whether the child has allergies and document this information on the child's enrolment record. If the child has severe allergies, ask the parents/guardians to provide a medical management action plan signed by a Registered Medical Practitioner
- Ensure that an anaphylaxis medical management action plan signed by the child's Registered Medical Practitioner and a complete auto-injection device kit (which must contain a copy the child's anaphylaxis medical management action plan) is provided by the parent/guardian for the child while at the Service.
- Ensure that the auto-injection device kit is stored in a location that is known to the assistant educator; easily accessible to adults (not locked away); inaccessible to children; and away from direct sources of heat.

- Ensure that the auto-injection device kit containing a copy of the anaphylaxis medical management action plan for each child at risk of anaphylaxis is carried by a staff member accompanying the child when the child is removed from the service e.g., on excursions that this child attends
- Regularly check and record the adrenaline auto-injection device expiry date. (The manufacturer will only guarantee the effectiveness of the adrenaline auto-injection device to the end of the nominated expiry month)
- In the event where a child who has not been diagnosed as allergic, but who appears to be having an anaphylactic reaction:
    - Call an ambulance immediately by dialing 000
    - Commence first aid measures
    - Contact the parent/guardian
    - Contact the emergency contact if the parents or guardian can't be contacted when practicable
    - Notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours

In the event that a child suffers from an anaphylactic reaction the educator and Service will:

- Follow the child's anaphylaxis action plan.
- Call an ambulance immediately by dialing 000
- Commence first aid measures
- Contact the parent/guardian
- Contact the emergency contact if the parents or guardian can't be contacted when practicable
- Notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours

Families will:

- Inform the Service and educator, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's allergies
- Develop an anaphylaxis risk minimisation plan with service staff
- Provide the service and educator with an anaphylaxis medical management action plan signed by the Registered Medical Practitioner giving written consent to use the auto-injection device in line with this action plan
- Provide the educator with a complete auto-injection device kit
- Regularly check the adrenaline auto-injection device expiry date
- Assist the educator by offering information and answering any questions regarding their child's allergies
- Notify the Service and educator of any changes to their child's allergy status and provide a new anaphylaxis action plan in accordance with these changes
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to the service and educator, for example, any matter relating to the health of the child
- Comply with the service's policy that no child who has been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injection device is permitted to attend care without that device
- Read and be familiar with the policy
- Bring relevant issues to the attention of both the Service and educator

Educating children

- Educators will talk to children about foods that are safe and unsafe for the anaphylactic child. They will use terms such as 'this food will make you sick', 'this food is not good for you', and 'so and so is allergic to that food'.
- Educators will talk about symptoms of allergic reactions to children (e.g., itchy, furry, scratchy, hot, funny).
- With older children, educators will talk about strategies to avoid exposure to unsafe foods, such as taking their own plate and utensils, having the first serve from commercially safe foods, and not eating food that is shared.

Reporting Procedures

After each emergency situation the following will need to be carried out:

- Educators are to complete an Incident Report, which will be counter signed by the Service Coordinator.
- If necessary, send a copy of the completed form to the insurance company; and
- File a copy of the Incident Report on the child's file and send copy to the Kids Planet Family Day Care Services office.
- The Nominated Supervisor or the Kids Planet Family Day Care Services is required to inform Department of Community Services about the incident within 24 hours.

Contact details for resources and support:

- Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA), at www.allergy.org.au, provide information on allergies. Their sample Anaphylaxis Action Plan can be downloaded from this site. Contact details for Allergists may also be provided.
- Anaphylaxis Australia Inc., at Allergy Facts, is a non-profit support organisation for families with food anaphylactic children. Items such as storybooks, tapes, auto-injection device trainers and so on are available for sale from the Product Catalogue on this site. Anaphylaxis Australia Inc. provides a telephone support line for information and support to help manage anaphylaxis. Telephone 1300 728 000.
- Royal Children's Hospital Anaphylaxis Advisory Support Line provides information and support about anaphylaxis to school and licensed children's services staff and parents. Telephone 1300 725 911 or Email: whitehead@rch.org.au
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website at www.education.vic.gov.au/anaphylaxis provides information related to anaphylaxis, including frequently asked questions related to anaphylaxis training.

Asthma Management Policy

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 15% of children. It is one of the most common reasons for childhood admission to hospital. Community education and correct asthma management will assist to minimise the impact of asthma. It is generally accepted that children under the age of six do not have the skills or ability to recognise and manage their own asthma effectively. With this in mind, Kids Planet Family Day Care Services recognises the need to educate its staff and families about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies.

PURPOSE

We aim to distribute a safe and healthy environment for all children enrolled at the service and providing an environment in which all children with asthma can participate to their full potential.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

DUTY OF CARE

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services has a legal responsibility to provide:

1. A safe environment
2. Adequate Supervision

Staff members including relief staff need to know enough about Asthma reactions to ensure the safety of children.

BACKGROUND

Asthma is a chronic, treatable health condition affecting approximately one in 10 Australian children. It is the most common reason for childhood admission to hospital. With good asthma management, people with asthma need not restrict their daily activities. Community education assists in generating a better understanding of asthma within the community and minimising its impact.

Symptoms of asthma include wheezing, coughing (particularly at night), chest tightness, difficulty in breathing and shortness of breath, and symptoms may vary between children. It is generally accepted that children under six years of age do not have the skills and ability to recognise and manage their own asthma without adult assistance. With this in mind, Kids Planet Family Day Care Services recognises the need to educate the staff and parents/guardians about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of children, and requires that children be protected from hazards and harm. Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will ensure that there is at least one educator on duty at all times who has current approved emergency asthma management training in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations

IMPLEMENTATION

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will involve all educators, families and children in regular discussions about medical conditions and general health and wellbeing throughout our curriculum. The Service will adhere to privacy and confidentiality procedures when dealing with individual health needs.

A copy of all medical conditions policies will be provided to all educators and volunteers and families of the Service. It is important that communication is open between families and educators to ensure appropriate asthma management.

It is imperative that all educators and volunteers at the Service follow a child's Medical Management Plan in the event of an incident related to a child's specific health care need, allergy or medical condition.

Management and Nominates Supervisor will ensure:

- All staff read and are aware of all medical condition policies and procedures, and ensuring that they are aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the Service.
- To provide approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training to staff as required under the National Regulations.
- That all educators approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training are current, meet the requirements of the National Law and National Regulations, and are approved by ACECQA
- At least one staff member with current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training is on duty at all times.

- The details of approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training are included on the staff record.
- Parents are provided with a copy of the service's Asthma Policy upon enrolment of their child.
- That when medication has been administered to a child in an asthma emergency without authorisation from the parent/guardian or authorised nominee, the parent/guardian of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as is practicable.
- To identify children with asthma during the enrolment process and informing staff
- To provide families with an Asthma Action Plan to be completed in consultation with, and signed by, a medical practitioner.
- To develop a Risk Minimisation Plan for every child with asthma, in consultation with parents/guardians
- That all children with asthma have an Asthma Action Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan filed with their enrolment record
- A medication record is kept for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the Service.
- Families of all children with asthma provide reliever medication and a spacer (including a child's face mask, if required) at all times their child is attending the Service.
- The asthma first aid procedure is consistent with current national recommendations.
- That all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- The expiry date of reliever medication is checked regularly and replaced when required, and that spacers and face masks are replaced after every use.
- Communication between management, educators, staff and parents/guardians regarding the Service's Asthma Policy and strategies are reviewed and discussed regularly to ensure compliance.
- All staff are able to identify and minimise asthma triggers for children attending the Service, where possible
- That children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way.
- That children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential.
- To communicate any concerns with parents/guardians regarding the management of children with asthma at the Service
- Asthma Australia's Asthma First Aid posters are displayed in key locations at the Service.
- That medication is administered in accordance with the Administration of Medication Policy

In the event that a child suffers from an asthma emergency the Service and staff will:

- Follow the child's Asthma Action Plan.
- If the child does not respond to steps within the Asthma Action Plan call an ambulance immediately by dialing 000
- Continue first aid measures
- Contact the parent/guardian when practicable
- Contact the emergency contact if the parents or guardian can't be contacted when practicable
- Notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours

Educators will ensure:

- They are aware of the services Asthma Policy and asthma first aid procedure (ensuring that they can identify children displaying the symptoms of an asthma attack and locate their personal medication, and Asthma Action Plans
- To maintain current approved Asthma Management qualifications
- They are able to identify and, where possible, minimising asthma triggers as outlined in the child's Asthma Action Plan
- Asthma first aid kit, children's personal asthma medication and Asthma Action Plans are taken on excursions or other offsite events
- To administer prescribed asthma medication in accordance with the child's Asthma Action Plan and the services Administration of Medication Policy.
- A Risk Minimisation Plan is developed for every child with asthma in consultation with parents/guardians
- To discuss with parents/guardians the requirements for completing the enrolment form and medication record for their child
- To consult with the parents/guardians of children with asthma in relation to the health and safety of their child, and the supervised management of the child's asthma
- Communicate any concerns to parents/guardians if a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities
- That children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- That children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential

Families will:

- Read the services Asthma Management Policy
- Inform staff, either on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has asthma
- Provide a copy of their child's Asthma Action Plan to the service and ensuring it has been prepared in consultation with, and signed by, a medical practitioner.
- Have the Asthma Action Plan reviewed and updated at least annually
- Ensure all details on their child's enrolment form and medication record are completed prior to commencement at the service
- Work with staff and educators to develop a Risk Minimisation Plan for their child
- Provide an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication and equipment for their child at all times
- Notify staff and educators, in writing, of any changes to the information on the Asthma Action Plan, enrolment form or medication record
- Communicate regularly with educators/staff in relation to the ongoing health and wellbeing of their child, and the management of their child's asthma
- Encourage their child to learn about their asthma, and to communicate with Service staff if they are unwell or experiencing asthma symptoms.

Plan of action for a child with diagnosed asthma

The staff, educator, together with the parents/guardians of a child with asthma, will discuss and agree on a plan of action for the emergency management of an asthma attack based on the Asthma First Aid Plan. This plan will be included as part of, or attached to, the child's asthma action plan and enrolment record. This plan should

include action to be taken where the parents/guardians have provided asthma medication, and in situations where this medication may not be available.

Administration of Medication Policy

In supporting the health and wellbeing of children, the use of medications may be required for children at the service. Any medication must be administered as prescribed by medical practitioners and first aid guidelines to ensure continuing health for the child and for the child's safety and wellbeing.

PURPOSE

To ensure all educators of the Service can safely administer children's required medication with the written consent of the child's parent or guardian. Educators will follow this stringent procedure to promote the health and wellbeing of each child enrolled at the service.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

IMPLEMENTATION

Families requesting the administration of medication to their child will be required to follow the guidelines developed by the Service to ensure the safety of children and educators. The Service will follow legislative guidelines and standards in order to ensure the health of children, families and educators at all times.

Management will ensure:

- The Administration of Authorised Medication Record is completed for each child using the Service who requires medication. A separate form must be completed for each medication if more than one is required.
- Medication may only be administered by the educator with written authority signed by the child's parent or other responsible person named in the child's enrolment record that is authorised by the child's parents to make decisions about the administration of medication.
- Medication must be provided by the child's parents which includes –
    - The administration is authorised by a parent or guardian;
    - Medication is prescribed by a registered medical practitioner (with instructions either attached to the medication, or in written/verbal form from the medical practitioner.)
    - Medication is from the original container;
    - Medication has the original label clearly showing the name of the child;
    - Medication is before the expiry/use by date.
    - Any instructions attached to the medication or related to the use of the medication
- Any person delivering a child to the educator must not leave medications in the child's bag or locker. Medication must be given directly to an educator for appropriate storage upon arrival.
- Written and verbal notifications are given to a parent or other family member of a child as soon as practicable, if medication is administered to the child in an emergency when consent was either verbal or provided by medical practitioners.
- If medication is administered without authorisation in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency the parent of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as practical.
- If the incident presented imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the child or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours of the incident.

- Enrolment records for each child outline the details of persons permitted to authorise the administration of medication to the child.
- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that medication records are maintained accurately.
- Medication forms are kept in a secure and confidential manner and ensure the records are archived for the regulatory prescribed length of time.
- Educators receive information about the medical and medication policies during their induction.
- To request written consent from families on the enrolment form to administer the Emergency Asthma Kit if required.
- Families will be reminded that every attempt to contact them for verbal permission will be made by the educator prior to administering asthma medications.
- Families are informed of the Service's medical and medication policies
- Safe practices are adhered to for the wellbeing of both the child and educators.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor/Educators will:

- Not administer any medication without the authorisation of a parent or person with authority – except in the case of an emergency, when the verbal consent from an authorised person, a registered medical practitioner or medical emergency services will be acceptable if the parents cannot be contacted.
- Ensure that medications are stored in the refrigerator in a labelled and locked medication container with the key kept in a separate location, inaccessible to children. For medications not requiring refrigeration, they will be stored in a labelled and locked medication container with the key kept inaccessible to children.
- Ensure that educator has approved First Aid qualifications in accordance with current legislation and regulations. The educator is responsible for:
    - Checking the Medication Form,
    - Checking the prescription label and the amount of medication being administered
    - Signing and dating the medication form
    - Returning the medication back into the locked medication container.
- Follow hand-washing procedures before and after administering medication.
- Discuss any concerns or doubts about the safety of administering medications with the Nominated Supervisor to ensure the safety of the child
- Seek further information from the family, the prescribing doctor, or the Public Health Unit before administering medication if required
- Ensure that the instructions on the Medication Form are consistent with the doctor's instructions and the prescription label.
- Invite the family to request an English translation from the medical practitioner for any instructions written in a language other than English.
- Ensure that the Medication Record is completed correctly
- A separate medication record must be completed for each medication given to the child

Families will:

- Notify educators, both via enrolment forms and verbally when children are taking any medications. This includes short and long term medication use.

- Complete a medication record for child requiring medication whilst they are at the Service.
- Assist Educators to complete long-term medication records in accordance with the medical practitioner completing and signing the plan.
- Update long term medication records quarterly or as the child's medication needs change.
- Be requested to sign consent to use creams and lotions (list of items in the first aid kit provided at enrolment) should first aid treatment be required.
- Be required to keep prescribed medications in original containers with pharmacy labels. Please understand that medication will only be administered as directed by the medical practitioner and only to the child whom the medication has been prescribed for. Expired medications will not be administered.
- Keep children away from care while any symptoms of an illness remain.
- Keep children away from care for 24 hours from commencing antibiotics to ensure they have no side effects to the medication.
- NOT leave any medication in children's bags.
- Give any medication for their children to an educator who will provide the family with a Medication Record
- Complete the Medication Record and the educator will sign to acknowledge the receipt of the medication. Please understand that no medication will be administered without written consent from the parent or authorised person.
- Provide any herbal/ naturopathic remedies or no prescribed medications (including Paracetamol or cold medications) with a letter from the doctor detailing the child's name, dosage and the expiry date for the medication.

Guidelines for administration of Paracetamol

- Families must provide their own Paracetamol for use as directed by a medical practitioner.
- Paracetamol will be kept in the locked medication container for emergency purposes should authorised collectors not be contactable.
- To safeguard against the disproportionate use of Paracetamol, and minimise the risk of concealing the fundamental reasons for high temperatures, educators will only administer Paracetamol if it is accompanied by a Doctor's letter stating the reason for administering, the dosage and duration it is to be administered for.
- If a child presents with a temperature whilst at care, the family will be notified immediately and asked to organise collection of the child as soon as possible.
- The family will be encouraged to visit a doctor to find the cause of the temperature. While waiting for the child to be collected, educators will:
    - Remove excess clothing to cool the child down
    - Offer fluids to the child
    - Encourage the child to rest
    - Provide a cool, damp cloth for the child's forehead and back of the neck
    - Monitor the child for any additional symptoms
    - Maintain supervision of the ill child at all times, while keeping them separated from children who are well.

Medications kept at the care Residence

- Any medication, cream or lotion kept on the care Residence will be checked monthly for expiry dates in unification with the First Aid Checklist.
- If a child's individual medication is due to expire or running low, the family will be notified by educators that replacement items are required.
- It is the families responsibility to take home medication
- MEDICATION WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED IF IT HAS PAST THE PRODUCT EXPIRY DATE.
- Families are required to complete a medication form for lotions to be administered. (Long-term medication form).

Emergency Administration of Medication

- In the occurrence of an emergency and where the administration of medication must occur, the educator must attempt to receive verbal authorisation by a parent of the child named in the child's Enrolment Form who is authorised to consent to the administration of medication.
- If a parent of a child is unreachable, the educator will endeavor to obtain verbal authorisation from an emergency contact of the child named in the child's Enrolment Form, who is authorised to approve the administration of medication.
- If all of the child's nominated contacts are non-contactable, the educator must contact a registered medical practitioner or emergency service on 000.
- In the event of an emergency and where the administration of medication must occur, written notice must be provided to a parent of the child or other emergency contact person listed on the child's Enrolment Form.

Emergency Involving Anaphylaxis or Asthma

- For anaphylaxis or asthma emergencies, medication will be administered to a child without authorisation, following the correct action plan has been provided.
- The Service will contact the following as soon as practicably possible -
    - Emergency Services
    - A parent of the child
    - The regulatory authority within 24 hours
- The child will be comforted, reassured, and removed to a quiet area under the direct supervision of a suitably experienced and trained educator.

14. Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Policy

It is vital that if an emergency situation arises, it is handled effectively and with consideration for all involved. Supporting Educators and children with an emergency situation requires vigilant planning and consistent implementation.

Effective management of emergency situations provides an opportunity to help support and build on children's coping mechanisms and resilience.

PURPOSE

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services aims to maintain the safety and wellbeing of each child, educator and individual using the service during an emergency or evacuation situation.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Coordinator, educators, educator assistants, children, families, and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service..

IMPLEMENTATION

We define an emergency as an unplanned, sudden or unexpected event or situation that requires immediate action to prevent harm, injury or illness to persons or damage to the Service's environment. It is a risk to an individual's health and safety. It is important that Services define emergencies that are specific to their environment.

We have a duty of care to provide all persons' with a safe and healthy environment. The National Quality Standard, Element 2.3.3 (Guide to the National Quality Standard, p. 78-79) encourages Services to effectively manage incidents and emergencies and to plan for these in consultation with relevant authorities.

To ensure compliance with National Regulations, the emergency and evacuation procedure must set out

- Instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency
- An emergency evacuation floor plan

Emergency evacuation plans should be practiced and reviewed frequently. Evacuation plans must be displayed in prominent positions near each exit and in the children's environment with a compliant floor plan for ease of reference. The Approved Provider will ensure a risk assessment is conducted to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service when preparing the emergency and evacuation procedure.

Circumstances under which an emergency evacuation will occur may include:

- Fire within the residence/building or surrounding garden/backyard
- Fire in the surrounding area where the residence may be in danger
- Flood
- Cyclone, severe storm or dust storm or other natural weather event
- dangerous animal, insect or reptile
- Terrorist threat
- Other circumstances may include:
    - gas explosion, traffic accident, or any event which could render the building unsafe (eg: earthquake).

[Our Bushfire Policy contains specific information about Bushfire Risk Management Plans and evacuation plans for Bush Fires.]

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment in order to identify any risk/s or hazards associated with potential emergencies that may affect the safe evacuation of children from the service.

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance that may affect the safe evacuation of children All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. If a risk concerning the safe evacuation of a child is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must update the Emergency and Evacuation Policy and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment is to be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

THE AUSTRALIAN WARNING SYSTEM (AWS)

The Australian Warning System (AWS) is a nationally consistent, three-tiered approach designed to make warnings clearer and lead people to take action during emergencies like bushfire, flood, storm extreme heat and severe weather. The warning system comprises of levels, action statements, hazard icons, colours and shapes. https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/about-us/our-warnings/

The three warning levels are:

Advice (Yellow): An incident has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes. Monitor conditions.

Watch and Act (Orange): There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now. Prepare to leave/evacuate. Do not enter flood water.

Emergency Warning (Red) : An Emergency Warning is the highest level of warning. You need to take action immediately. Leave/evacuate (immediately by am/pm/hazard timing.

When there is an Emergency Warning, educators need to prepare for possible emergency evacuation and implement the procedures effectively to ensure the safety of all children, staff, families and visitors in the Service.

TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL REGULATIONS, OUR FDC SERVICE WILL ENSURE THAT:

- emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are available for inspection at the FDC residence at all times
- the Approved Provider and FDC educator conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the approved residence annually
- the approved provider will review the risk assessment after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe evacuation of children from the service
- all staff and FDC educators have a thorough understanding of the Australian Warning System (AWS)
- educators are assisted to develop evacuation plans and procedures and to identify a safe area in the residence in case of a situation that would require a 'lockdown emergency'
- relevant stakeholders/authorities are consulted for advice and guidance to improve risk mitigation strategies as part of our emergency and evacuation plan (police, fire, parents/families)
- consideration is made to evacuate infant/s and non-ambulant children evacuating the premises resulting in enhanced ratios
- additional consideration is made for FDC services operating in multi-storey residence or buildings (assembly areas, stairwells, non-ambulant children, supervision) [Reg. 97(1)(b)
- emergency evacuation plans are displayed in prominent positions near each exit and in rooms occupied by the children
- the plan includes a floor plan for ease of reference with clearly defined assembly points and clearly marked exit routes in case of an emergency
- the emergency and evacuation procedures include instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency
- emergency evacuation rehearsals (drills) will be practiced and reviewed every three months by the FDC educator, educator assistant, students, volunteers, and children present on the day
- FDC educators, educator assistants, coordinators and volunteers are aware of emergency evacuation procedures and regulatory requirements
- FDC educator and educator assistants are aware of their responsibilities and roles in the event of an emergency situation- including evacuation and lock downs
- there is an induction process in place to inform educators, educator assistants, coordinators, students and volunteers of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedure
- each drill is documented, and records kept at both the FDC residence and principal office
- in the case of Bush Fire emergency, the FDC principal office maintains a current data base of all residences and their locations living in bushfire prone areas (see *Bush Fire Policy*)
- a risk assessment is conducted following any emergency evacuation to ensure the FDC residence is safe to continue to provide education and care to children
- an emergency telephone list (located next to the telephone) includes the numbers for:
    - Police
    - Local fire station
    - Rural Fire Service

- State Emergency Services (SEs)

EDUCATORS WILL:

- maintain an up-to-date register of emergency telephone numbers for all children and provide a copy to be kept at the principal office
- ensure a copy of the register of emergency telephone numbers is kept in an *Emergency Evacuation Bag* along with a portable first aid kit, copy of the emergency procedure
- ensure they are contactable whilst children are in attendance by emergency services (i.e.: have a mobile phone charged and accessible)
- display emergency telephone numbers prominently in the kitchen, office and each room that is occupied by children in the residence
- rehearse, document and evaluate emergency evacuation procedures every 3 months. To ensure best practice we will conduct emergency evacuation drills in a weekly block every 3 months so that all children experience an evacuation on a regular basis
- ensure spontaneous rehearsals also take place during the year to assist in refining risk management procedures and evacuation procedures
- time the planned or spontaneous emergency evacuation drill and document in the *Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Record*
- after reflection, notes on any areas that need improving or revising are to be documented in the *Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Record*. Educators will discuss with the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor and implement strategies to make continuous improvement to procedures which will be documented in the Service's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- consider how to safely evacuate infant/s and children with any disabilities (include in your procedure)
- keep children calm during evacuation drills
- ensure all exits have exit signs displayed clearly
- ensure there are no obstructions in hallways, stairways prevent access to exits
- ensure the sign-in book is completed daily to be used as an attendance roll
- keep a written record of all visitors to the FDC residence
- ensure all children, family members and any visitors are accounted for during the day
- communicate with families when evacuation drills have taken place to discuss with children
- ensure assembly area is clearly identified and checked regularly (update plan if an alternative location may be required- depending on the reason for evacuation)
- ensure all fire extinguishers, fire blankets, fire hoses, and other emergency equipment located throughout the residence are inspected and tested at six monthly intervals by an authorised company as per the Australian Safety Standard AS 1851-2012: *Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment*.
- ensure extinguishers are emptied, pressure tested, and refilled every five years
- ensure all tests performed on emergency equipment and the date on which it was tested is recorded on a label or metal tag attached to the unit. Certificates to verify testing will be filed and provided to the principal office of the FDC service
- ensure smoke detectors are regularly tested and batteries replaced annually
- ensure educator assistants and visitors to the FDC Service are familiar with the *Emergency Evacuation Policy* and procedure

Once an emergency situation is over, the educator will collaborate with the Approved Provider to conduct a thorough evaluation of the emergency procedure, actions and communication implemented to determine if any changes need to be made.

FAMILIES WILL:

- ensure contact details are kept up to date
- provide emergency contact details on their child's enrolment form and advise the FDC educator and principal office of any change of name or phone number
- ensure the attendance record for their child is completed each day
- ensure they are aware of the service's *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* and procedures
- follow the directions of the FDC educator or coordinator in the event of an emergency or evacuation

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the event of an emergency, the educator will make the decision to evacuate. The educator may be notified of the need to evacuate by: Emergency Services if an emergency situation is announced (bush fire, flood, damaging winds/storm).

As per regulation 97, the emergency and evacuation procedures must set out-

a) instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency; and

b) an emergency and evacuation floor plan; and

c) if the education and care service premises is located within a multi-storey building shared with other occupants and on a storey with no direct egress to an assembly area—

I. all possible evacuation routes from each storey on which the premises is located; and

II. the evacuation routes that are proposed to be used in an evacuation; and

III. how all children will be safely evacuated from the premises, including non-ambulatory children; and

IV. the stages in which an evacuation will be carried out; and

V. the identity of the person in charge of an evacuation; and

VI. the roles and responsibilities of staff members during an evacuation; and

VII. the arrangements made with the other occupants of the multi-storey building in relation to the evacuation of the multi-storey building.

THE EDUCATOR WILL:

- calmly inform children and visitors and other residents of the FDC residence to evacuate
- move all children to evacuation assembly location taking emergency evacuation bag (ensure sign in book/record, gather medication, visitor sign in sheets)
- request assistance to move infants or children with disabilities from other adults in the home/ educator assistant or emergency services if unable to complete the evacuation on their own
- check that all children and adults registered in attendance book are accounted for
- once children are safely evacuated, administer first aid if required
- call 000 and provide their name, address and nearest cross street, reason for emergency, mobile phone contact number, number of children evacuating
- notify the Approved Provider/Coordinator of the evacuation (only if children's safety is not compromised)

- if the identified evacuation assembly area is not accessible, identify an alternative area where children and other adults will be safe. Communicate with emergency services to confirm your assembly area
- remain calm and reassure children
- once emergency services arrive, request assistance with supervision and contact parents/emergency contacts
- notify FDC approved provider/coordinator of the evacuation
- once area is confirmed to be safe by emergency services, return to the residence with children and visitors
- ensure attendance is checked against register
- In the event of a fire within the service resulting in damaged phone lines, the educator may evacuate the children and seek assistance from neighbouring residents and / or use the mobile phone as per the Emergency Evacuation Plan

IMPORTANT:

Following the emergency evacuation, the educator will complete an *Emergency Evacuation Incident Report* and an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*. The approved provider will make a notification of a serious incident to a regulatory authority (within 24 hours) through the NQA IT System when emergency services have attended an education and care service in response to an emergency, rather than as a precaution or for any other reason.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

In the event of a situation where there is immediate threat or danger to the educator and children,

a 'lock down' will be implemented. The educator will have identified a safe room for this purpose as part of the Emergency Plan. A safe room should have doors that can be locked from the inside and have limited or no windows. (see *Lockdown Policy* for further information)

The educator will:

- calmly move children inside the residence to a designated area (as indicated in the Emergency Plan).
- move babies and children with mobility disabilities to designated area
- inform children- '*this is a lockdown, stay calm and quiet*' (as per drills)
- do not let the unauthorised person/s into the residence
- conduct a head count and check attendance against sign in register
- lock external doors, window and close blinds and turn off lights
- turn mobile phone onto silent/vibrate
- contact 000 stating the name and address of the service, the nature of the emergency, the nearest cross street, the number of children and adults in lockdown
- reassure children
- wait for emergency services arrive and provide clearance
- once cleared by emergency services, contact Approved Provider of FDC Service
- ensure all families are notified of the incident as soon as practicable after the lockdown has ended (consult with the Coordinator/Approved Provider for guidance)
- assist the Approved Provider to complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours when there has been an emergency that has posed a risk to the safety and wellbeing of the children

DEALING WITH TRAUMA

Emergencies and natural disasters are extremely stressful, and it is normal for children and adults to feel overwhelmed and distressed. People cope with trauma in many different ways. Children look to adults for reassurance, care and opportunities to share their feelings. It is important for FDC educators to understand the impact of disasters and seek help when needed.

The FDC Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will support educators to provide information to parents and families following any emergency or natural disaster including:

- will the service be open in the days and weeks ahead?
- how to find alternative care and education
- how to contact services for support with dealing with trauma

Several organisations offer support for educators in these situations:

Emerging Minds

BeYou- Trauma informed practice

PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY

Australian Government Department of Education Resources

Help in an emergency

Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology

15. Collection & Delivery of Children to & from Family day care

PURPOSE

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services aims to ensure the protection and safety of all children, staff members, and families accessing the Service. Educators and Educator Assistants will only release children to an authorised person as named by the parent/guardian on the individual child's enrolment form.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, Educator Assistants, children, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Guidelines for delivery and collection of children are put in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of each individual child.

ARRIVALS

- In order for children to feel secure and safe, FDC educators should ensure children are greeted warmly and children have the chance to say goodbye to the person dropping them off. Saying goodbye helps to build trust, while parents/guardians leaving without saying goodbye could cause the child to think they have been left behind.
- All children need to be signed in by an authorised person: Note that the signing in of a child is verification of the accuracy of the record. Information required on the register includes the time and the signature of the person dropping off the child. The parent/authorised person must also advise staff who will be collecting the child/children.
- Families will be reminded to sign their child/children into the FDC Service and will be encouraged to do so immediately upon arrival to avoid forgetting.
- Should families forget to sign their child/children in, and their signature cannot reasonably be obtained, National Regulations require the FDC educator to sign the child in.

- Sign in sheets is to be used as a record in the case of an emergency to account for all children present at the FDC service
- A child's medication needs, or any other important or relevant information should be passed on to the child's educator by the person delivering the child.
- The FDC educator will check that the family has completed an Administration of Medication Record and store the medication appropriately, away from children's reach.
- A space will be made available to children and their families.
- In the case of a separated family, either biological parent is able to add a contact in writing unless a court order is provided to the FDC Service stating that one parent has sole custody and responsibility.

DEPARTURE

- Parents are to advise their child's FDC educator if someone different is picking up their child, both verbally and on the sign in/out sheet. This person is to be named on the enrolment form or added in writing as an authorised contact for the child.
- Photo identification must be sighted by the educator before the child is released. If the educator/educator assistant cannot verify the person's identity, they may be unable to release the child into that person's care, even if the person is named on the enrolment form.
- All children must be signed out by their parent (or a person authorised by the parent) when the child is collected from our FDC Service. If the parent or other person forgets to sign the child out, they will be signed out by the educator.
- Children must be signed out on the same sheet that they were signed in on.
- Parents are requested to arrive to collect their child/children by the time in their agreement.
- No child will be withheld from an authorised contact or biological parent named on the enrolment form unless a current court order is on file at the Service.
- In the case of a particular person (including a biological parent) being denied access to a child, the service requires a written notice (court order) from a court of law.
    - The educator will attempt to prevent that person from entering the service and taking the child; however, the safety of other children must be considered.
    - Educators/educator assistants will not be expected to physically prevent any person from leaving the service.
    - In such cases, the parent with custody will be contacted along with the local police.
    - Where possible the educator will provide police with the make, colour, and registration number of the vehicle being driven by the unauthorised person, and the direction of travel when they left the Service.
    - A court order overrules any requests made by parents to adapt or make changes. For the protection of the children and educators, parents are asked not to give the address of the educator to anyone other than those absolutely necessary.
- The educator will ensure that the authorised nominee pick-up list for each child is kept up to date. It is our policy that we do not allow anyone under the age of 16 to collect children.
- If the person collecting the child appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, and educators feel that the person is unfit to take responsibility for the child, educators will:
- Discuss their concerns with the person, without the child being present if possible, and
- Suggest they contact another parent or authorised nominee to collect the child.

- If the person insists on taking the child, Educators will inform the police of the circumstances, including the name of the person, and if possible, the make, colour, and registration number of the vehicle being driven, and the direction of travel when they left the Service.

- Educators cannot prevent an incapacitated parent from collecting a child but must consider their obligations under the relevant child protection laws.
- Children may leave the premises in the event of an emergency, including medical emergencies.
- Details of absences during the day will be recorded.

VISITORS

To ensure we can meet Work Health and Safety requirements and ensure a child safe environment individuals visiting Kids Planet Family Day Care Services educators care residence must sign in when they arrive at the FDC Service and sign out when they leave. It is also a requirement of the National Regulations that Visitors are not left alone with children at any time.

LATE COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

- If parents/guardians know they are going to be late, they must notify the FDC Educator and make arrangements for someone else to collect the child.
- If parents/guardians have not arrived by the time on their agreement, the educator will attempt to contact them via telephone. If the FDC Educator or Coordinator is unable to contact parents/guardians and the child has not been collected, alternative contacts as listed on the enrolment form will be contacted to organise the collection of the child.
- Due to licensing and insurance purposes, if by the agreed time on the child's agreement neither the parent/guardian or any authorised contacts are available or contactable and the Educator has other commitments, the Coordinator/Approved Provider may need to contact the police and other relevant authorities.
- Where families are continually late to collect children, a Late Collection of Children letter will be presented to parents/guardians.
- Should this non-compliance continue, the service reserves the right to terminate a child's enrolment.

16. Termination of Enrolment Policy

PURPOSE

To ensure that each child and family obtain a comprehensive induction to the Service as per our legal agreement, which instructs families on the services right to terminate a child's enrolment if a service policy has been breached.

SCOPE

This policy applies to families and management of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Management and Staff are determined to develop a respectful two-way partnership between the family and Service. However, management recognises that there may be some circumstances where the appropriate course of action is the cancellation of a child's enrolment.

Behaviour Management

There are times when children's behaviour requires guidance, working in collaboration with the Service's policies and procedures. Every effort will be made to deal with the behaviour using positive guidance and working closely with families to implement a plan in order to help rectify any unacceptable behaviour. If the child's behaviour continues to be disruptive and harmful, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child from the Service, in order to keep the children and staff safe.

Service Policies

Our Service has a range of policies and procedures to ensure the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children, staff, families and visitors of the Service. We reserve the right to terminate a children's enrolment if at any time a Service policy has been breached.

This may include:

- Failure to comply with the enrolment contract
- Disparaging or hurtful behaviour of a child that continues even with parent collaboration in stopping the behaviour.
- Non-payment of childcare or late fees and/or recurring late payment of fees.
- Continuing to pick up the child past the required licensed time.
- Inability to meet the child's needs without additional staff.
- Deliberate impertinence towards the approved provider or staff.
- If a parent knowingly brings their child ill to the Service.
- Consistent child-rearing style differences between the parent and provider.
- False information given by a parent either verbally or in writing.
- Bullying and/or harassing Educators, children or families enrolled at the Service.

Employees with children at the Service

Employees are welcome to enrol their child at the Service, however if an employee is terminated from their position, the Service reserves the right to terminate the child's position due to conflict of interest.

Withdrawing a Child from the Service

Families are required to give two weeks written notice to cease their child's enrolment. Once the written notice has been given to the Nominated Supervisor the two-week holding deposit/bond is then transferred into the last two weeks of childcare fees to cover the notice period. If less than the required written notice period is given, the two-week holding deposit/bond is kept as part-payment in lieu of the notice period and families are required to pay the remaining balance.

Children are required to attend the notice period, or they will forfeit their Centrelink incentives and will be required to pay the full fee.

Withdrawal from Care: (Prior to the agreed commencement date)

If a family has accepted the offer of a placement, then decides to withdraw from care before the agreed commencement date, the written notice period applies. If less than the written notice period is given prior to the agreed commencement date, full payment of the two weeks holding deposit/bond is payable to the Service and is nonrefundable.

17. Excursion Policy

PURPOSE

Services have a duty of care to provide all persons with a safe and healthy environment.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to family day care educators (educator), family day care educator assistants, regular visitors, family day care service staff members, family day care educator family members, students, parents, children (including visiting children) and volunteers.

PRINCIPLE:

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services has the responsibility to ensure the family day care service has in place policies and procedures in relation to children leaving the family day care residence and excursions.

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services must take reasonable steps to ensure the policies and procedures are followed and made available for inspection or at request.

POLICY:

Family day care educators will take reasonable steps to ensure the collection and delivery of children, whether to and from the family day care residence or on excursions, supports the safety and protection of the children.

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services encourages family day care educator to implement safe practices whilst transporting or on excursions. The family day care educator has a responsibility to minimise the risk and harm to children while on excursions or while transporting.

Family Day Care Excursion are Either 'Routine" or Non-Routine':

Routine Excursions

Routine excursions form the basis for many meaningful opportunities to engage children in current or topical interests.

A routine excursion is "an excursion that is undertaken on a regular basis to a particular place in the locality of the place where the service is provided", such as a daily walk to a nearby park, school or to a library; a playgroup; another Family Day Care educator's home, etc.

Non-Routine Excursions

These pre-planned excursions offer children valuable experiences and opportunities to build on learning and curriculum through special outings within the greater community. This is any other excursion that is not a routine excursion e.g., a trip to the Zoo or a concert or play.

Risk Assessments

- Educators must complete a risk assessment of the excursion which considers —
    - the proposed route and destination for the excursion; and
    - any water hazards; and
    - any risks associated with water-based activities; and
    - the transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion; and
    - the number of adults and children involved in the excursion; and
    - given the risks posed by the excursion, the number of educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required;
    - the proposed activities; and
    - the proposed duration of the excursion; and
    - the items that should be taken on the excursion.
- Educators should visit the proposed residence prior to the excursion to complete their Risk Assessment.
- Educators must check the location on arrival to the residence for safety hazards and reassess whether or not to go ahead with their excursion.

All Educators must:

- Ensure they are familiar with and adhere to the Excursion and Transport Policy and Procedure.

- Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of their obligations under the Education Care Service National Act to provide effective supervision that ensures the protection, health and safety of children.
- Supervise children and ensure their safety at all times on routine and non-routine excursions.
- Ensure that required educator to child ratios for excursions are adhered to at all times.
- Ensure that all parents/guardians have completed and signed an Excursion Authority/Permission Form for all excursions and prior to the excursion being undertaken. The signed Excursion Authority must provide the detailed excursion information as required under the regulation.
- Ensure that no child leaves the Family Day Care premises unless there is an Excursion Authority/Permission form signed by the child's parent/guardian.
- The FDC educator Nominated Supervisor must ensure that signed excursion authority forms for non-routine excursions are faxed or scanned and emailed to the Management Team or FDC Head Office before any child participates in that excursion.
- Ensure that no excursions involving children enrolled at the family day care service are undertaken to Residences where there is a water hazard / body of water, e.g., pond, river unless the water is fenced off and totally inaccessible to children.
- Ensure an excursion is undertaken only after an excursion risk assessment is conducted; and risks and management strategies have been identified and the excursion approved by Kids Planet Family Day Care Services Nominated Supervisor and Coordinator.

PARENT / GUARDIAN EXCURSION AUTHORITIES

- All parents are to be given an Excursion Authority form that provides the following details about the planned excursion:
- Child's name
- The date and start and end times for excursion
- Destination and address
- Purpose and any links to programs / curriculum
- Method of transport and planned itinerary
- Activities to be undertaken and timetable
- Name of educator with first aid qualifications; all FDC educators must have a current first aid qualification
- An emergency contact number for contacting the educators. For the FDC educator it will be their mobile phone number
- Emergency contact numbers for parents/guardians
- Number of adults attending who will be supervising the children
- Cost, if any
- Particular clothing or equipment needs, if relevant
- Parent/Guardian name and signature
- Contingencies in the case of weather conditions

Items to be taken on excursions include:

- A suitable and fully stocked first aid kit

- A mobile phone
- A list of all children participating in the excursion and their emergency contact numbers
- Children's medications, if required
- Sunscreen and hats
- Food and drinks, properly stored in an appropriate cooler bag
- Other items as required, such as drinking cups; warm clothing etc.

Educators will:

- Ensure copies of each excursion authorisation signed by the parent/guardian are provided to Kids Planet Family Day Care Office prior to undertaking an excursion, either by fax or scanning and emailing a copy.
- Complete an Excursion Residence Risk Management Checklist for every excursion, both before departing and on arrival at the Residence.
- Take a mobile phone on all excursions.

Routine Excursions

- Annually at the commencement of every calendar year, and during the year where changes advised, provide Kids Planet Family Day Care with a Routine Excursion Schedule that lists all routine excursions.
- Update routine excursion forms as required.
- Discuss with parents at the first interview, all current routine excursions.
- Document routine excursions on the weekly program and place on display for parents / guardians.

Planning the Excursion

- Research where you want to go – what are the possible destinations, what value there is for the children, what you will do, what is the safest way to get there, what facilities are available, what you will need to take with you and what costs if any.
- The safety of the children must be the paramount consideration in the choice of route and mode of transport. Playgrounds should be fenced, and away from water and traffic hazards.
- Communicate with families – discuss costs and times with families.
- Make any necessary bookings.
- Discuss the excursion with the children – involve them in the planning.
- Confirm all bookings – including arrangements made with families the day prior.
- Additional planning may need to be considered in the planning of excursions for children with additional needs. All children have the right to access all excursions and engage in meaningful ways while on excursions.

Road and Pedestrian Safety

- Ensure that children are safe when walking. All children are to hold an adult's hand or a pram, strollers or using safety harnesses. Children are to be kept in sight of the educator at all times.
- Supervise children at all times, when near roads
- Physically separate play areas from vehicle access areas.
- Be aware of driveways, unfenced yards, and parked cars as these can increase the risk of accidents.

- Talk to children and promote awareness of road safety by talking about precautions you are taking to keep safe while walking and on an excursion.
- Lead by example and cross the roads at appropriate junctions, lights, pedestrian crossings.
- Choose the safest route and locations with minimal or no traffic
- Clearly note on all excursion authority forms to be signed by families if a driver of the vehicle is not the registered educator. In this case, prior to the excursion, Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will require a copy of;
- Driver's licence,
- Driver's car registration details,
- Vic Roads inspection

Car Safety

- Vehicles must be registered, insured, maintained and road worthy.
- Driver holds a current and appropriate licence.
- Vehicles must be fitted with child restraints as required by law and appropriate for the age and weight of each child. They must conform to Australian Standards and have current certification by an Authorised Restraint Fitter.
- All child restraints are fastened while vehicle is in motion
- Keep children occupied when travelling in vehicles to help prevent children unbuckling seat belts, e.g., sing songs and talk about the journey
- Ensure where possible that children get in and out of the car using the 'safety door' – usually the rear kerb side door.
- Children must never be left unattended in a car.
- Ensure there are no loose or sharp objects inside the car that could cause injury if an accident occurs.
- Never leave children alone in motor vehicles, standing alone by the side of the road or at road crossings.

Supervision

Supervision on excursions must ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children for the duration of the excursion, taking into account all risks and hazards likely to be encountered.

On the Day of the Excursion

Children attending are informed of excursion timetable/itinerary, special requirements, safety procedures and grouping of children. Sunscreen is applied and everyone is required to wear hats if there is an outside component to the excursion. Children are reminded about toileting.

During the Excursion

- Educators must count their children frequently, to keep track of all children.
  If children require toileting the educator must ensure that no child enters a public toilet unattended by the educator.
- Before leaving the excursion site the group is to be brought together and a check made to ensure all the children are present.
- Educators will prevent children from playing with or going near dogs and other animals.

Evaluating the excursion

After the excursion, evaluate the outing:

- Its value to children;
- Any safety issues;
- Organisational aspects;
- Would you do it again?
- What would you do differently

Parents will:

- Sign Routine and Non-Routine Excursion Authorities and be aware of the details of the excursion
- Supply sunscreen, hat, suitable clothing and footwear, food and drink for their child.
- Ensure that the FDC educator has current contact numbers and emergency contact numbers.
- Pay the educator for any additional expenses relating to the excursion.
- Be aware that no child is to leave the educator's home without written signed permission from a parent/guardian.
- Read the excursion information and be informed of any travel, by walking or any other means of transport that their children may be involved in, during care hours.
- Inform the educator before the start of the excursion, if their child/ren will not be in care on the day.

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services, Management Team and Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure that all educators are provided with a copy of all policies and procedures at induction and upon commencement of employment / appointment, including the excursion policy and procedure.
- Ensure that educators are aware of their obligations to provide effective supervision on excursions under the regulation and standards.
- Ensure an Excursion Authority is signed by each child's parent/guardian and received at the FDC Head Office.
- Ensure an authority for Routine Excursions to be conducted is signed by each child's parent/guardian during the enrolment process as part of the Parent Agreement.
- Provide professional training and development, and ongoing monitoring to support educators to ensure strict compliance with all policies and procedures.
- Ensure that the educator has provided proof of risk assessment of the excursion Residence.

18. Positive guidance policy

PURPOSE:

Behaviour guidance requires a broad approach or children to be physically and psychologically safe, gradually guiding them to communicate needs verbally, and developing independence skills without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviour to resolve conflict to meet their needs.

All persons working with children will encourage acceptable forms of behaviour that build children's self-confidence and self-esteem and provide strategies to enable children to control their own behaviours.

Family day care educators will create a physical and emotional environment that facilitates personal and social growth and assists children to regulate their energy to be appropriate to the task being undertaken.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to family day care educators, family day care educator assistants, family day care service staff, volunteers and families.

PRINCIPLE:

To ensure appropriate procedures are in place that respect children's rights and provide them with strategies and guidance to control their own behaviours.

POLICY:

Family day care educators will respect children's rights and support them to develop to their full potential by encouraging acceptable social skills and allowing them to resolve conflicts using positive behaviour. Family day care educators will support the children in their efforts to regulate their energy to be appropriate to the task to be undertaken.

Purpose

Positive behaviour guidance techniques in an environment that supports qualities of consistency, harmony, respect, consideration, fairness, warmth and sensitivity will allow the child to gain self-control and take responsibility for their personal behaviour.

Procedures:

The use of physical punishment by family day care staff, family day care educators and educator assistants, volunteers, students and visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances.

The use of isolation, humiliation, intimidation or negative labelling is not acceptable under any circumstances.

Family day care educators (educator) and educator assistants will:

- respect the values of parents/guardians;
- respond to and acknowledge children's emotions such as happiness, anger, sadness, anxiety, frustration and fear;
- establish an environment that promotes positive behaviour;
- take into account a child's age, individual needs, personality, cultural background and the context of the behaviour;
- offer choices in the decision making processes;
- recognise limits with an understanding of why a child may behave in a certain way;
- encourage children to practise positive and acceptable behaviour;
- use redirection and distraction techniques;
- implement strategies that demonstrate an understanding and empathy towards children who display behaviours that are not always consistent with their development and temperament;
- provide children with a clear explanation why a particular behaviour is unacceptable, and provide an alternate, acceptable behaviour;
- collaborate with families and family day care service staff in managing ongoing behavioural issues.

Family day care service will:

- Support family day care educators and assistants in developing and implementing appropriate positive guidance techniques for children in their education and care service.
- Provide training and professional development to encourage strategies that reinforce a positive learning environment for all children.

Collaboration with parents

The family day care educator will collaborate with families in regard to management guidance strategies so consistent practices can occur across the two environments.

19. Legal and insurance cover

PURPOSE:

To ensure appropriate insurance cover is obtained and kept up to date by the family day care service and the family day care educator, and documentation of this insurance is available for inspection by the family day care service.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to family day care educators and the family day care service.

PRINCIPLE:

The family day care service and family day care educator hold current public liability insurance that is accessible for inspection.

POLICY:

The family day care service will ensure that family day care educators (cares) and family day care assistants are informed of the appropriate insurance and legal cover required, their responsibilities and obligations and their rights and entitlements. A family day care educator will hold current insurance policies that are available for inspection by the family day care service and regulatory body.

Procedure:

To ensure all family day care service staff, family day care educators and family day care educator assistants are informed of, and covered by, appropriate insurance and legal policies, all family day care educators and the family day care service will hold:

- A current public liability insurance policy, in accordance with the Regulation and which adequately covers the family day care educator and residence of care.

20. Enrolment and orientation

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure children and families receive a positive and informative enrolment and orientation process that meets their individual needs. We strive to establish respectful and supportive relationships between families and the Family Day Care Service to promote positive outcomes for children whilst adhering to legislative requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistants, children, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

ENROLMENT

According to the Child Care Provider Handbook (May 2023) '*enrolling children is a requirement under Family Assistance Law for all children who attend childcare (or have an arrangement for care) regardless of their parent's or guardian's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy…An enrolment links the child, the individual claiming the subsidy and the childcare service.*' An enrolment notice is required for each child attending the service. This reflects the type of arrangement that is in place between the provider and the family/individual or organisation.

IMPLEMENTATION

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for enrolment and orientation (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).

Our FDC Service accepts enrolments of children aged between 6weeks-12 years of age.

Enrolments will be accepted providing:

a) the maximum daily attendance does not exceed the licensed capacity for each family day care educator engaged

b) a vacancy is available for the booking required

c) the adult to child ratio is maintained.

The Family Day Care Service recognises the educator as an agent for the Service in relation to the enrolment of children into the Service as permitted by National Education and Care Services Regulations and provide an efficient enrolment procedure that is clear and unambiguous to Family Day Care educators and families.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Our FDC Service aims to assist families who are most in need and may prioritise filling vacancies with children who are:

- At risk of serious abuse or neglect
- A child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

Providers are asked to (but are not legally obliged to prioritise children). CCS Handbook p.35

ENROLMENT

When a family has indicated their interest in enrolling their child in our Family Day Care Service, we will organise an enrolment meeting to share information and build relationships.

- Families will be provided with a range of information about our Family Day Care Service which may include:
  - the service philosophy, inclusion, programming methods, incursions, excursions, fees, policies, procedures, SunSmart requirements, regulations and the licensing and assessment process for our State, signing in and out procedure, the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), the National Quality Framework, FDC educator qualifications, educator and parent communication strategies.
- Enrolment interviews with families will be conducted by the coordination team
- Families will be provided with information and referral to FDC educators who may be available for their care needs
- A mutually convenient time will be organised to visit the FDC residence for an enrolment interview (Families may be encouraged to meet with several educators in their area who have current vacancies).
- Any matters that are of a sensitive nature, such as discussing a child's medical needs, Court Orders, parenting plans or parenting orders, will be discussed privately with the coordination team. Families will be required to bring any documents required in relation to court orders, medical needs or plans.
- Families will complete the enrolment form informing the coordination team of their child's interests, strengths and individual needs- (e.g.: settling strategies for young children; before and after school needs)
- Families are required to pay an enrolment fee and two-week bond which is calculated at full fee to secure the position. Failure to pay the upfront fees will lead to the child not being accepted. When 2 weeks' notice of withdrawal is given, the bond will be refunded if all accounts are up to date.
- Families are invited to ask questions and seek any further information they require
- Families will be provided with a Family Handbook
- Families will be provided with vacancies, a start date and a suitable time for the child to be orientated to the FDC educator's residence

- If a family or child uses English as a second language or speak another language at home, we request that at this time families provide us with some key words in the language/s the child speaks so that the FDC educator can learn the words
- Families who wish to receive CCS as reduced fees must apply for CCS through the myGov website/app, this includes completing the Child Care Subsidy activity test.
- Information about gap fees and absences will be discussed.
- It is a legal requirement that prior to the child starting at the FDC Service we have all required documents including
    - the completed enrolment form
    - medical management plans (if relevant) completed by the child's general practitioner
    - a current Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) showing the child is up to date with immunisations for their age *and*
    - details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans
- It is a requirement of the Family Assistance Office that immunisation information held by the FDC Service is kept current. Parents are reminded mid-way through the year to provide any immunisation updates to the Service in order to continue receiving childcare subsidy.
- Children must meet the immunisation requirements to be eligible for Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A and Child Care Subsidy (CCS). Some exemptions apply; however families are advised that vaccination conscientious objection is not a valid exemption.
- Parents must notify the Service if their child is not up to date with their immunisations for their age via the enrolment form and attach the required documentation on their AIR immunisation history statement
- National and state legislation in relation to immunisation for childcare
- To have an enrolment confirmed for a child in long day care, kindergarten, family day care or occasional care, parents/carers have to provide the service with a current immunisation history statement to show the child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age. [read more here]
- Unborn children may be placed on the waiting list to avoid the unfair allocation of places that may occur if children can only be placed on the list after birth. If an unborn child is placed on the waiting list, the family must advise the Service of the expected birth date. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the coordination team of the name and date of birth of the child within three months after the expected birth date. If this information is not provided, then the child and family details will be removed from the list.
- It is the family's responsibility to keep the Service informed of any changes to the information recorded on the application form.

ENROLMENT PACK

Families will be provided with an enrolment pack which consists of:

- Family Handbook which outlines the FDC Service's operation and philosophy
- current fee structure and payment details
- Child Care Subsidy information
- Information on the National Quality Framework, National Quality Standard and the approved frameworks- Early Years Learning Framework and My Time, Our Place
- ECA Code of Ethics brochure
- Lunchbox and Snack ideas
- Munch and Move Fact Sheets

FAMILIES WILL BE ASKED TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR ENROLMENT OF THEIR CHILD:

1. Full name/s of parent/s (or the person legally responsible for the care of the child) residential address and contact telephone number
2. Each parent's occupation, work hours and educational qualifications
3. The full name, residential address and contact telephone number of a person or persons, authorised by the parent who may be contacted in case of an emergency concerning the child if a parent is unable to be contacted (authorised nominee)
4. The full name, residential address and contact telephone number of any person authorised by the parent to collect the child from the FDC educator's residence (authorised nominee)
5. Full name of the child
6. Child's date of birth
7. Child's birth certificate or passport or identity document
8. Child's residency status
9. Child's address
10. Gender of the child
11. Cultural background of the child
12. Provision of care – if care will be a routine and/or casual etc.
13. Session start and end times
14. Complying Written Agreement including fee information
15. Immunisation History Statement
16. Any court orders or parenting agreements regarding the child
17. The primary language spoken by the child; if the child has not learnt to speak, the child's family's language
18. Any special requirements of the family, including for example cultural or religious requirements
19. The individual needs of a child with a disability or with other additional needs
20. A statement/authorisation indicating the name and address and contact details of any person who is authorised to consent to the administration of medication to the child
21. Authorisation and signature by parent/authorised person for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or FDC educator to seek:
    - medical treatment for the child from a registered practitioner, hospital or ambulance service
    - transportation of the child by an ambulance service
22. Child's Medicare number (if available)
23. Specific healthcare needs of the child, including allergies and intolerances
24. Any medical management plan for a specific severe healthcare need, medical condition, or allergy, such as an Anaphylaxis Emergency Management Plan or Risk Minimisation Plan.
25. Details of any dietary restrictions for the child
26. The name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor
27. Authorisation for regular occurring transportation and regular outings/excursions
28. CRN for child and claimant

ORIENTATION OF THE SERVICE

During parent interviews and orientation of the Family Day Care residence with their FDC Educator

and Coordinator, families will:

- be provided with the enrolment form to be completed or shown how to complete this through an online platform
- have Child Care Subsidy (CCS) explained to families and assistance may be offered to assist with the application process.
- be provided with an outline of the Service policies which will include key policies such as: Payment of fees, Sun Safe, Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness, Control of infectious diseases, Sick child policy and Administration of Medication
- be shown the signing in/out process at the FDC residence
- be advised of appropriate clothing for children to wear each day, including shoes, hats and sunscreen
- be informed about policies regarding children bringing in toys from home
- be introduced to the FDC educator assistant (if applicable)
- be taken on a tour around the residence
- be asked to share information on any medical management plan or specific healthcare needs of their child (if applicable)
- be informed of the daily report and how parents can view this or informed about the online platform/App the FDC service may use
- be introduced to the routine and educational program, including portfolios and the observation cycle
- be informed about communication strategies including meetings, interviews, newsletters, emails, etc.
- be given the opportunity to set goals for their child
- confirm preferred method of communication
- be advised that it is their responsibility to notify the FDC educator of any changes to their current details on enrolment forms (e.g.: new phone numbers)

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/COORDINATION TEAM WILL ENSURE:

- enrolment form is completed accurately and, in its entirety
- document evidence such as birth certificate or passport is sighted to verify that the child's enrolment details are true and correct
- authorisations are signed by both parents/guardians
- the FDC Service complies with the *Disability Discrimination Act* and our enrolment policy and practices do not discriminate against children or others with disability
- barriers to access and participation for children with disability are identified and reasonable adjustments to the program and environment is made to allow access and participation in the Service [See: *Additional Needs Policy*]
- a child with medical needs does not begin at the service unless a medical management plan is received and medication is brought to the service each day
- the child's Medical Management Plan is recorded, and this information is shared/distributed to the FDC educator
- Action Plans are completed in full (if relevant)

- Administration of Medication forms are completed (if relevant)
- the Medical Conditions Policy is provided to families for children with a specific health care need, allergy or other relevant medical condition before the child begins education and care at the Service
- Risk Minimisation Plans and Communication Plans are requested/completed with parents/guardians for children with medical needs
- FDC educator/educator Assistants are aware of the new child including any medical conditions, interests, developmental needs, and strengths
- immunisation history statement and birth certificate have been sighted and photocopied
- the child is added to the Observation cycle
- the enrolment is lodged through Harmony or PEP with Department of Education
- a file for the Child's information is created
- contact is made with families to share details on how the child is settling to care during the first few weeks
- families are provided with an orientation survey to complete within the first 6 weeks of starting to gain feedback about the orientation and enrolment process.

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS WILL:

- ensure an enrolment record is kept for each child which contains all the information set out in regulation 160 including all required authorisations relating to medical treatment, regular outings and transportation and health information
- keep prescribed enrolment and other documents including medication record and children's attendance records
- keep all records confidential

FAMILIES WILL:

- complete all documentation required by the FDC Service for enrolment
- provide required authorisations as indicated on enrolment form
- notify the FDC Service of any specific health care needs of the child, including medical conditions and allergies and provide a medical management plan for child if applicable
- ensure all information about the child and family is kept up to date

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) offers assistance to families to help with the cost of childcare for children aged 0-13 years. There are three factors that determine a family's level of CCS. These are:

- Combined annual family income
- Activity test – the activity level of both parents
- Service type – type of child care service and whether the child attends school

Documentation may be required such as Australian driver licence, Australian passport, Foreign passport, Australian birth certificate, Australian Marriage certificate, Australian citizenship certificate

- Families are provided with a Customer Reference Number (CRN)
- Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction
- Families will contribute to their childcare fees and pay the Service the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount- generally called the 'gap fee'

- Families may also be eligible for Additional Child Care Subsidy depending upon their circumstance

FDC EDUCATORS PROVIDING CARE FOR THEIR OWN CHILD/REN OR CHILD/REN OF RELATIVES

There are rules around providing care for FDC educator's own child or children and children of relatives including nieces, nephews, cousins and grandchildren (including great grandchildren).

- Our FDC Service will ensure an enrolment form is completed for FDC educator's own child (best practice) or children of relatives
- The enrolment form and CWA will ask if the child is related to the FDC educator
- Attendance records will also be maintained for educator's own child or children (if the child/ren is not cared for by another adult within the premises) and any child who is a relation of the FDC educator. Attendance records must be updated within 14 days after the end of each week in which care was provided.
- FDC educators are unable to claim CCS or ACCS for their own children or any siblings of the FDC educator. Limited exemptions to this rule apply see the Childcare Provider Handbook for further information.
- FDC educators must ensure care provided to children of a relative is less than 50% of children cared for across the fortnight
- Each FDC educator will sign an acknowledgement stating they are aware of the requirements and limitations around providing care to their own children or to relatives.
- FDC educators are to confirm on a regular basis that they are not in breach of the requirement
- The service will maintain and keep a register of care which details care provided by an educator within the FDC Service whose child or whose partners child is, on the same day, being provided care by another FDC educator, including where the other FDC educator works for the same or a different FDC service.
- This register is updated within 14 days after the end of each week in which care was provided

COMPLYING WRITTEN ARRANGEMENT

The Provider and Parent must enter into an agreement regarding the planned arrangements for care of a child, this is called a *Complying Written Arrangement* (CWA) and is an agreement to provide care in return for fees.

- The CWA must be recorded, and the parent must confirm the terms of the agreement either electronic or hard copy and this must be kept by the provider.
- The CWA must include the following information:
    - the names and contact details of the provider and the individual(s)
    - the date the arrangement starts
    - the name and date of birth of the child (or children)
    - if care will be provided on a routine basis and if so, details about the days on which sessions of care will usually occur
    - the usual start and end times for these sessions of care
    - whether care will be on a casual or flexible basis (in addition to, or instead of, a routine basis)
    - details of fees charged under the arrangement (providers can reference a fee schedule or information available on their website), which the parties understand may vary from time to time.
- Where there are certain changes (fees or booked days) to the individual Complying Written Arrangements (CWA) for care between the provider and an individual, the provider must update the arrangement in writing, and the families are required to confirm the changes by signing the updated CWA.
- An enrolment notice must be submitted within 7 days following the signed CWA and enrolment acceptance.

- Once the provider submits an enrolment notice the family will be asked to confirm the enrolment through their myGov account.

ADDITIONAL CHILDCARE SUBSIDY PROCEDURE

Our Service will ensure all ACCS applications are managed in line with the Guide to Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) and CCS Handbook

- Parents can apply for ACCS (grandparent), ACCS (temporary financial hardship) or ACCS (transition to work) through Centrelink directly
- The provider can apply for ACCS (child wellbeing) through the CCS software or PEP for children identified at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Once a child has been identified as 'at risk' the FDC service will check the ACCS eligibility requirements from the Guide to the ACCS (Child Wellbeing)
- If the FDC Service deems the child is eligible for ACCS the FDC Service will submit an initial ACCS Certificate for a 6-week period.
- The FDC Service needs to provide a referral to an appropriate support agency in conjunction with the submission of an ACCS certificate
- If further ACCS (Child Wellbeing) is required following the initial 6-week certificate the service may apply for a Determination for a period of up to 13 weeks.
- Following an application for an ACCS 6-week certificate the provider will abide by the requirement to make an ACCS (child wellbeing) referral to an appropriate support agency
- Following an application for an ACCS 12-week determination the provider will abide by the requirement that the application must be accompanied by evidence, dated less then 6 months old, or a statutory declaration that supports the provider's view that the child continues to be 'at risk'
- If the child continues to be 'at risk; after the initial 13-week determination, then the provider needs to lodge a subsequent determination application.

ENROLMENT RECORD KEEPING

Our *Record Keeping Policy* outlines the information and authorisations that we will include in all child enrolment records.

ON THE CHILD'S FIRST DAY

Consideration will be made to each family regarding the initial settling in period and strategies may be offered to assist both parents and the child. Parents will be reassured that they are able to stay with their child for as long as they choose in the early days; speak to their child's FDC educator; contact the FDC educator during the day to 'check' in on their child and request help with separation if this is a problem for their child.

On the first day, the child and their family will be welcomed and shown where or how to sign their child in/out of the FDC educator's residence

- The FDC educator will discuss what is happening during the day and show where the child's locker is located
- Information about collecting their child at the end of the day will be discussed
- the FDC educators will ensure information about the child's first day is shared with parents (through online APP or daybook)
- Management will ensure the orientation checklist has been completed and all required documents and information has been received from families.

21. Governance & Management of Service

PURPOSE:

Regulatory, licensing and funding bodies require the retention and maintenance of records in relation to service stakeholders and children for a specified time. All records are required to be kept up to date and stored confidentially in a secure area with access by authorised persons only. Records will be destroyed appropriately after specified times.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to the family day care service and family day care educators.

PRINCIPLE:

Kids Planet Family Care Services has the responsibility to ensure the family day care service has in place policies and procedures in relation to governance and management of the service, including confidentiality of records.

POLICY:

All persons will comply with all policies and procedural requirements when engaging in activities relating to the operation of the family day care service and will conduct themselves in an ethical manner and abide by codes of conduct. All records will be maintained in a confidential and private manner.

Procedures:

- All family day care service staff, family day care educators and family day care assistants will be given information on legal and ethical requirements. For example: Induction/Orientation or Certificate III training.
- Every family day care service will hold a policy and procedures file which is provided to family day care educators and accessible to families.
- Family day care educators will have a working knowledge of policies and procedures within the file.
- An industry Code of Conduct will be followed by the family day care service staff, family day care educators, family day care assistants, volunteers and students.
- The family day care service will:
    - Provide all family day care staff, family day care educators and family day care assistants with a copy of the Code of Conduct including responsibilities of all parties.
    - Provide all family day care staff, family day care educators and family day care assistants with training at induction in relation to the Code of Conduct and update existing persons of any changes.
    - Ensure policies and practices are developed in line with current Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2012 and the National Quality Standards.
    - Ensure changes within the services are explained to all family day care staff, family day care educators and family day care assistants and families prior to implementation.
    - Ensure if a change to a policy/procedure is made, then at least 14 days' notice to the parents of children enrolled at the family day care service must be given before implementing any change to a policy and/or procedure.
    - Family day care staff and family day care educators and assistants will be given information on the ECA Code of Ethics.

Records management

Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements. Quality Standard 7.3.1.

All records relating to children, families and family day care service operation will be:

- Kept in a safe and secure manner only accessible by authorised personnel; and
- Be destroyed after a period of time in line with legislation.
- Specific records:
    - For records relating to an incident, illness, injury or trauma suffered by the child while being educated and cared for by the family day care service - until the child is 25 years of age.
    - For records relating to an incident, illness, injury or trauma suffered by the child that may have occurred following an incident while being educated and cared for by the family day care service - until the child is 25 years of age.
    - For records relating to the death of a child while being educated and cared for by the family day care service or that may have occurred as a result of an incident while being educated and cared for - until 7 years following the death of a child.
    - For records relating to a child enrolled in the family day care service - until the end of 3 years after the last day on which the child was educated and cared for.
    - For records relating to the approved provider – until the end of 3 years after the last date on which the approved provider operated the family day care service.
    - For records relating to the nominated supervisor, family day care service staff member and/or family day care educator providing education and care on behalf
    - of the family day care service - until the end of 3 years after the last date on which the nominated supervisor or staff member provided education and care on behalf of the service.
    - For all other records – until the end of 3 years after the date on which the record was made.

<u>Family day care service will:</u>

- Require that all required records are recorded, properly maintained, updated and kept in the nominated secure place as per relevant legislation requirements (National Regulations 183)
- Require that all records are kept confidential and only made available to authorised persons.
- When a family day care educator leaves or is terminated from the service, all documentation referred to in R.179 need to be submitted to the approved provider of the family day care service:
    - Documentation of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the educational program as set out in R.74;
    - An incident, injury, trauma and illness record as set out in R.87;
    - A medication record as set out in R.92;
    - Children's attendance records as set out in R.159;
    - Child enrolment records as set out in R.160; and
    - Record of visitors to the family day care residence as set out in R.165.
- Ensure the following records are kept as required by Education and Care National Regulations:

Part 4.7, Division 1

(R.158) Children's attendance records to be kept by approved provider.

(R.159) Children's attendance records to be kept by family day care educator.

(R.160) Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator.

(R.161) Authorisations to be kept on enrolment record.

(R.162) Health information to be kept on enrolment form.

Part 4.7, Division 3

(R.177) Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider.

(R.178) Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by family day care educator.

(R.179) Family day care educator to provide documents on leaving service.

(R.180) Evidence of prescribed insurance.

(R.181) Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider.

(R.182) Confidentiality of records kept by family day care educator.

(R.183) Storage of records and other documents.

(R.184) Storage of records after service approval transferred.

Any documentation generated by the service in the operation of their duties and responsibilities under the Education and Care Services National Law (VIC) Act, 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2012, will be kept by the family day care service.

Confidentiality

- The family day care educator will keep confidential the affairs of each child in their care and of the child's family and shall not disclose any information to a third party other than the family day care service or as legally required to do so.
- Confidential conversations will be conducted in a quiet area away from other children, parents, staff and family day care educators. Such conversations in relation to the health and wellbeing of the child should be noted in writing and stored in a confidential manner.
- Reports, notes and observations in relation to family day care educators, family day care service staff and children must be objective, accurate and free from bias and negative comments including use of labels.
- Students, volunteers and/or visitors to the family day care educator's residence will ensure that information in regard to family day care educators, family day care service staff, children and families is not discussed outside of the context in which it was heard.
- Any information received or transmitted via mobile telephone (including text/SMS) or any other electronic device (example email) shall be treated with the same confidentiality as any other written form of communication and must be stored confidentially.

Privacy

- The family day care service and family day are educators will not collect sensitive information unless the individual has consented, or there is a legal requirement to do so or in other special circumstances that have a bearing on the wellbeing of the child.
- Every reasonable step will be taken to ensure personal information collected, used or disclosed is accurate, complete and current.
- Every reasonable step will be taken to ensure that personal information held within the family day care service is protected from misuse, loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.
- All personal information requested through Freedom of Information (FOI) will be managed by the approved provider.
- Personal information would not usually be transferred overseas and then only if it meets the requirements of the National Privacy, Principle 9.

22. Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

The right to confidentiality and privacy of the child and the family is outlined in Early Childhood Code of Ethics and National Education and Care Regulations. We will respect the privacy of children and their parents and educators, while ensuring that they access high quality early years care and education in our Service.

PURPOSE

To preserve private and confidential files of the children, families, staff and visitors using the Service. We aim to protect the privacy and confidentiality by ensuring continuous improvement on our current systems use, storage and disposal of records, ensuring that all records and information about individual children, families, educators and management are preserved in a secure place and are only retrieved by or released to people who need the information to fulfil their responsibilities at the service or have a legal obligation to distinguish.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Early Childhood Services are required to comply with Australian privacy law which includes the Privacy Act 1988 (the Act) which was amended in February 2017, with the changes due to take effect on February 22nd, 2018.

The new law introduces a Notifiable Data Breaches (NDB) scheme that requires Early Childhood Services, Family Day Care Services and Out of School Hours Care Services to provide notice to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (formerly known as the Privacy Commissioner) and affected individuals of any data breaches that are "likely" to result in "serious harm."

Businesses that suspect an eligible data breach may have occurred, must undertake a reasonable and expeditious assessment to determine if the data breach is likely to result in serious harm to any individual affected. A failure to notify that is found to constitute a serious interference with privacy under the Privacy Act may result in a fine of up to $360,000 for individuals or $1.8 million for organisations.

In order to comply with the Privacy Act, services are required to follow the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), which are contained in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act).

In particular, the principles cover how personal information can be used and disclosed (including overseas), keeping personal information secure, and the open and transparent management of personal information including having a privacy policy.

The principles cover:

- the open and transparent management of personal information including having a privacy policy
- an individual having the option of transacting anonymously or using a pseudonym where practicable
- the collection of solicited personal information and receipt of unsolicited personal information including giving notice about collection
- how personal information can be used and disclosed (including overseas)
- maintaining the quality of personal information
- keeping personal information secure
- right for individuals to access and correct their personal information

The APPs place more stringent obligations on APP entities when they handle 'sensitive information'. Sensitive information is a type of personal information and includes information about an individual's:

- health (including predictive genetic information)
- racial or ethnic origin

- political opinions
- membership of a political association, professional or trade association or trade union
- religious beliefs or affiliations
- philosophical beliefs
- sexual orientation or practices
- criminal record
- biometric information that is to be used for certain purposes
- Biometric templates.

Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)

APP 1 – Open and transparent management of personal information

Ensures that APP entities manage personal information in an open and transparent way. This includes having a clearly expressed and up to date APP privacy policy.

APP 2 – Anonymity and Pseudonymity

Requires APP entities to give individuals the option of not identifying themselves, or of using a pseudonym. Limited exceptions apply

APP 3 – Collection of solicited personal information

Outlines when an APP entity can collect personal information that is solicited. It applies higher standards to the collection of 'sensitive' information.

APP 4 – Dealing with unsolicited personal information

Outlines how APP entities must deal with unsolicited personal information.

APP 5 – Notification of the collection of personal information

Outlines when and in what circumstances an APP entity that collects personal information must notify an individual of certain matters.

APP 6 – Use or disclosure of personal information

Outlines the circumstances in which an APP entity may use or disclose personal information that it holds

APP 7 – Direct marketing

An organisation may only use or disclose personal information for direct marketing purposes if certain conditions are met.

APP 8 – Cross-order disclosure of personal information

Outlines the steps an APP entity must take to protect personal information before it is disclosed overseas

APP 9 – Adoption, use or disclosure of government related identifiers

Outlines the limited circumstances when an organisation may adopt a government related identifier of an individual as its own identifier or use or disclose a government related identifier of an individual.

APP 10 – Quality of personal information

An APP entity must take reasonable steps to ensure the personal information it collects is accurate, up to date and complete. An entity must also take reasonable steps to ensure the personal information it uses or discloses is accurate, up to date, complete and relevant, having regard to the purpose of the use or disclosure.

APP 11 – Security of personal information

An APP entity must take reasonable steps to protect personal information it holds from misuse, interference and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. An entity has obligations to destroy or de-identify personal information in certain circumstances.

APP 12 – Access to personal information

Outlines an APP entity's obligations when an individual requests to be given access to personal information held about them by the entity. This includes a requirement to provide access unless a specific exception applies.

APP 13 – Correction of personal information

Outlines an APP entity's obligations in relation to correcting the personal information it holds about individuals

Management will:

- Provide Staff and Educators with relevant changes
- Make sure all relevant staff understand the requirements under Australia's privacy law
- Keep up to date with the Australian Privacy Principles (this may include delegating a staff member to oversee all privacy-related activities to ensure compliance).
- Ensure personal information in protected in accordance with our obligations under the Privacy Act 1988 and Privacy amendments (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012
- Ensure all records and documents are maintained and stored in accordance with Education and Care Service National Regulations
- Ensure the service acts in accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Principles and Privacy Act 1988 by developing, reviewing and implementing procedures and practices that identify
    - the name and contact details of the service;
    - what information the service collects and the source of information;
    - why the information is collected;
    - who will have access to the information;
    - Collection, storage, use, disclosure and disposal of personal information collected by the service
    - any law that requires the particular information to be collected;
    - adequate and appropriate storage for personal information collect by the service;
    - protection of personal information from unauthorised access;
- Ensure the appropriate use of images of children
- Ensure all employees, students volunteers and families are provided with a copy of this policy
- Deal with privacy complaints promptly and in a consistent manner, following the Service's Grievance Procedures. Where the aggrieved person is dissatisfied after going through the grievance process
- Ensure families only have access to the files and records of their own children
- Ensure information given to Educators will be treated with respect and in a professional manner
- Children and staff files are stored in a locked and secure cabinet
- Ensure Information relating to staff employment will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Information shared with us by the family will be treated as confidential unless told otherwise.

Nominated Supervisor will:

- Adhere to centre policies and procedures, supporting management
- Ensure educators, staff, volunteers and families are aware of the privacy and confidentiality policy
- Ensure the service obtains consent from parents and/or guardian of children who will be photographed or videoed by the service
- Ensure families only have access to the files and records of their own children
- Information given to Educators will be treated with respect and in a professional manner
- Ensure only necessary information regarding the children's day to day health and wellbeing is given to non-primary contact educators – for example food allergies
- Will not discuss individual children with people other than the family of that child, except for the purposes of curriculum planning or group management. Communication in other settings must be approved by the family beforehand.
- Information shared with us by the family will be treated as confidential unless told otherwise.

Responsible Persons and Staff will:

- Read and adhere to the privacy and confidentiality policy at all times
- Ensure recording information and photographs of children are kept secure and may be requires at any time by the child's parents or guardian
- Ensure families only have access to the files and records of their own children
- Treat private and confidential information with respect in a professional manner
- Will not discuss individual children with people other than the family of that child, except for the purposes of curriculum planning or group management. Communication in other settings must be approved by the family beforehand.
- Information shared with us by the family will be treated as confidential unless told otherwise.
- Maintain individual and Service information and store documentation according to this policy at all times.
- Not to share information about the individual or service, management information, or other staff as per legislative authority.

Personal information our service may request in regards to children:

- Parent contact details
- Emergency contact details and persons authorised to collect individual children
- Children's health requirements
- Immunisation records
- Developmental records and summaries
- External agency information
- Custodial arrangements
- Incident reports
- Medication reports
- Child care benefit and child care rebate information

- Medical records
- Permission forms
- Child's birth certificate

Personal information our service may request in regards to staff

- Personal details
- Tax information
- Working contract
- Emergency contact details
- Medical details
- Immunisation details
- Working with children check
- Qualifications
- Medical history
- Resume
- Superannuation details
- Child Protection qualifications
- First Aid, Asthma and Anaphylaxis certificates

23. Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations

PURPOSE

The Family Day Care Service aims to ensure that all educators are consistent in how authorisations are managed and understand what does or does not constitute a correct authorisation, which consequently may lead to a refusal.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, Educator Assistants, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Family Day Care Service will ensure we comply with the current Education and Care Services National Regulations, which require parent or guardian authorisation to be provided in matters including:

- Administration of medication to children
- Administration of medical treatment, dental treatment, and general first aid treatment
- Ambulance transportation
- Excursions including regular outings
- Incursion attendance
- Taking of photographs by people other than educators
- Water based activities
- Enrolment of children, including providing details of persons nominated to authorise consent for medical treatment or trips outside the service premises

- Children leaving the premises in the care of someone other than a parent or guardian

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL ENSURE THAT:

- The acceptance and refusal authorisation policy is reviewed and maintained by FDC Service management and adhered to at all times by educators.
- All staff follow the policies and procedures of our Service.
- Educators ensure that all parents/guardians have completed the authorised person's section of their child's enrolment form (refer to *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*), and that the form is signed and dated before the child commences at the FDC Service.
- Permission forms for excursions are provided to the parent/guardian or authorised person prior to the excursion (refer to *Excursion Policy*).
- Parent/guardians are provided with a copy of relevant policies for our FDC Service or are aware of how they can be accessed.
- Attendance records are maintained for all children attending the Service.
- A written record of all visitors to the Service, including time of arrival and departure and reasons for visit is documented.
- Where a child requires medication ~~(excluding Paracetamol)~~ to be administered by educators/staff, that this is authorised in writing, signed and dated by the parent/guardian or authorised person and included with the child's record (Refer to *Administration of Medication Policy*).
- Educators/educator assistants do not administer medication without the authorisation of parent/guardian or authorised person, except in the case of an emergency, including an asthma or anaphylaxis, or epilepsy or diabetes emergency (refer to *Administration of Medication Policy, Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Emergency and Evacuation Policy, Management of Asthma Policy, Management of Anaphylaxis Policy, Management of Diabetes Policy*, *and Management of Epilepsy Policy*).
- Educators and educator assistants allow a child to participate in excursions only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised person.
- Educators/educator assistants allow a child to depart the Service only with a person who is the parent/guardian or authorised person, or with the written authorisation of one of these, except in the case of a medical emergency or an excursion (Refer to *Arrival and Departure of Children Policy* and *Child Safe Environment Policy*).
- There are procedures in place if an inappropriate person (for example, an intoxicated person) attempts to collect the child from the FDC Service (refer to *Arrival and Departure of Children Policy*).

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Follow the policies and procedures of the FDC Service.
- Ensure that parents/guardians sign and date permission forms for excursions prior to the excursion being implemented
- Allow a child to participate in an excursion only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised person.
- Check that parents/guardians or authorised persons sign the attendance record as their child arrives and departs from the Service.
- Administer medication only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised person, except in the case of an emergency, including an asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy, or diabetes emergency.
- Allow a child to depart from the Service only with a person who is the parent/guardian or authorised person, or with the written authorisation of one of these, except in the case of a medical emergency or an excursion.

- Follow procedures if an inappropriate person attempts to collect a child from the Service (for example, an intoxicated person).
- Inform the family and Approved Provider when a written authorisation does not meet the requirements outlined in Service's policies.

FAMILIES WILL:

- Read and comply with the policies and procedures of the FDC Service.
- Complete and sign the authorised person section of their child's enrolment form before their child commences at the Service.
- Ensure that changes to nominated authorised persons are provided to the FDC Service in a timely manner.
- Advise nominated authorised persons that they will require photo identification (such as a driver's licence) in order to collect their child from the Service.
- Sign and date permission forms for excursions.
- Sign the attendance record as their child arrives and departs from the FDC Service.
- Provide written authorisation where children require medication to be administered by educators/staff, including signing and dating it for inclusion in the child's medication records.

AUTHORISATION REQUIREMENTS:

Authorisation documents are required for the following situations and must have details recorded as specified:

Administration of medication	• The name of the child. • The authorisation to administer medication, signed by a parent or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication. • The name of the medication to be administered. • The time and date the medication is to be administered. • The dosage of the medication to be administered. • The period of authorisation (actual days and dates: from and to). • The date the authorisation is signed. • Medication in its original container and bearing the correct child's name. • Medication is not past its expiry or use-by date. • Medication is administered in accordance with any instructions attached to the medication or provided by a registered medical practitioner. • A second person checks the signed Authority to Administer Medication record, checks the dosage of the medication, and witnesses its administration. • The Educator administering medication and witness must write their full name and sign the medication record. • Details of the administration must be recorded in the medication record.

Medical treatment of the child including transportation by an ambulance service (Included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record):	• The name of the child. • Authorisation to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service. • Authorisation for the transportation of the child by an ambulance service. • The name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service. • The child's Medicare number. • The name of the parent or guardian providing authorisation. • The relationship to the child.
Emergency Medical Treatment (included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record or as updates during enrolment):	• The Service is able to seek emergency medical assistance for a child as required (i.e. medical practitioner, ambulance or hospital) without seeking further authorisation from a parent or guardian in the case of an emergency, including for emergencies relating to medical conditions noted on the enrolment form.
Collection of children (Included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record or as updated during enrolment):	• The name of the child. • The name of the parent or the guardian of the child or the authorised nominee on the enrolment form providing authorisation. • The name of the person/s authorised by a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record to collect the child from the premises. • The relationship to the child of the persons authorised to collect the child from the premises. • The signature of the person providing authorisation and date of authorisation.
Excursions (Including regular outings)	If the excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period, otherwise: • The name of the child. • The date of the excursion (if not for a regular outing). • The reason for the excursion. • The proposed destination for the excursion. • The method of transport to be used. • The route to be taken to and from the excursion. • The activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion.

	• The period the child will be away from the premises. • The anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion. • The ratio of Educators attending the excursion to the number of children attending the excursion. • The number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion. • Statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service. • The name of the parent or guardian providing authorisation. • The relationship to the child. • The signature of the person providing authorisation and date of authorisation. • Any water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities. • The items that should be taken on the excursion.
Sun Screen and Insect Repellent application	• Name of child • Permission authorised for educator to apply SPF 30+ or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen supplied by FDC Educator **or** • Permission authorised for staff to apply SPF 30+ or higher broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen **supplied by parent/guardian** • Parent signature and date • Material Safety Data Sheet required for all products • Permission authorised for staff to apply insect repellent supplied by the FDC Educator **or** • Permission authorised for staff to apply insect repellent supplied by the **parent/guardian**
Confirmation of Authorisation	• All authorisation forms received (including the initial enrolment form) are to be checked for completion. • All authorisations (excluding the initial enrolment form) are checked to ensure that the authoriser (name and signature) is the nominated parent or guardian on the enrolment form. • If incomplete or inappropriately signed, the authorisation form should be returned to the parent or guardian for correction. • Children will be suspended from any activity requiring authorisation until the appropriate form has been correctly completed and signed.

24. Payment of fees and provisions

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021).

Quality early education and care provides the foundation for children's development and social engagement whilst supporting workforce participation of parents and carers. Our Family Day Care Service is committed to supporting our approved educators provide quality education and care to all children at affordable fees for families.

As an approved childcare service, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to reduce fees to eligible families. Fees are based on our ability to provide the requirements of the Education and Care National Law and National Regulations, Family Assistance Law, the Australian Taxation Office and guidelines contained in the Child Care Provider Handbook.

PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of all fees including educator fee structures and administration fees and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains process of fee payment and the necessity of ensuring children's fees are paid on time and consequences for failure to pay fees on time. Kids Planet Family Day Care Servics acknowledge that approved educators operate in a contractual arrangement with our Service and provide a fee schedule to families upon enrolment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, FDC educators, families and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our FDC Service aims to ensure families understand the fee schedules and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to meet our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Child Care Subsidy legislative requirements. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately and our approved educators adhere to their responsibilities as '*fit and proper persons*' under Family Assistance Law. Our FDC Service and educators ensure the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

GENERAL FEES

Approved educators operate as self-employed small business owners and set their own fees, days of operation and minimum hours for provision of education and care under Kids Planet Family Day Care Services. Educators are advised they must meet their obligations under the *Family Assistance Law* and *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* regarding setting of fees, ensuring the following:

- educators do not charge an individual more than the usual CCS hourly session fee who may be eligible for ACCS or who receives a prescribed payment
- educators do not change fees during a particular event or circumstance (for example during Covid or a service closure)

Families will be provided with a fee schedule for each session of care for individual educators at time of enrolment. Educator fees may vary due to educator qualifications, location, hours of care provided including casual and permanent fees, overnight fees, weekend rates and the age of the child. Some educators provide food, nappies and transport and these will be added to the hourly fees. Late fees will be detailed on the fee schedule.

GENERAL FEES

- Fees are charged per hour
- There is an administration levy day per family. This fee is subject to change on an annual basis.

- CCS is paid directly to the FDC Service and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's statement)
- Families are required to pay their FDC educator the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount- the 'gap' amount
- Where gap fee payments are paid to educators, the Approved Provider will oversee and take all reasonable steps to ensure payments are collected from families.
- The Approved Provider will reconcile payments made by families within the CCS Software to ensure families pay the gap fee for each session
- 'Gap Fees' must be paid via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) (effective 02 July 2023)
- Gap fees will be collected by the Kids Planet Family Day Care Services effective 1st November 2024 on behalf of the educator via direct debt. In accordance with our Fee Policy and new legislation that came into effect on 1 July 2023, all childcare fees must now be paid electronically, and we will not accept payment in cash.
- Fees must be kept in advance of a child's attendance
- Educators will issue receipts from Harmony for all fees paid directly through EFT to their bank account.
- Fees are to be paid fortnightly through a direct debit system. If families wish to pay fees on a weekly or monthly basis, it is a requirement that the family pay in advance and are not in arrears
- Families are requested to contact the Service if their child is unable to attend a particular session
- If a session of care falls on a public holiday, families are required to pay normal fees. CCS will be paid for sessions that fall on public holidays
- Casual days may be offered to families if available

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (CCS)

- Parents/guardians are required to register for CCS through their myGov account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment
- Basic requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy.
- Parents must:
    - care for their child at least 2 nights per fortnight or have 14% share of care
    - be liable for child care fees at an approved early childhood education care service
    - meet residency requirements
- The child must:
    - be 13 or under
    - not attending secondary school (unless an exemption applies)
    - meet immunisation requirements
- Child care must be provided by an approved provider
- Families level of Child Care Subsidy will be determined by:
    - family income estimate
    - activity level

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- number of children in care
- type of early learning and child care Service

- Child Care Subsidy will be provided directly to the Service and this amount deducted from the parent/family account
- Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstance to Centrelink- (family income, activity levels, relationship changes or any other changes to their circumstances)
- Any disputes with CCS payments are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments
- Child care discounts for early childhood workforce will only be offered as outlined in the CCS Handbook.

PAYMENT OF FEES

- Families are required to pay fees using the FDC Service's direct debit system. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account
- Fees and charges associated with direct debit system are outlined upon enrolment
- Families will be issued with a *Statement of Entitlement* on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements
- The *Statement of Entitlement* will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts
- The *Statement of Entitlement* is generated using our CCS Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

ABSENCES FROM FDC SERVICE

- Families are requested to contact the FDC Service/ FDC educator if their child is unable to attend a particular session
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the Service is their child is unable to attend
- Under the Child Care Subsidy families are allowed 42 absence days per child, per financial year
- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason. Families do not have to provide evidence.
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law
- Records and evidence will be kept by the Service for each additional absence, where required
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via myGov
- In a period of emergency (declared by the Australian Government), such as bushfire or flood, extra allowable absences for the duration of the emergency will be automatically applied in the CCS system.
- In accordance with Family Assistance Law, educators cannot charge for, or record a session of care where provision of care is not available. Educators are not able to charge a different rate for the same type of care provision. Therefore, if the educator is unable to provide care due to illness or leave, they are unable to charge for that particular session of care

Public Holidays

- Parents are required to pay Educators the usual rate for public holidays if the child normally attends on that day. If care is required on a public holiday, an arrangement must be made with the Educator and Co-ordination Unit one (1) week in advance.

Parent & Child Absences

- Parents must provide two (2) weeks' notice, in writing to the Educator and Co-ordination Unit of the intention to take holidays or advise any alteration to the contracted days and hours.
- The holiday form must be completed and select the options that say:
    - I plan on going on a holiday I agree to pay the holiday fee while my child/ren is/are away and I will sign my timesheet before I leave.
    - I suspend my child/ren to attend care while I/we are away and I am not paying any holding fee and the position is free to place another child/ren.
- If a child is on holiday and no absence is claimed for the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), the childcare place is not automatically reserved, and the provider may offer that spot to another child. To ensure a place is held, it is usually necessary to pay the required fees for the period of absence.

Educator Holidays

- At least four (4) weeks' notice will be given to parents prior to the Educator taking holidays. No fees are payable during Educator holidays. Alternate care, when possible, will be arranged for children during Educator holidays; fees apply to the relief Educator. This procedure also applies when your Educator is ill.

Changes in Contracted Hours

- Any changes in hours or days are not transferable to another day (e.g., if contracted days are Monday & Tuesday and the Monday falls on a public holiday the Parent cannot swap this day for a Wednesday). If Parents wish to use care for an extra day, they will be subsequently charged the appropriate fee.

Leaving Care

- Written notice of leaving Family Day Care must be given at least two (2) weeks in advance to the Educator and Co-ordination Unit or two (2) weeks' fees will be payable in lieu of notice. CCS cannot be claimed in lieu of notice. (Child Care Subsidy cannot be claimed if your child does not attend care on the last day).

ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) provides extra help with the cost of early education and care
- There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:
    - **Child wellbeing** to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect. The approved provider is involved in determining children who may require additional support who are at risk of harm
    - Grandparents—to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment
    - **Temporary financial hardship**—to help families experiencing financial hardship. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment

- **Transition to work**—to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work. Families are required to contact Centrelink directly regarding this payment

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation of the approved provider

DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURE

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder letter will be issued after one week and then again after two weeks if the fees are still outstanding
- At any time of the debt recovery process the family will be encouraged to enter a debt agreement with our FDC Service and educators to repay outstanding fees. A written contract will be provided for the family to sign outlining repayment plan details. The repayment plan will provide information as to the duration and amount of the repayments as well as steps that will be taken if the repayment plan is not adhered to
- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after three weeks, for which the family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time the FDC Service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements. You will be liable for any recovery costs in addition to the outstanding amount.

LATE FEES

- It is unacceptable to pick children up late from an educator's residence. A late fee will apply where children are not picked up prior to closing time
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently late with fee payment.

CHANGE OF FEES

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of four weeks written notice is given to all families (Regulation 172 requires a minimum of 14 days' notice)
- CCS hourly rate caps may be increased by the CPI at the commencement of each financial year Any CCS hourly rate increases are governed by CCS and are automatically adjusted through our CCS Software.

TERMINATION OF ENROLMENT

- Parents/guardians are to provide two weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from care
- If termination from the FDC Service is required without notification, families can lose their Child Care Subsidy, resulting in the payment of requirement for full fees to be charged
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law

RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT

The Approved Provider and Coordination Unit/Nominated Supervisor are responsible for:

- ensuring that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Regulations are met
- ensuring the service and all persons with management and control (PMC) comply with the rules under Family Assistance Law (FAL)
- ensuring persons with management and control (PMC) are consider 'fit and proper' persons

- taking reasonable steps to ensure all educators, staff and volunteers follow the Payment of Fees Policy and procedure
- ensuring all families are aware of our Payment of Fees Policy
- providing families with educator fee schedules (these may be different for each educator due to education qualifications, hours and days of care provided, overnight fees etc.
- ensuring enrolment information are submitted correctly with appropriate enrolment information
- providing families with regular statement of fees payable
- notifying families of any overdue fees
- providing families with reminder letters as required
- terminating enrolment of children should fees not be paid
- discussing fee payment with families if required
- providing at least 4 weeks written notice to families of any fee increases or changes to the way fees are collected

Please note: Reg. 172 states a minimum of at least 14 day's notice regarding changes to policies must be provided to families

RESPONSIBILITY OF FAMILIES

- provide the FDC Service with the correct enrolment details to facilitate the CCS claim, if required, including:
    - Centrelink Reference Numbers for child and CCS claimant
    - Date of Birth for child and CCS claimant
- ensure payment of fees as per policy
- notify Centrelink of any changes that may affect their CCS entitlement
- confirm their child's enrolment through the parents myGov account.

THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS

Parents are generally liable to pay the co-contribution for child care fees. Only state and territory governments (and their agencies) can contribute to the cost, in part of full, of child care fees for families.

Where an agreement has been made between an employer or charity to assist in the contribution of fees the fees must be reduced accordingly before CCS has been applied.

Our FDC Service will record all documentation regarding any third-party payments.

COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Coordination Unit/Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Coordination Unit/Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.

Public Holidays

Parents are required to pay Educators the usual rate for public holidays if the child normally attends on that day. If care is required on a public holiday, an arrangement must be made with the Educator and Co-ordination Unit one (1) week in advance.

Parent & Child Absences

Parents must provide two (2) weeks' notice, in writing to the Educator and Co-ordination Unit of the intention to take holidays or advise any alteration to the contracted days and hours.

Educator Holidays

At least four (4) weeks' notice will be given to parents prior to the Educator taking holidays. No fees are payable during Educator holidays. Alternate care, when possible, will be arranged for children during Educator holidays; fees apply to the relief Educator. This procedure also applies when your Educator is ill.

Changes in Contracted Hours

Any changes in hours or days are not transferable to another day (e.g., if contracted days are Monday & Tuesday and the Monday falls on a public holiday the Parent cannot swap this day for a Wednesday). If Parents wish to use care for an extra day, they will be subsequently charged the appropriate fee.

Leaving Care

Written notice of leaving Family Day Care must be given at least two (2) weeks in advance to the Educator and Co-ordination Unit or two (2) weeks' fees will be payable in lieu of notice. CCS cannot be claimed in lieu of notice. (Child Care Subsidy cannot be claimed if your child does not attend care on the last day).

25. Dealing with Complaints/ Grievance Policy

Feedback from families, educators, staff and the wider community is fundamental in creating an evolving Service working towards the highest standard of care.

It is foreseeable that feedback will include divergent views, which may result in complaints. This Policy details Kids Planet Family Day Care Services 's procedures for receiving and managing informal and formal complaints. Parents and Educators can lodge a grievance with management with the understanding that it will be managed conscientiously and confidentially.

PURPOSE

We aim to investigate all complaints and grievances with a high standard of equity and fairness. We will ensure that all persons making a complaint are guided by the following policy values:

- Procedural fairness and natural justice
- Code of ethics and conduct
- Culture free from discrimination and harassment
- Transparent policies and procedures
- Opportunities for further investigation
- Adhering to Kids Planet Family Day Care Services philosophy

Procedural fairness and natural justice

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services believes in procedural fairness and natural justice that govern the strategies and practices, which include:

- The right to be heard fairly;
- The right to an unbiased decision made by an objective decision maker; and
- The right to have the decision based on relevant evidence

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Grievances can transpire in any workplace. Complaints help our FDC Service identify problems and provide opportunities to address these appropriately and effectively to sustain a child safe, healthy, harmonious and productive service environment. The Grievance Policy ensures that all persons are presented with procedures that:

- Value the opportunity to be heard;
- Promote conflict resolution;
- Encourage the development of harmonious partnerships;
- Ensure that conflicts and grievances are mediated fairly; and
- are transparent and equitable

Complaints and Grievances Management Register: Records information about complaints and grievances received at the FDC Service, along with the outcomes. This register includes documents that must be kept in a secure file, accessible only to management and the Regulatory Authority. The register can provide valuable information to the approved provider and nominated supervisor of the service to ensure children and family's needs are being met.

Complaint handling: Effective processes of receiving, investigating and resolving complaints.

Grievance**:** A grievance is a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature. A *workplace grievance* is a complaint raised towards an employer by an employee due to a violation of legalities (workplace policies, employment contract, national standards).

Investigation: A formal and systematic inquiry to establish facts about the complaint by collecting, documenting, examining and evaluating evidence.

Mediator**:** A person who attempts to assist and support people involved in a conflict come to an agreement.

Mediation: An attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between disputants through the objective intervention of a neutral party.

Notifiable Complaint**:** A complaint that alleges a breach of the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, National Quality Standard or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the approved provider or nominated supervisor to the regulatory authority within 24 hours of the complaint being made (S.174(2)(b), Reg. 176(2)(b)).

If the approved provider, nominated supervisor or coordinator is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact the Regulatory Authority for confirmation. Written reports must include:

- details of the event or incident
- the name of the person who initially made the complaint
- if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report (where relevant)
- contact details of a nominated member of FDC Service
- any other relevant information.

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website: www.acecqa.gov.au and logged using NQA ITS (National Quality Agenda IT System).

Serious Incident**:** An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed

from the centre in contravention of the Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the centre premises (Reg.12). The regulatory authority must be notified within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the centre (Reg. 176(2)(a)). A serious incident should be documented in an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. These records are required to be retained for the periods specified in Reg. 183

Privacy and Confidentiality

Management and educators will adhere to our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* when dealing with grievances and complaints. However, if a grievance or complaint involves a staff member, FDC educator or child protection issue, a relevant government agency will need to be informed as soon as practicable or within 24 hours. As mandatory reporters, educators and staff are required to report all instances of (alleged or witnessed) of child abuse, including assault or sexual abuse (including grooming) to Police, approved provider and Child Protection agencies within 24 hours. [see: *Child Protection Policy*]

Conflict of Interest

CONFLICT AND POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

We acknowledge that conflict is a natural part of the work environment. It is important that all conflict is resolved as unresolved conflict can lead to tension; stress; low productivity; bitter relationships; excess time off; ill health; anxiety and many other destructive emotions. When conflict is addressed and handled constructively the outcomes are feelings of relaxation; openness; high productivity; vitality; good health, empowerment; a sense of achievement etc. Positive communication between educators is vital to the smooth running of the FDC Service and to ensure aapositive environment for children. Educators are expected to treat other educators with respect, accept differences and share ideas. It is every staff member's responsibility to contribute to the development of an open, healthy and constructive work environment. All grievances and complaints, whether considered minor or not, are to be dealt with promptly, professionally and thoroughly.

The FDC Service's employees and engaged staff are expected to look at conflict in a positive way, ready to learn something new, reflect on good quality practice, improve work relationships and ultimately provide better care and education for children.

Employees are also to be aware of their responsibility to be a good role model for children, and appropriately and professionally handle conflict with work colleagues, children, parents, and other associates.

Employees should regularly reflect on *Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics* for guidance of appropriate behaviour when dealing with conflict. The Code of Ethics states that all team members should "*make every effort to use constructive methods to resolve differences of opinion in the spirit of collegiality."*

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/COORDINATOR WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations are met and child's safety and wellbeing are prioritised at all times
- ensure educators and staff have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- provide an induction program for new staff and educators that includes an overview of policies and procedures, including this *Dealing with Complaints Policy* and procedure
- ensure all employees, volunteers and students are
    - required to participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
    - aware of their mandatory reporting obligations to report suspected risk or risk of harm to authorities immediately
    - aware of the person to whom complaints can be made and the processes required

- ensure the name and contact number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly displayed and staff and FDC educators are aware of the processes required to make a complaint
- treat all grievances or complaints seriously and as a priority
- notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised. Notification must include any incident where there is a reasonable belief that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the FDC Service or any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the FDC Service. [insert details of your state/territory contact]
- comply with legislation for the Reportable Conduct Scheme and ensure the Office of the Children's Guardian is notified within 7 business days of becoming aware of any allegations and/or convictions of abuse or neglect of a child made against an employee or volunteer and ensure they are investigated, and appropriate action taken. (see Reportable Conduct Scheme section).
- ensure grievances or complaints remain confidential
- ensure grievances or complaints reflect procedural fairness and natural justice
- ensure people feel safe or comfortable when making a complaint, including children
- discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the verbal or written complaint.
- investigate and document the grievance or complaint fairly and impartially. The investigation will consist of:
    - reviewing the circumstances and facts of the complaint (or breach) and inviting all affected parties to provide information where appropriate and pertinent
    - discussing the nature of the complaint (or breach) and giving the accused educator, staff member, volunteer or visitor an opportunity to respond
    - permitting the accused person to have a support person present during the consultation (for example: Union Representative, HR Representative, lawyer, colleague, friend or family member
    - providing the employee with a clear written statement outlining the outcome of the investigation.
- advise the complainant and all affected parties of the outcome within 7 working days of receiving the verbal or written complaint.
    - management will provide a written response outlining the outcome and provide a copy to all parties involved
    - if a written agreement about the resolution of the complaint is prepared, all parties will ensure the outcomes accurately reflects the resolution and sign in agreeance
- should management decide not to proceed with the investigation after initial enquiries, a written notification outlining the reasoning will be provided to the complainant.
- keep appropriate records of the investigation and outcome and store these records in accordance with our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* and *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*
- monitor ongoing behaviour and provide support as required
- ensure the parties are protected from victimisation and bullying
- request feedback on the grievance or complaint process using a feedback form
- track complaints to identify recurring issues within the FDC Service which are addressed appropriately within the Service's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program that includes an understanding of child protection law and their obligations
- report all instances (alleged or witnessed) of child abuse, including assault or sexual abuse (including grooming) to NSW Police within 24 hours
- be aware of the possible ramifications of their actions when dealing with staff issues
- raise the grievance or complaint directly with the person they have grievance with, in a professional manner and at an appropriate time. Both parties should try to resolve the issue and develop solutions to ensure the problem does not happen again. Discussions should be based on the principles of privacy, confidentiality, respect and open-mindedness, will not involve other educators, staff, volunteers or visitors (e.g., parents) and will take place away from children.
- if the person is unable to resolve the issue or feels uncomfortable raising the matter directly with the person concerned, the grievance or complaint must be raised with the approved provider/coordinator/management. The approved provider or coordinator (or other manager) may ask for the issue to be put in writing.
- provide all relevant information, outlining the issue, identifying any other person involved in the problem, and any suggested solution
- communicate openly about the issue with the relevant parties
- raise any grievance involving suspected or actual unlawful activity (including bullying) with the approved provider or coordinator immediately and privately
- maintain confidentiality at all times
- maintain professionalism at all times

When the persons involved cannot resolve the grievance between them in a constructive and professional way the following steps will be taken.

The aggrieved person is to contact their immediate supervisor (educator, approved provider or coordinator) who will act as mediator.

The mediator will have an interview with the persons involved and clarify the facts, work out whether advice is needed from other sources, discuss options available, and help to formulate a plan of action.

If an employee does not feel comfortable in approaching their supervisor, or the conflict is with their immediate supervisor, they can contact the next level of management to act as mediator.

If an amicable resolution does not occur at this meeting the mediator is to present a report to the next level of management outlining:

- the nature of the grievance or complaint
- the procedures followed to date
- the solution(s) sought
- the recommended plan of action or resolution.

If an agreement is reached the mediator is to present a report to the next level of management outlining:

- the nature of the grievance or complaint
- the procedures followed to date
- the solution(s) agreed upon
- the plan of action to reach this solution and review time if warranted.

- a copy of this report is to be provided to all persons involved in the grievance or complaint, and a copy is to be retained at the workplace.

GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Harmonious staff relations within the FDC Scheme largely depend on staff feeling satisfied that their professionalism is being acknowledged by their involvement in appropriate decision-making processes. The quality of industrial relations is likely to be substantially better in a workplace if the decision-making processes adopted permit staff to have input into decisions that affect the nature and quality of their professional work.

Management and staff within the organisation will work together to develop and implement appropriate strategies to facilitate consultative and collaborative decision-making processes within the workplace. Where staff feel these processes have failed and are in conflict with decisions made by management, the following procedure is to be followed:

- the aggrieved person(s) will discuss the grievance with their immediate supervisor
- the supervisor is to report the grievance to the nominated supervisor
- the mediator will seek advice as necessary from other sources, (e.g.: unions, Work Cover and funding bodies).
- the mediator will then advise management of the possible solutions.

Meetings are to be arranged with the aggrieved person(s) as necessary throughout the process. The outcome of the grievance must be reported to the aggrieved person within a week of the decision.

RESOLUTION OF GRIEVANCES

Grievances are considered resolved when all persons involved agree to a solution, when the cause of the grievance has been removed or resolved, and when arrangements have been made, if appropriate, to repair any damage and distress suffered by the persons involved. Strategies agreed upon by both parties are to be put in place to help avoid further conflict.

UNRESOLVED CONFLICT

If resolution of the conflict is unsuccessful after all procedures in the *Dealing with Complaints Policy* have been followed it may then be necessary to take disciplinary action.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Mediators are to use discretion and do their utmost to maintain confidentiality. Any breach of this confidentiality could result in a charge of misconduct. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in the following situations: if it is considered that someone is in danger, if disciplinary action or criminal investigation might be necessary; or if employer liability might be involved.

No action will be taken against the person about whom a formal complaint is lodged until they are made aware of any allegations so that they may respond.

SUPPORT PERSON

Educators and staff members are able to nominate a support person to attend any meetings with them. This person may be a Union Representative, HR Representative, lawyer, colleague, friend or family member.

A support person may provide support by:

- taking notes during the meeting
- clarifying questions asked
- clarifying any allegations made
- help formulate responses
- engage in discussions and are more than a passive observer

- aid in understanding processes
- request breaks
- emotional support.

A support person cannot:

- represent the employer
- speak on their behalf
- advocate for the organisation

EDUCATORS AND/OR EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL NOT:

- become involved in complaints or grievances that do not concern them
- raise complaints with an external complaints body, such as a court or Tribunal, without exhausting the FDC Services' grievance procedures.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/EVALUATION

Complaints provide our FDC Service with opportunities for learning and improvement. We encourage

regular and ongoing feedback from staff, children and families and the community. Our FDC Service is committed to resolving complaints through prompt investigation, open communication, and transparent.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/EVALUATION

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regular and ongoing feedback from staff, children and families and the community. Our FDC Service is committed to resolving complaints through prompt investigation, open communication, and transparent.

To ensure complaints and grievances are handled appropriately, the approved provider/nominated supervisor will:

- evaluate each individual complaint and grievance as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Management Register* to assess that a satisfactory resolution that has been achieved
- review complaints and grievances as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Management Register* to ensure a pattern of similar grievances is not occurring
- review the *Dealing with Complaints Policy (Staff)* and other related policies annually
- review the effectiveness of the FDC Service policy and procedures to ensure all complaints and grievances have been handled fairly and professionally
    - Consider feedback from staff, FDC educators and families regarding the policy and procedure.

26. Participation of students and volunteers on placements

PURPOSE:

To provide opportunities for the training needs of volunteers and students through imparting knowledge and experience from family day care service staff and family day care educators. Students can be provided with opportunities and resources to demonstrate their competencies and to gain experience.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to family day care educators, the family day care service, volunteers and students on practicum placements.

PRINCIPLE:

To provide opportunities for the training needs of volunteers and students in family day care.

POLICY:

To provide a clear and understandable process to allow for volunteers and students who participate in the family day care service, ensuring safety for them and the children.

Procedures:

<u>The family day care service can offer placements to:</u>

- High school students who wish to gain work experience as part of a high school program, where the school has initiated the work experience, identified the student's suitability, worked with the service to arrange suitable times and provide authorisation for the student to participate.
- Students attending other registered training organisations and studying in a relevant field, such as childcare, teaching, recreation or community services where the training organisation has initiated the placement, identified the students suitability, worked with the
- nominated supervisor in relation to times and expectations and provided written authorisation for the student to participate.

The Approved Provider/Coordinator will:

- Provide the student/volunteer with a Work Placement Orientation Package.
- Advise students or volunteer to bring in the paperwork from her school/training organisation outlining the reason for their placement.
- Ensure Work Placement Students or Volunteers are never left on their own with children or included in the ratio of adult to children.
- Ensure students are aware that they must not discuss concerns, issues or complaints with parents, guardians and/or visitors.
- Introduce the student or volunteer to the educator.
- Show the student or volunteer where they can access the Family Day Care Service's policies.
- Ensure the student has signed a confidentiality agreement prior to commencing their placement.
- Liaise with learning institutions and accept suitable student placements under the institution's supervision.
- Assist learning institutions to place suitable students with individual Educators.
- Ensure student's/volunteer's paperwork and insurances are current.

Educators will:

- Conduct an orientation for the student or volunteer including taking the student or volunteer on a tour of the Family Day Care Service, showing emergency exits, and facilities.
- Negotiate with the student or volunteer the times/hours to be worked, and dates of the placement.
- Ensure students or volunteers bring in a document outlining the reason for their placement.
- Inform families, children, and Educators when work experience students and volunteers are present at the Family Day Care Service, including their role and hours they will be spending at the Service.
- Discuss any relevant important information about specific children to the student or volunteer (i.e. court orders, additional needs, dietary needs) so that the student or volunteer is aware of potential issues.
- Maintain open communication with Work Experience Students and Volunteers along with their practicum teachers about their performance.

- Support all student's and volunteer's practicum requirements to the best of their ability during the placement.
- Work as a team sharing appropriate skills and knowledge with each student and volunteer.
- Be aware of student and volunteer expectations.
- Have the time and proficiencies to support each student and volunteer in their placement.
- Encourage students to seek help and advice as required.
- Be a positive role model, showing appropriate behaviour and conduct themselves in a professional manner.
- Guide the students throughout the day.
- Make the student or volunteer feel welcome and a valued member of the Family Day Care Service.
- Discuss the progress of written work and performance with the student or volunteer.
- Discuss any concerns raised by the student with the Student's Supervisor.
- Ensure students or volunteers are directly supervised at all times during children's nappy change times.
- Encourage students to use their initiative.
- Ensure the student/volunteer remains up to date with their assessments/tasks to be completed.
- Never leave the student alone with a child or children.

Work Experience Students and Volunteers will:

- Develop the skills and knowledge needed to care for and educate children.
- Learn about the importance of working as part of a team in the Early Childhood Profession.
- Learn strategies for working in a team environment.
- Learn and accommodate the expectations of the qualified educator/educator assistant in the Family Day Care Service.
- Inform the Educator in writing of what will be expected of them by their training body, University or School, or any other training organisation, and provide time sheets and evaluation forms.
- Keep up to date with all written work requirements.
- Work a variety of shifts to gain knowledge of different aspects of Family Day Care Service operations.
- Bring in a document introducing themselves that will include:
    - Name
    - Course they are studying
    - RTO/university they are studying with
    - Dates and times they will be at the Family Day Care Service
    - The focus of their study.
- Discuss any problems the student may be experiencing with the Educator.
- Adhere to all policies and procedures.
- Never remove a child from direct staff supervision.

Probity Checks:

- All students will supply identity details to the Nominated Supervisor
- All students will complete a Working with Children Volunteer/student declaration
- All students will have a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor so that they will receive information regarding the following Family Day Care Service policies:
  a. Child protection
  b. Record Keeping and Confidentiality
  c. Complaints

Students at risk:

If educators feel that the student is at risk of failing their practicum, the following steps will be taken:

1. The Educator will alert the Approved Provider of any concerns with the student.
2. The Educator and Approved Provider will discuss concerns with the Student.
3. The Educator or Approved Provider will arrange for the student's teacher to visit the Family Day Care Service and discuss concerns that have ascended.
4. The student's educational institution and Nominated Supervisor will govern the outcome of the practicum.
   Termination of Practicum:

Termination of student's placement will occur if the student:

- Harms or is at risk of harming a child in their care.
- Is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Fails to notify the Family Day Care Service if they will not be attending the Service.
- Does not adhere to starting times or break times.
- Is observed using repeated inappropriate behaviour at the Family Day Care Service.
- Does not comply with all policies and procedures addressed in the student package.
- Does not provide the photo with an introduction on commencement.
- Does not keep up to date with their work placement tasks.
- Removes any child or children from the direct supervision of an educator

27. Equal opportunity

PURPOSE:

To ensure that the Kids Planet Family Day Care Service is responsive to the community in which it operates. It has processes and supports in place to provide access to the service for children, families, staff and educators regardless of gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, religion, political conviction, impairment, family responsibility or status and age. When participating in the service everyone will be protected from harassment due to sex, race, impairment or any other reason.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to family day care educators, family day care educator assistants, family day care service staff, volunteers and families and children.

PRINCIPLE:

The service will have in place policies and procedures that are based on the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity.

Children's rights and interests will be paramount.

POLICY:

Kids Planet Family Day Care Service is committed to the principles of Equal Opportunity in relation to community access to the service and the appointment of staff. Individuals will be treated with respect regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, impairment, marital status, political conviction, pregnancy, family responsibility or family status. The service will actively promote the positive aspects of diversity and encourage acceptance and appreciation of individual differences. Education and care will be made available to the community in accordance with the Commonwealth "Priority of Access Guidelines".

Procedures:

- The service will have access to current information regarding Equal Opportunity legislation.
- Families, educators and staff will be given clear instructions about the Commonwealth "Priority of Access Guidelines".
- The service will endeavour to ensure that all policies and practices are inclusive.

Children

- Equal Opportunity principles will be an integral part of the service's daily programs and routines. Children will be given positive experiences which encourage equal opportunity. Programs will actively include opportunities for the children to experience diversity of culture, gender roles etc.
- Family day care educators and service staff will treat individual children and their families with respect. They will take into account individual differences in language, attitudes, abilities, assumptions and expectations.
- Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be afforded access to the service where:
    - a place exists;
    - they meet the required priority of access;
    - the service is able to access and/or borrow appropriate resources to care for the child.

The service will support family day care educators in their efforts to include children with a disability within their service by actively participating in the Inclusion Support Program.

Family day care educators and service staff

- All educators/staff will be selected or employed according to equal opportunity guidelines.
- Where the community in which the service is operating comprises of a particular ethnic group, the service will make every effort to include workers from that group at the service, provided they meet the required selection criteria and are considered to be the best person for the position.
- The service will actively promote the opportunity to become a family day care educator (educator) within particular ethnic communities when statistics reveal a need from within that ethnic population.
- Applicants with disabilities who apply for advertised positions or registration will be assessed according to the selection criteria and will not be discriminated against because of their disability.
- During induction staff and family day care educators will be provided with information on the procedures to be followed in the event of harassment or discrimination experienced carrying out their role at the service.
- Clear guidelines and grievance procedures will be developed in accordance with the state and federal equal opportunity legislation and made available to family day care educators and staff.

28. Assessment Approval & Reassessment of approved Family Day Care Residence

Under the Children (Education and Care Services) National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the Approved Provider of a Family Day Care service must conduct an assessment (including a risk assessment) of each approved family day care residence before education and care is provided to children at the residence. Following approval, an annual assessment must be conducted, including a risk assessment, of each family day care residence to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children who are educated and cared for by the service are protected. Records of all assessments must be maintained.

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure the Family Day Care residence protects children's health, safety and wellbeing. By conducting comprehensive assessments, including risk assessments, potential hazards that may cause injury or harm to children being cared for at a residence are identified and actions to minimise potential risk are clearly documented and action taken to ensure compliance.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistance, children, families, and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the Approved Provider of a Family Day Care (FDC) Service must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for assessing proposed FDC residences and reassessing approved FDC residences. They must also take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. The Approved Provider of a Family Day Care Service will conduct assessments (including a risk assessment) of each approved family day care residence *before* education and care is provided to children and then at least once a year. The FDC service must additionally conduct *monthly* inspection of any water hazards, water feature or swimming pool or spa and fencing at each FDC residence. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected at all times. The Approved Provider will maintain a record of assessments undertaken and provide a copy to the FDC educator for their records.

The Education and Care Services National Law requires all services to '*ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children… from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury'* (Section 167). Risk assessments are to be conducted to identify any potential hazards that may cause injury or harm to children being cared for, assess the risk of harm or potential harm and eliminate or minimise the risk by using control measures. Risk assessments are to be evaluated, reviewed and continually monitored. This may include conducting regular daily safety checks, regular WHS inspections and regular spot checks conducted by the Coordinator of the Family Day Care Service.

The Approved Provider is responsible for ensuring all approved FDC residences are compliant to the National Regulations and understand that penalties apply for non-compliance including record keeping requirements.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

- advise potential FDC educators of the requirement of conducting an assessment, including a risk assessment, of the proposed residence as suitable, to comply with legislated regulations in order for approval to operate family day care.
- advise potential FDC educators of consequences of non-compliance – suspension or cancellation of engagement
- develop an assessment procedure/checklist to be used when assessing each FDC residence
- develop a re-assessment procedure/checklist to use when re-assessing each FDC residence
- develop a risk assessment procedure for FDC educators to implement to identify potential hazards and manage risks

- ensure the risk assessment includes a diagram showing the areas of the residence that has been assessed by the approved provider and deemed suitable for education and care
- ensure this diagram clearly shows the existence of any water hazard, swimming pool or spa
- display the diagram at the entry of the FDC residence clearly visible for families to view
- provide continuous and ongoing monitoring of the environment through regular home visits by the coordinator to observe the environment and if necessary, make recommendations to ensure compliance and safety for children at all times
- conduct a comprehensive annual assessment of each approved family day care residence at least annually
- ensure families using the residence are informed about the findings of annual assessments and specific areas to which it relates or the finding made by the approved provider
- conduct an annual assessment of the family day care educator and educator assistant and any person over the age of 18 who resides or frequently visits the family day care residence while education and care is provided, as a 'fit and proper person'. The approved provider must also consider each person to have
- a Working with Children Check.
- a criminal history record check issued not more than 6 months before it is considered
- provide a copy of the assessment and re-assessment to the FDC educator for their own records
- ensure educators and educator assistants maintain current approved first aid and approved anaphylaxis and asthma management training and annual cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. Copies of valid certification must be recorded at the principal office of the FDC Service
- notify families at least 14 days before changing policies and procedure that
    - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected
    - significantly impact the service's education and care of children or;
    - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service
- conduct and record monthly inspections of water hazards, swimming pools, water features, spas or other potential water hazard and surrounds (including fences/gardens) for FDC service residence
- ensure any water safety inspection reports which contain potential risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of children must be notified to the Approved Provider within 24 hours- See: Water Hazard Safety Inspections
- provide a copy of the water safety inspection report to the FDC educator
- keep records of the water safety inspection report
- request compliance certificates for any barriers or fencing surrounding swimming pools, spas or water hazards to ensure compliance with Australian Standards, including requirements as per legislation and council requirements (See Water Safety Policy)
- ensure swimming pools or spas have a safety device has been installed to alert or deter a child from entering the water
- ensure educators maintain a back-up communication device that is kept in a permanent location and is always available in an emergency
- ensure educators provide notification to the Approved Provider of any proposed renovations and/or changes to the residence that will affect the education and care provided to children at the service (at least two weeks' notice)

- ensure educators provide notification to the Approved Provider of any circumstances which may affect or pose a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of children, including infectious diseases or natural disasters (bushfire, flooding).

ASSESSMENTS OF FAMILY DAY CARE RESIDENCES:

- suitability of the residence according to the number, ages and ability of children attending or likely to attend
- for services in a multi-storey building shared with other occupants, consideration as to whether, for each storey there is direct egress to an assembly area to allow the safe evacuation of all children attending the residence, including non-ambulatory children
- for services in a multi-storey building, details regarding the number of storeys within the building, which storey the residence will be located, and the ages of children who will attend on each storey (if the residence covers more than 1 storey)
- existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pool at or near the residence
- identifying any risks or potential hazards for purposes of sleep and rest
- the risk posed by any animals at the residence
- children are provided with a safe, secure education and care environment that poses minimal risks
- children have access to sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment
- all equipment and furniture used in providing education and care are safe, clean and in good repair
- the service has enough seats and developmentally appropriate utensils for children to use at mealtimes
- there are adequate facilities for safe handling, preparation, storage and disposal of food and beverages
- the location and design of toilets and hand washing facilities enable safe and convenient access by the children
- adequate supervision is provided for children when using toilet facilities
- adequate, developmentally and age-appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities are provided
- hot water taps have temperature controls or safety guards to reduce risk of being scalded
- the suitability of nappy change facilities for children attending or likely to attend the service (including ensuring the educator is able to maintain hand on contact with a child during nappy changes)
- hygienic procedures are followed for cleaning the nappy change area between changes of children- including replacing paper on the change table, handwashing and use of gloves
- suitability of nappy change arrangements for children attending, or likely to attend
- nappy change facilities are located in an area that prevents unsupervised access by children
- laundry facilities are adequate and appropriate for educators to deal with soiled clothing, nappies and linen
- laundry facilities are located and maintained in a way that does not pose a risk to children
- the residence is well ventilated and has adequate natural lighting
- all FDC residences (except those in WA- 1m minimum standard applies) must comply with the 0.75m height requirement for safety glass (Regulation 117). Any glass that is accessible to children that is lower than the height requirement must have additional glazing or safety film over the glass. (Regulation 117)
- prescribed information is displayed within the FDC residence in accordance with regulation 173A

- sliding doors have decals/transfers positioned at various eye levels of children
- the premises are maintained in accordance with all regulations and building standards
- sleep/rest environment and sleep equipment are fit for purpose
- consideration of evacuation procedures of infants and toddlers if their sleeping arrangements are located upstairs. (See specific risk assessments).
- any equipment with a fall height over 500mm has Australian Standard playground surfacing/soft fall to prevent serious head injuries
- fencing of the outdoor space used by children at the service is enclosed and is of a height and design that prevents preschool age children or under from getting beneath, through or over
- any items that children may use to assist them to scale a fence (play equipment, branches of a tree) are either removed or moved away from the fence
- all fences and gates are appropriately maintained to ensure the safety of children
- indoor spaces are kept at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children
- existing water safety hazards, including water features and swimming pools at/or near the residence are considered as part of the risk assessment and subject to monthly future inspections
- the risk posed by animals at the residence are carefully considered within the risk assessment
- all internal or external stairways, ramps, corridors, hallways or balconies are enclosed in such a way as to prevent a child being trapped or falling through or climbing over it
- power points are fitted with approved safety options or with an earth leakage circuit breaker
- safety plugs are installed when electrical points
- electrical appliances are kept out of reach of all children
- sandpits are covered at night and raked regularly to dispose of any animal faeces
- outside area is checked to prevent any pests or vermin (snakes, rats, mice, spiders)
- garden sheds/garages are kept locked
- firearms and ammunition are inaccessible to children at all times and are stored securely and separately in a locked cupboard at all times
- firearms licences of registered persons are provided to the approved provider

IN THE CASE OF NON-COMPLIANCE OF NATIONAL REGULATIONS, THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

- notify the regulatory authority of matters in accordance with the notification requirements in sections 173-174 of the National Law and regulations 173-176
- conduct a meeting with the FDC educator to develop an action plan to ensure areas assessed as non-compliant are rectified within a specific time frame
- ensure ongoing monitoring and assessment of the FDC residence and educator's action plan by the coordinator

If there are other issues preventing compliance, the Approved Provider may take further action to suspend or cancel the approval of the residence as part of the FDC Service/Scheme and terminate the employment of the FDC educator.

THE FDC EDUCATOR WILL:

- keep up to date with any changes to the Assessment and reassessment of residences for FDC policy and procedures
- advise the approved provider of the areas of the residence they wish to use for the operation of their service
- ensure family members are reminded of the areas that have been assessed for use
- ensure notification has been made to the approved provider of any proposed renovations and/or changes to the FDC residence which may pose a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of children attending or likely to attend
- ensure notification has been made to the approved provider of any circumstances which may affect or pose a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of children, including infectious diseases or natural disasters (bushfire, flooding)
- provide a child safe environment, meeting all regulatory standards by completing daily safety checks and regular risk assessments which monitor the suitability and safety of the education and care environment and identify any risks
- discuss any suspicions or disclosures from children and follow appropriate reporting if you believe a child may be at risk of harm
- ensure the residence is set up to facilitate adequate supervision of children
- ensure the environment is free from tobacco smoke, alcohol and illicit drugs at all times
- ensure Working with Children Check (WWCC) is current at all times
- ensure any person residing in the residence over the age of 18 has a current WWCC
- participate in annual assessments of their residence or more regularly if necessary
- ensure a diagram showing the areas of the residence used to provide education and care is displayed at the entry of the FDC residence
- ensure their residence meets all regulatory requirements including ensuring that the premises, furniture and all equipment and toys are safe, clean and in good repair
- ensure quiet, well-ventilated and comfortable sleeping spaces are provided for children's sleep and rest
- remove ladders from any bunk beds or make the top level of the bunk inaccessible to children under 8 years
- ensure all cots meet Australian Standards and are in good repair
- ensure all glazed areas of the residence complies with glass Regulation 117. All FDC residences must comply with the 0.75m height requirement for safety glass (NQF Review). Any glass that is accessible to children that is lower than the height requirement must have additional glazing or safety film over the glass.

The glazed area must be-

a) glazed with safety glass if the Building Code of Australia requires this; or

b) in any other case

- treated with a product to prevent shattering if hit
- or guarded by barriers to prevent a child from striking or falling against the glass.

- ensure that all equipment used complies with Australian Standards (cots, bedding, toys, electrical equipment)
- ensure floor coverings are secure and free from tripping hazards

- follow safety advice from recognised authorities and manufacturers
- ensure any play equipment or building structures are not placed near fences where children could gain a foothold and climb over a fence
- ensure gates and doors have childproof catches that prevent access to hazards including dams, roads, water features, spas or swimming pools
- complete and assist in record keeping of monthly inspections of swimming pools, spas and water feature
- ensure swimming pools or spas have a safety device has been installed to alert or deter a child from entering the water
- ensure a back-up communication device is available at all times, located in a permanent location
- ensure dogs and animals that may cause injury to children are housed in areas with secure fencing
- comply with the outcomes of the residence pre-assessment and annual assessment in a timely manner (as per action plan if required)

RECOMMENDED CHECKLISTS/AUDITS FOR FAMILY DAY CARE RESIDENCE ASSESSMENT

(Any checklist or audit sheet developed to be used for assessment must be shared with FDC educators)

- Opening and closing checklist
- Information and display checklist
- Daily safety checklist- indoor/outdoor (checking fencing, gates, locks, play equipment, sandpit, water hazards, risks posed by pets)
- Kitchen Audit
- Cleaning checklist
- Medication Audit
- First Aid Kit Audit
- Inclusive Audit
- Chemical and hazardous materials checklist- including safety data sheets
- Bathroom checklist including suitability of nappy changing arrangements
- Laundry and hygiene facilities
- Children's toys safety checklist
- Furniture and equipment safety checklist
- Carpark safety checklist
- Home Safety Risk Assessment FDC - Premises assessment checklist including- glass, ventilation and natural light, suitable and sufficient furniture and materials and developmentally appropriate equipment and suitability of the residence
- Transportation pickup/drop off checklist
- Safe sleep audit
- Work, Health and Safety Audit
- Visitor register
- Risk Assessment Audit

- Emergency Evacuation Audit- (fire equipment, smoke alarms)
- FDC Pool/Water Hazards/Water features Safety checklist

29. Engagement or Registration of family day care educator

Family Day Care (FDC) educators provide early education and care for babies and children up to 13 years of age in a natural and flexible home learning environment. Educators are early childhood education and care professionals who hold Certificate III level (or higher) qualification. Our Family Day Care Service aims to engage and register educators who are appropriately qualified, are passionate early childhood educators and are committed to ongoing training and professional learning with the support of our coordinators and management team.

PURPOSE

We aim to create and maintain a positive, professional and transparent approach to recruit, register and engage family day care educators to our Family Day Care Service and ensure that our FDC educators are fit and proper, suitably qualified and passionate early childhood educators. The safety, health, and wellbeing of children is paramount, and we ensure our systems and documentation for engaging and registering FDC educators are kept up-to-date and reviewed regularly.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator

assistants, children, families, and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the Approved Provider of a Family Day Care service must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the engagement or registration of FDC educators. They must also take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

The FDC Service will have a consistent process in the registration or engagement of Family Day Care educators. Educators will come from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences, to reflect the diversity within our community, whilst adhering to all current Education and Care Services National Regulations, National Quality Standards and Family Assistance Law.

Our FDC Service will use a variety of advertising methods to attract and recruit Family Day Care educators, which may include paper based, electronic/social media and word of mouth. All potential educators are required to submit a written application stating relevant qualifications, interest, suitability and availability. We encourage opportunities to discuss our processes of recruiting, training and engagement of potential educators. All FDC educators will register with the Department of Education through the Provider Digital Access Portal (PRODA) and maintain registration as part of their employment by our service to provide care for children and record attendance information for Child Care Subsidy purposes.

Our FDC Service is committed to be a child safe Early Education and Care Service and uphold the 10 Child Safe Standards as recommended by the National Office for Child Safety and our recruitment and screening processes play a vital role in protecting children from harm.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

- ensure obligations under the *Education and Care National Law and Regulations* are met and understood by all FDC educators
- ensure robust and proper checks take place prior to registration of FDC educators, including a declaration of fitness and history of compliance with the National Law and Regulations completed by the educator
- review the educator's knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children, taking into consideration the educator's history of compliance with the National Law and regulations (Reg 143A)

- ensure FDC are at least 18 years of age, are suitably qualified, hold at least an approved certificate III level (or higher) qualification (transitional arrangements apply for existing FDC educators to complete qualifications)
- ensure potential educators hold a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) and Australian National Police Criminal history record check (or Police Check) obtained from the relevant state or territory police service, or an agency accredited by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, no more than six (6) months before the date of the application
- have procedures in place to notify the regulatory authority of any circumstance that may pose a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children, including fitness of propriety issues related to any individual residing in the FDC residence
- ensure FDC educators notify the approved provider of any new resident over 18 years of age at the FDC residence and any circumstances relating to a person at the FDC residence that may affect whether they are a fit and proper to be in the company of children (including if the person has been charged or convicted of an offence of a sexual or violent nature or an offence involving drugs or a weapon, the person's working with children or vulnerable people check, registration or card is rejected, revoked or suspended or the person is prohibited from working with children)
- maintain a register of FDC educators, coordinators, educator assistants
- ensure quality practices in our recruitment process, induction, retention and wellbeing
- embed National child safe principles into the service's philosophy, practices and culture
- ensure copies of all policies and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, families, volunteers, students and visitors
- ensure a diagram is displayed and visible from the main entrance showing the FDC residence assessed as suitable for providing education and care to children and identifying any swimming pool, water feature or spa
- ensure any swimming pool at the FDC residence is fenced according to relevant state laws

TO BE ENGAGED OR REGISTERED AS A FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATOR, THE APPLICANT MUST:

- be aware of regulatory requirements
- ensure the approved provider is notified of any circumstance that may pose a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children attending or likely to attend the family day care residence (Reg. 176A)
- be at least 18 years of age
- hold a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) and Australian National Police Criminal history record check (or Police Check) obtained from the relevant state or territory police service, or an agency accredited by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, no more than six (6) months before the date of the application
- complete a declaration that all proposed educators are fit and proper persons having regard to any prior actions involving fraud or dishonesty and their capacity to comply with the family assistance law
- maintain current approved first aid qualification and approved anaphylaxis and asthma management training
- renew cardio-pulmonary resuscitation every 12 months
- hold at least an approved Certificate III level of an early childhood education qualification. (Existing FDC educators who are engaged prior to July 1 2023 have until July 1 2024 to complete an approved qualification (does not apply to FDC educators in South Australia)
- hold insurance against public liability with a minimum cover of $10,000,000

- be considered a '*fit and proper person'* to be providing education and care to children
- be a responsive and effective communicator
- maintain and extend ~~have a deep~~ their knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children and implement the approved learning frameworks- *Belonging, Being and Becoming*: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (V2.0) *and Our Time Our Place*: Framework for School Aged Care in Australia (V2.0)
- hold PRODA registration, and individual RA number as a FDC educator
- notify the approved provider of any residents at the FDC residence, including intention to have residents at the residence
- notify the approved provider of any circumstances relating to a person who resides at the residence or intends to reside that may affect whether the person is fit or proper to be in the company of children

EDUCATORS SHOULD BE EXPECTED TO:

- complete a written application to the Family Day Care Service
- participate in an interview with the Approved Provider or nominated person (coordinator, educational leader)
- provide requested documentation
- display a diagram at the main entrance showing the areas of the FDC residence assessed as suitable for education and care provided to children
- ensure this diagram clearly shows the existence of any water hazard, swimming pool or spa
- display prescribed information clearly visible for families at the entrance of the FDC residence
- have adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children
- have knowledge and competence in ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of all children being educated and cared for in their residence
- have knowledge of child protection law and understand their responsibilities as mandatory reporters
- have knowledge and commitment to embedding the National Child Safe Principles
- maintain current approved first aid and approved anaphylaxis and asthma management training and renew cardio-pulmonary resuscitation every 12 months
- ensure their public liability insurance is kept current
- have the proposed residence assessed and approved by the approved provider prior to commencement of providing education and care to children
- notify the approved provider of all family members residing in their residence including their names and dates of birth
- notify the approved provider of any residents at the FDC residence; if any person is over 18 years of age provide a WWCC clearance check
- notify the approved provider of any circumstance relating to a person who resides or intends to reside at the residence that may affect whether the person is a fit and proper person to be in the company of children
- ensure to provide a smoke, drug and alcohol-free environment
- be prepared to allow coordinators to regularly visit their residence to assess safety and compliance and review the educational program

- have policies and procedures available at the residence and be readily accessible by all educators, educator assistants, coordinators, volunteers and families and regulatory officers
- be prepared to self-assess their performance in delivering care and education to children in their care and plan for future improvements in their Quality Improvement Plan
- implement the FDC Services' policies and procedures
- abide by the Code of Conduct at all times
- complete a minimum of 4 training sessions annually with our FDC Service
- comply with the requirements set out in the Child Care Provider Handbook
- provide evidence of mandatory immunisation requirements as set by current Public Health Orders (if required)

POTENTIAL FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS MAY BE:

- required to gain a medical clearance from a qualified medical practitioner, stating he/she is physically and/or mentally capable of the duties and requirements for work in family day care
- required to examine their own immunisation status in order to protect themselves and the children and families they work with
- required to have their vehicle checked by an authorised restraint fitter to check condition of seat belts, child restraints, tyres etc.

APPROVAL OF ENGAGEMENT OR REGISTRATION WITH THE FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE

The approved provider will review all information submitted by the applicant and assess whether they meet the assessment to be a 'fit and proper' person to provide education and care to children.

If the applicant is successful, they will receive a letter of offer to be registered or engaged by the service.

The educator will be provided with an extensive induction and orientation training. This may be presented as online modules or small group training.

Induction will provide information on:

- Legal requirements and obligations under the National Quality Framework
- Family Day Care administration requirements
    - service policies and procedures
    - legislation and guidelines
    - applying knowledge of Commonwealth and jurisdictional administrative requirements
    - CCS and ACCS – fees
    - legal requirements of record keeping- attendance records, visitor records, written authorisations
    - Statement of Philosophy
    - Family Day Care Service Handbook
    - insurances
    - information on small business management (including taxation requirements)
    - employment terms and conditions, including the contractor payment arrangements
    - schedule of fees and fee collection methods
    - record keeping requirements

    - process of assessing the suitability of the residence and ongoing assessment
    - Working with Children Checks/criminal history checks
- National Quality Framework-
    - Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations
    - National Quality Standards
    - Assessment and Rating
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- Provision of quality education and care to children
    - Early Years Learning Framework and My Time, Our Place Framework
    - Importance of play
    - educational program
    - observing and documenting children's development
    - caring for children
    - inclusive environments
    - behaviour guidance
    - managing children's health and safety
- Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Standards
- Methods of communicating with families
- Process of dealing with grievances and complaints
- Work Health and Safety
- Privacy and Confidentiality

Prior to any child being enrolled with the FDC educator, an assessment of the proposed residence must be completed to ensure it meets the service requirements.

We aim to build successful and professional partnerships between our FDC Service and educators.

If potential family day care educators are dissatisfied with the engagement and registration process, they will be encouraged to use the grievance procedure.

[See: *Engagement and Registration of Family Day Care Educators Procedure*]

30. Keeping of Register of family day care educator

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Family Day Care Services are required to maintain an accurate register of any Family Day Care (FDC) educators, coordinators and educator assistants engaged by or registered with the service

PURPOSE
The Family Day Care Service aims to act in an equitable and transparent manner by ensuring an accurate register that includes all the information prescribed in the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistants, families, and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an approved provider of the Family Day Care (FDC) Service must ensure that a register of family day care educators, coordinators and educator assistants employed or engaged by, or registered with the service is developed and maintained. The Approved Provider must also take reasonable steps to ensure that those policies and procedures are followed.

Record keeping is an integral part of the management of a service. To support quality education and care, as well as ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children we ensure our register of all FDC educators, coordinators and educator assistants is accurate and kept up-to-date.

WHERE IS THE REGISTER KEPT?

- The register will be kept at the principal office of the approved Family Day Care Service
- Coordinators will be responsible for recording evidence in the register of visits, phone calls and other support provided to family day care educators
- The register will be made available to authorised officers of a regulatory authority and parents on request within 24 hours. The register will be kept in a secure place and treated confidentially
- Information must be held for three years after the date an educator, coordinator or educator assistant ceases to be employed or engaged by or registered with the Family Day Care service.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- include the prescribed information in the register about the FDC educators, coordinators and
- educator assistants
- take reasonable steps to ensure the information in the register is accurate
- provide any information in the register (and any changes) to the regulatory authority upon request within 24 hours of the request
- ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily available and accessible to FDC educators, coordinators, educator assistants and other staff, and families
- notify families at least 14 days of any changes to policy or procedures- as per regulations
- provide induction training to new educators and other staff
- provide ongoing training and information to coordinators, nominated supervisors, educators and educator assistants to ensure they can fulfil their roles and provide a child safe environment for all children and young people
- keep copies of the register until the end of 3 years after the FDC educator, coordinator or educator assistant ceases to be employed or engaged by or registered with the FDC service.

THE REGISTER OF FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS, COORDINATORS AND ASSISTANTS MUST INCLUDE:

- full name of educator, coordinator/s and educator assistant
- date of birth (minimum of 18 years of age) of each person
- contact details (including address) of each person
- the address of the residence or approved Family Day Care service to confirm where the educator will be providing education and care to children as part of the service
- the date that each educator, coordinator and educator assistant was engaged by or registered with the Family Day Care Service

- the date the educator, coordinator and educator assistant ceased to be engaged by or registered with the service (if applicable)
- the full name of the educator to be assisted by the educator assistant
- the days and hours the educator will usually be providing education and care to children as part of the service
- if the educator or educator assistant is an Approved Provider, the number of the provider approval and the date the approval was granted
- the name and date of birth of people who normally reside at the FDC residence and a record of any working with children clearance (WWCC or teacher registration) as per state legislation. The record must include the date sighted by the approved provider/nominated supervisor and the expiry date
- evidence of any relevant qualifications held by the educator, coordinator or educator assistant *or* if applicable that the educator, coordinator or educator assistant is actively working towards that qualification as provided under Regulation 10 (Note: existing FDC educators have until 1 July 2024 to complete an approved qualification. New FDC educators must hold an approved certificate III or higher prior to commencing their role in the FDC service).
- evidence of any other training completed by the educator, coordinator or educator assistant
- evidence that each FDC educator is receiving adequate monitoring and support from a FDC coordinator including:
    - dates and times of any visits by the co-ordinator to the family day care residence
    - purpose of visit- monitoring or support
    - dates and times of any telephone calls between the co-ordinator and the FDC educator for the purpose of monitoring and support
    - details of any correspondence or written materials provided to the educator for the purpose of monitoring and support (include dates and times of correspondence)
- evidence that the educator and educator assistant have completed:
    - an ACECQA approved First Aid certificate- including yearly cardio-pulmonary resuscitation training
    - an ACECQA approved anaphylaxis management training and
    - an ACECQA approved emergency asthma management training
- if the coordinator will be providing education and care to children, evidence that the co-ordinator has completed-
    - an ACECQA approved First Aid certificate- including yearly cardio-pulmonary resuscitation training
    - an ACECQA approved anaphylaxis management training and
    - an ACECQA approved emergency asthma management training
    - child protection training
- a record of the identifying number and expiry date of a current Working with Children Check, Working with Children Card, Working with Vulnerable People Check, Criminal History Record Check or proof of current teacher registration under an education law of a participating jurisdiction and date of expiry.
- a record identifying the date the check or registration of the above was sighted by the approved provider or a nominated supervisor of the service

- for each child educated and cared for by the educator as part of the Family Day Care service, the child's name and date of birth and the days and hours that the educator usually provides education and care to that child
- if regulation 124(5) applies, a record of the approved granted in relation for the FDC educator operating with more than 7 children, or more than 4 children under preschool age, due to exceptional circumstances
- if the education and care is provided in a residence, the full names and dates of birth of all persons who normally reside at the FDC residence and a record of any working with children clearance, such as WWCC or teacher registration

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- notify the approved provider of any changes to the information recorded in the register
- update information related to qualifications, mandated training, working with children clearance/check, details of monitoring support provided by the FDC coordinator

31. Monitoring, support and supervision of family day care educator

PURPOSE:

To maintain quality of education and care, and to continually improve the practices within the family day care service whilst meeting relevant legal requirements.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to family day care educators and family day care educator assistants.

PRINCIPLE:

To implement fair and transparent processes in supporting, monitoring and supervising family day care educators and family day care educator assistants, using best endeavours to ensure the continuing improvement of the service.

POLICY:

The family day care service will support, monitor and supervise family day care educators and educator assistants in complying with the Regulations and Standards and to be empowered to continually improve their service.

General Procedure:

The family day care service will develop procedures for:

- Supporting all educators and educator assistants by making available advice and assistance at all times education and care is being provided, including educators and educator assistants residing in remote locations.
- The provision of guidance, information and support to assist registered family day care educators and educator assistants to understand their responsibilities and to comply with the National Law, National Regulations, National Standards and service policies.
- Monitoring and supervising family day care educators and educator assistants by a schedule of visits (announced, unannounced and planned reviews, to ensure ongoing compliance)

Specific Procedures:

<u>Program</u>

- The family day care service will ensure the educator and educator assistant have a current educational program displayed at the service at a place that is easily accessible to parents and available for inspection on request.

- The family day care service will support educators to develop an educational program and monitor the program to ensure it meets the following criteria:
    - delivered in accordance with and based on an approved learning framework;
    - based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and
    - takes into account the individuality of every child.
- The family day care service will support educators to develop an educational program and monitor the program to ensure it contributes to the following outcomes:
    - Children have a strong sense of identity;
    - Children are connected with and contribute to his or her world;
    - Children have a strong sense of wellbeing;
    - Children are confident and involved learners; and
    - Children are effective communicators.
- The service will monitor the program documentation used by the family day care educator to assess children's learning and progress in order to meet the requirements of R.74 (1a), (1b) and is in a format that can be shared with families.
- The service will monitor an educator/educator assistant and provide, at a parent's request, the following information:
    - The content and operation of the educational program as it relates to that child;
    - Information about that child's participation in the program; and
    - A copy of assessments or evaluations in relation to that child.
- If an educator ceases registration with a service all documentation and assessments of child's development will be delivered to the family day care service.
- The service will supervise, monitor and support the educator/educator assistants interactions and practices to ensure they are positive, ethical and respectful and risks to children are minimised.
- Educators and educator assistants will have access to a toy and resource library and to play sessions.

Qualifications

- The family day care service will sight, record and retain copies of educators and educator assistant's relevant qualifications.
- The family day care service will record and identify all other training completed by educators and educator assistants.
- The family day care service will monitor and support educators, to have or be actively working towards, at least an approved Certificate III in Education and Care.

Continuous improvement

- The family day care service will support:
    - educators/educator assistants to recognise their particular strengths, talents and interest
    - educators with opportunities to work collaboratively with the family day care service and families to further develop their skills and improve practice and relationships;
    - collaborative opportunities for educators to discuss and reflect on individual children and families; and

- family day care educators in an ongoing cycle of review through which current practices are examined and reviewed and new ideas generated.

- The family day care service will record this information on individual educator's quality improvement plans.

Physical environment

- The family day care service will:
    - monitor the family day care residence to ensure that the residence and all equipment and furniture used for the education and care of children are clean, safe and in good repair;
    - support the educator/assistant to develop risk assessment plans for the physical environment;
    - monitor any modifications and/or intention to modify the environment to ensure compliance with the Residence Assessment form. The educator will notify the family day care service and relevant authorities in writing prior to commencement of modifications; and
    - support and monitor educators/educator assistants in providing a physical environment that is safe, suitable and creates a rich and diverse range of experiences, that promotes children's learning and development.

Records

- Educators and educator assistants will be monitored and supported to understand the requirement for all records to be maintained in accordance with Legislative requirements, and are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality.
- The family day care service will monitor and support practices to ensure that all family and children's information is communicated in a professional and confidential manner whether the information is written, discussed, electronically transmitted or by any other means.
- The family day care service will provide educators/educator assistants with the policies and processes necessary for the effective administration and management of their education and care service including compliance with legal requirements as required under R.169 (2).

Visits to family day care residences and/or Residences

The family day care service will:

- Conduct regular planned and unplanned support visits to educators and educator assistants and ensure a written record is kept of these visits.
- Discuss and record progress of quality improvement plans during support visits to educators and assistants.
- Support educators to manage the care of their own family members without compromising care and education of enrolled children.
- Work alongside educators and educator assistants to determine their own professional development needs and support them to receive that training.

32. Assessment of family day care educators, assistants and persons residing at family day care residence

Our Family Day Care (FDC) Service has the responsibility of ensuring Family Day Care educators, educator assistants and all persons over the age of 18 residing at the family day care residence are fit and proper persons to be involved in the provision of education and care to young children. Our Service closely monitors Family Day Care educators and educator assistants to ensure the fitness and propriety of all adults. Co-ordinators provide FDC educators and educator assistants with ongoing professional support, assistance and supervision and maintain accurate records to safeguard children's safety and wellbeing.

PURPOSE

Our FDC Service adheres to the Education and Care Services National Regulations and conducts assessments of educators, educator assistants and all persons over the age of 18 who reside at the Family Day Care residence to ensure they are fit and proper persons, are suitably qualified and hold the relevant emergency care qualifications.

SCOPE

This policy applies to approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators and educator assistants of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the Approved Provider of a Family Day Care (FDC) service must ensure that policies and procedures are in place to assess FDC educators, educator assistants and persons residing at FDC residences. They must also take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. To ensure the ongoing health, safety and wellbeing of children, the Approved Provider is responsible for assessing a person's suitability as an educator or educator assistant and must ensure that all persons who work or reside in the premises of an approved FDC residence are considered to be '*fit and proper persons*'.

Our FDC Service is committed to be a child safe Early Education and Care Service and uphold the 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards as recommended by the National Office for Child Safety and our recruitment and screening processes play a vital role in protecting children from harm.

We achieve this by:

- comprehensively screening all applicants for educators and educator assistants before the commencement of providing education and care
- ensuring all applicants who are working or residing with children have the required clearances (WWCC, criminal history checks)
- annually assess the FDC residence or more frequently in the case of new persons residing at the residence or in the case of an incident or accident.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL ENSURE THAT:

- an assessment process is developed and conducted for all educators and educator assistants to ensure they are considered to be fit and proper persons to care for children prior to engaging or registering them in the service and as a rigorous and ongoing assessment process annually (or as required) Reg. 163
- all FDC educators and educator assistants and coordinators are over the age of 18 years of age
- nominated supervisors, coordinators, FDC educators and assistants and volunteers are aware of their individual responsibilities for child protection and maintain up to date knowledge of child protection law
- coordinators, FDC educators and educator assistants have completed approved child protection training
- background checks are made for each person who has management or control for the provider including FDC educators
- a record is kept of expiry dates of criminal history check and WWCC checks
- the Department of Education is contacted if the status of a person's check changes
- FDC educators and educator assistants provide relevant documentation demonstrating they are a fit and proper person. This includes educators and educator assistants to:
    - provide proof of age
    - have a criminal history check issued in the previous six months (services in ACT, NT, WA, SA)

- hold a current and verified Working with Children Check (WWCC)

- FDC educators and educator assistants:
  - hold current first aid qualifications undertaken within the previous three years-
    - approved first aid qualification (except in the case of emergency life support and CPR which must be completed every year)
    - approved anaphylaxis management training
    - approved emergency asthma management training
  - hold a current Driver's License if applicable
  - provide a declaration that all proposed educators are fit and proper persons having
  - regard to any prior actions involving fraud or dishonesty and their capacity to comply with the family assistance law- [See information below for CCS]
  - hold PRODA registration, and individual RA number as a FDC Educator
  - provide documentation of current public liability insurance
- a register of family day care educators, educator assistants and residents over 18 years of age is maintained Reg. 153
- FDC educators hold an approved Certificate III level (or higher) qualification prior to commending their role in a FDC service (effective 1 July 2023)
- existing FDC educators currently engaged by the FDC service have until 1 July 2024 to complete an approved qualification (does not apply to FDC educators in SA as FDC educators must hold an approved Certificate III level (or higher) qualification prior to commending their role in a FDC service
- FDC educators maintains adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children
- all educators, educator assistants, coordinators and other staff engaged by the Service are not only approved to work with children through the WWCC but are those who have the right personal qualities, skills and experiences to provide high quality supervision and care to children
- any person residing at the FDC residence is assessed as, and remain, fit and proper for the service to operate
- a child being educated and cared for by the Family Day Care Service is never left alone with a resident, visitor or student (including contract workers)
- address or mitigate as part of their risk assessment any notification of a change in circumstance that has been identified that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children of the service
- any person over 18 years of age residing at the Family Day Care residence holds a current Working with Children Check (WWCC)
- for services operating less than 12 months, the minimum of 1 full time equivalent (FTE) co-ordinator is required for every 15 FDC educators (1:15)
- educators new to the FDC Service are provided with initial support and monitoring during the first month of operation
- for services operating more than 12 months, a minimum of 1 full time equivalent (FTE) FDC coordinator is required for a maximum of 25 FDC educators (1:25) after the first 12 months of operation)

- written consent is provided by parents of each child being educated and cared for by the educator to the use of the FDC educator assistant in each specific circumstance
- a record of nominated supervisors, co-coordinators, educators, and educator assistants engaged in the Service is maintained and kept up to date
- implementing the grievance procedure or taking disciplinary action in the event of a breach of 'Code of Conduct'

- respond to any allegations to the Victoria as per the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- re-allocating children if a person or persons residing in the FDC residence do NOT meet the 'fit and proper' assessment
- FDC educators adhere to the requirements set out in the Child Care Provider Handbook
- clear expectations about commitment to child safety (Child Safe Standards) are communicated to FDC educators and educator assistants

THE FAMILY DAY CARE COORDINATOR WILL PROVIDE ONGOING ASSESSMENT OF THE EDUCATOR AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANT THROUGH MONITORING AND REGULAR VISITS TO EDUCATOR'S HOMES.

THE COORDINATORS WILL:

- provide ongoing support and advice to FDC educators and educator assistants when education and care is being provided
- monitor and supervise FDC educators and educator assistants through a range of methods including:
    - scheduled face-to-face visits to educator's home, sufficient in number and frequency to ensure quality of care is maintained
    - telephone conversations
    - emails and text messages
    - Zoom calls
- offer professional learning opportunities to FDC educators, educator assistants and other staff involved in the Family Day Care service
- provide evidence of adequate monitoring and support including:
    - dates and times of any visits
    - purpose of the visit- monitoring or support
    - dates and times of any telephone calls
    - details of any correspondence or written materials provided to the educators for the purpose of monitoring or support
    - acknowledging and reporting any areas of concern and processes put in place to rectify these areas
    - report quality care issues in relation to the NQS to Approved Provider
- ensure compliance of National Regulations including:
    - health, hygiene and safe food practices
    - child safe environment
    - safe transportation of children
    - risk assessments

- first aid kits
- enrolment and other documents to be kept by FDC educator
- smoke, alcohol and drug free environment
- fencing regulations
- dangerous and hazardous chemicals, medications and substances
- ensuring unauthorised people, volunteers and visitors are not left alone with children.

- ensure an accurate register of each FDC educator, co-ordinator and educator assistant is maintained and kept securely. (This register must be kept for three years after an educator, co-ordinator or educator assistant ceases to be registered at the service)
- inform the nominated supervisor/responsible person or approved provider of new residents at a FDC residence

THE FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATOR AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANT WILL:

- be aware of all regulatory and Family Assistance Law requirements
- ensure all documentation demonstrating they are a fit and proper person as per Regulation 163 and Family Assistance Law (CCS) is provided to the Family Day Care service and kept up to date (National Police Check, WWCC)
- provide evidence of completion of approved qualification by 1 July 2024
- notify the approved provider of any new person aged 18 years or over who resides or intends to reside at the family day care residence (including overseas or interstate visitors)
- notify the service provider of any children residing or intending to reside in the FDC residence who are turning 18 years of age within 30 days prior to them turning 18 (providing enough notice to complete necessary checks)
- notify the approved provider immediately if they are aware of any circumstance relating to any person ~~over the age of 18 years~~ who resides, or intends to reside at the educator's FDC residence that may affect whether the person is a fit and proper person to be in the company of children.
- keep a detailed record of all visitors to the family day care residence, including their name, signature, date, time of the visitor's arrival and departure
- ensure a child being educated and cared for by the Family Day Care Service is never left alone with a resident, visitor or student (including contract workers)
- provide a risk management plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children attending the service if required
- submit all documentation required to the Approved Provider as requested
- embed the National Child Safe Principles
- provision of home insurances, rental agreements, and any other documentation for approval of place of residence to operate a family day care service

DETERMINING WHETHER A PERSON IS FIT AND PROPER

Our FDC Service will adhere to *Family Assistance Law* to determine if a person is deemed fit and proper to be involved in the administration of the Child Care Subsidy, matters involving fraud, dishonesty, financial management, compliance with the law and administration of funds are all relevant considerations. The *CCS Personnel Policy FDC* provides further information regarding requirements to ensure FDC Educators are fit and proper including registration with Provider Digital Access Portal (PRODA).

Our FDC Service will adhere to National Regulations regulation 164 (effective October 2023) to ensure all persons residing at the FDC residence are determined as fit and proper. The FDC educator must notify the Approved Provider, as soon as possible, if they become aware of any circumstance or situation which may affect the fit and proper status of any individual residing or intending to reside at the FDC residence. Circumstances or situations which may affect an individuals fit and proper status may include:

- charged with or convicted of
    - an offence of sexual nature
    - an offence of violent nature
    - an offence involving drugs
    - an offence involving a weapon
- the individuals Working with Children Check/Clearance application being rejected, revoked or suspended
- if the individual has been prohibited from working with children

33. Visitors to family day care residences and Residence

Under the *Education and Care Services National* Regulations, an Approved Provider of a Family Day Care (FDC) service must take all reasonable steps to ensure a record is kept of all visitors to a family day care residence while children are being educated and cared for by an educator. This policy assists FDC services to clarify who is in attendance at a residence at any given time and ensures the continued safety of children who are being educated and cared for at the service. Although visitors are welcomed and encouraged into the FDC residence it is imperative that supervision strategies are implemented to ensure children's safety at all times.

PURPOSE

The Family Day Care Service aims to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children enrolled at the service by having a process in place to accurately and securely record information about visitors to the FDC residence. Adequate supervision of children must be maintained at all times children are being educated and cared for in a service. The FDC educator and/or educator assistant must ensure a child or children are never left alone with a visitor.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators and educator assistants, children, families and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Education and Care Services National Regulations required the Approved Provider of the Family Day Care Service to ensure policies and procedures are in place for managing visitors to Family Day Care (FDC) residences. The Approved Provider will develop and maintain a register of all visitors to a residence whilst children are being educated and cared for.

A visitor includes all persons who do not normally reside in an educator's residence. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Families looking to enrol their child/ren and are provided with an opportunity to view the FDC residence
- Family Day Care Coordinators or person with management or control of the service
- Inclusion support workers/ Allied Health Workers
- Trades person (plumber, carpenter, electrician)
- Department of Education authorised personal
- Community members contributing to the educational program such as through story or music
- House guest (staying in educator's residence)
- Children over the age of 13 years visiting the residence

- Authorised Officer (Regulatory authority, SafeWork, Police)
- Students or Volunteers
- Educators visiting from another service
- TAFE/Uni/RTO Teachers
- Performers/ Entertainers/ Presenters

A Visitor Register must be kept of all visitors, including students and volunteers to a FDC residence (regulation 165). The visitor register must include:

- Date
- Reason for visit
- Full Name
- Time of arrival and departure
- Company (if applicable)
- Working With Children Check (where applicable, best practice) (state/territory equivalent)

THE APPROVED PROVIDER OF A FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE WILL:

- ensure FDC educators are advised of their responsibilities regarding the requirement to keep a
- record of all visitors to a Family Day Care residence whist children are educated and cared for
- monitor the *Visitor Register* regularly- including time of arrival and departure from the service
- ensure FDC educators are aware of their obligation to inform the approved provider if any new person aged 18 or over who resides, or intends to reside at the educator's family day care residence
- ensure FDC educators are aware of their obligation to inform the approved provider of any change in circumstance relating to a person who resides at the family day care residence and was previously considered to be a 'fit and proper person' to be in the company of children
- ensure any person aged 18 or over who resides at the family day care residence holds a current Working with Children Check (WWCC
- ensure regular visitors to the FDC residence are aware of the need to complete a Working with Children Check (this includes volunteers and students over the age of 18. Check your state/territory for age requirements)
- verify working with Children Checks for all student, volunteers and visitors where required
- take reasonable steps to ensure the Nominated Supervisor, Coordinators, FDC educators, educator assistants, staff and volunteers follow the *Visitors to FDC Residences*
- ensure visitors and educators are aware that no visitor is affected by or under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on the service premises when children are being educated and cared for.

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL ENSURE:

- they are aware of the Visitors to FDC Residences Policy and procedures
- all visitors complete and sign the *Visitors Register*
- ~~ensure~~ the *Visitor Register* record is accurate and is made available to the approved provider, regulatory authority or a child's parent if requested
- the *Visitor Register* is kept in a safe and secure location

- visitors are under the direct supervision of the educator or educator assistant whilst at the family day care residence
- visitors (including students and/or volunteers) are never left alone with a child whilst at the service under any circumstance
- visitors who may come into direct contact with children submit their Working with Children Check to be verified by the Approved Provider (best practice)
- visitors, students and volunteers are dressed appropriately and behave in accordance with service policies
- the approved provider is notified of any pending visits to the service by a trade's person
- any maintenance or repairs to the FDC residence is completed outside of normal operating hours as far as possible
- the approved provider is notified of any person aged 18 or over who resides, or intends to reside at the family day care residence
- Working with Children Checks are provided to the approved provider for verification for all persons who reside at the family day care residence or regular visitors of the FDC service
- the approved provider is notified of any change in circumstance relating to a person who resides at the family day care residence and was previously considered to be a 'fit and proper person' to be in the company of children
- social visits by friends and relatives of educators are kept to a minimum during hours that children attend the service
- no visitor is affected by or under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on the service premises when children are being educated and cared for
- all children registered each day are accounted for when a visitor leaves the premise
- each visitor to the FDC residence shows evidence of mandatory immunisation requirements as set by current Public Health
- if a visitor becomes hostile or aggressive the educator will refer to the service *Managing an Aggressive Person or Visitor Policy* for guidance.

VISITORS, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS TO THE FAMILY DAY CARE RESIDENCE WILL:

- complete the *Visitor Register* upon arrival and departure of the FDC residence, including times, dates and signature
- provide current identification- badge, photo ID
- provide a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) to educator
- provide a poster/letter to families to introduce themselves and outline the reason for their placement (students)
- remain under the direct supervision of the educator or educator assistant at all times
- adhere to the instructions and guidance provided by the educator/supervisor/coordinator
- maintain confidentiality at all times in regard to children, families and educator
- adhere to the service's Child Safe Policies including the Child Safe Environment Policy, Code of Conduct Policy and Child Protection Policy at all times
- not be affected by or under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at the residence when children are being educated and cared for

- participate in an orientation/induction to the service residence (students)
- provide evidence of mandatory immunisation requirements as set by current Public Health Orders.

34. Provision of information, assistance & education to family day care educators

PURPOSE:

To provide current information, support and training to family day care educators and educator assistants.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to family day care educators and educator assistants (new and continuing) and family day care service staff.

PRINCIPLES:

The family day care service will distribute information to family day care educators and educator assistants.

The family day care service will provide ongoing assistance and access to training for family day care educators and educator assistants.

POLICY:

The family day care service will provide current information, ongoing assistance, access to and opportunities for training.

General Procedures:

The family day care service will support family day care educators with:

- Initial and ongoing training opportunities and access for family day care educators and educator assistants.
- A quality improvement plan to assist them in developing their service as part of the quality improvement process.

Specific Procedures:

<u>The family day care service will:</u>

- Ensure every family day care educator and educator assistant is provided with orientation training.
- Develop a philosophy statement and provide information and support to family day care educators and assistants to incorporate planning and programming to reflect this philosophy.
- Ensure educators and educator assistants will have access to sufficient training and support to implement the Early Years Learning Framework and My Time, Our Place Framework for School Aged Children.
- Ensure educators and educator assistants have access to training and information regarding their responsibilities and requirements under the National Quality Framework.
- Support and assist educators and educator assistants to develop their own quality improvement plans including identification of strengths and training needs (Refer to Quality Improvement form).
- Endeavour to provide access to training to educators and educator assistants through a variety of means, including multimedia, learning packages and face-to-face training sessions facilitated by the service provider or an external trainer.
- Maintain a record of training and support provided to educators and educator assistants.
- Ensure family day care educators and educator assistants are informed and have access to ongoing essential training: for example: Responding to Allegations and Anaphylaxis and Asthma Management.

- Develop a plan for timely delivery of essential training for educators and educator assistants.
- Endeavour to provide information of training opportunities available in the local area.
- Provide educators and educator assistants with links to relevant curriculum documents and information websites.
- Provide educators and educator assistants with electronic or paper copies of all service policies and procedures.
- Ensure that educators and educator assistants have been provided with information about and support to develop processes for the effective maintenance, disposal and storage/display of records such as:
    - Insurance documents;
    - Accident records;
    - Medication records;
    - Attendance records;
    - Provider/service approval;
    - Service rating;
    - Service of waivers;
    - Service operation information;
    - Health and safety, including attendance of a child at risk of anaphylaxis or the occurrence of an infectious disease.
- Actively seek feedback from educators and educator assistants regarding the level and quality of information, assistance and training provided.
- Actively seek feedback and input from educators, educator assistants and parents in the development and review of policies and procedures.
- The family day care educator will:
- Undertake to meet all essential training requirements as required under Qualifications in the Policy 19 Monitoring, support and supervision of family day care educators and family day care educator assistants.
- In addition to essential training, undertake 8 hours of professional development between each service membership period.
- If the family day care educator fails to comply with undertaking the 8 hours of professional development, the family day care service membership will be extended for 6 months.

35. Engagement or Registration of family day care educator assistants

Under specific circumstances, a Family Day Care (FDC) educator assistant, may assist the FDC educator in providing education and care to children as part of a Family Day Care Service. The FDC educator assistant must be approved and engaged by or registered by the approved provider and meet all relevant requirements of the *Early Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*.

PURPOSE
The Family Day Care Service aims to establish and maintain a constructive and professional approach in the engagement and registration of educator assistants.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistants, children, families, and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the Approved Provider of a Family Day Care (FDC) Service must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the engagement or registration of FDC educator assistants. They must also take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

A Family Day Care educator assistant may be engaged by or registered by the service, to assist Family Day Care educators in providing education and care to children and assisting with other areas of support. This may include the transportation of children, emergency situations and when the FDC educator needs to attend an appointment. Educator assistants must maintain the standards expected by the service, the National Quality Framework, families and the community.

Our FDC Service is committed to be a child safe Early Education and Care Service and uphold the 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards as recommended by the National Office for Child Safety and our recruitment and screening processes play a vital role in protecting children from harm.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER OF THE FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE WILL ENSURE:

- ensure obligations under the Education and Care National Law and Regulations are met and understood by all FDC educators
- the nominated supervisor, management, staff, educators and educator assistants comply with this policy
- the applicant is approved as an educator assistant as part of a Family Day Care Service in the circumstances set out in National Regulations
- the FDC educator assistant engaged at the FDC service is at least 18 years old
- there is a clear and equitable registration process when engaging educator assistants
- reference checks are conducted prior to registering the applicant
- educator assistants are provided with information about the service including employment requirements
- the educator assistant has been deemed a 'fit and proper person' to be in the company of children, and holds a valid Working With Children Check/Clearance
- a register containing prescribed information about each educator assistant engaged by or registered with the service is maintained to ensure compliance with National Regulations
- clear expectations about commitment to child safety (National Child Safe Standards) are communicated to FDC educators and educator assistants
- educator assistants are provided with a comprehensive induction and training to ensure clear and concise understanding about their role and responsibilities at the FDC service including: -
    - knowledge of the Service's Child Safe Policies and Procedures including Child Safe Environment Policy, Child Protection, Sleep and Rest, Emergency Evacuation, Administration of First Aid and Code of Conduct Policy and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
    - Reportable Conduct Scheme
    - safe transportation requirements
    - Work Health and Safety guidelines
    - behaviour guidance
    - service routines

    - human resource documentation
    - physical environment
    - communication with families' processes
    - Family Assistance Law and Child Care Subsidy
- educator assistants know how to install and use child car restraints according to manufacturer's instructions
- educator assistants have been provided with the Service's policies and procedures in order to maintain compliance and quality standards
- educator assistants are aware of individual children's details including allergies, routines, contact details of parents and carers and emergency details
- educator assistants have completed all required paperwork, including evidence of their personal details, copy of their current First Aid qualification; copy of current anaphylaxis and asthma management training and copy of their valid Working with Children Check
- consideration is given to each FDC educator's specific context and location when registering educator assistants (in particular, educators located in remote areas)
- written consent is received from each child's parent for FDC educator assistants to assist the FDC educator in circumstances detailed in regulation 144

THE FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE WILL MAINTAIN A REGISTER OF FDC EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS APPROVED BY THE SERVICE CLEARLY RECORDING:

- full name, address and date of birth of the approved FDC educator they will be assisting
- full name, address and date of birth of the educator assistant
- statement included about family day care service being a residence
- a record of the identifying number of the Working with Children Check and date that the check was sighted by the approved provider or nominated supervisor and expiry date
- evidence the FDC educator assistant has completed:
    - current approved first aid qualification
    - current approved anaphylaxis and asthma management training
    - completion of emergency life support and cardio pulmonary resuscitation training
    - current child protection training
- evidence of any relevant qualifications held by the FDC educator assistant
- details of current driver's licence (with 3rd party compulsory insurance if transporting children)

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATOR ASSISTANT SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES (REGULATION 144)

An educator assistant must be approved and engaged by or registered by the approved provider to assist a family day care educator under specific circumstances (including transporting or escorting children)

- written consent must be provided by parents of each child being educated and cared for by the educator to the use of the family day care educator assistant in each specific circumstance
- written consent must be provided to the approved provider
- in the event of an emergency, parents of each child must be notified as soon as possible by the family day care Educator, Educator Assistant or service representative.

SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES INCLUDE:

- assisting the family day care educator as part of the Family Day Care service
- in the absence of the family day care educator, transporting a child between a residence and school or another educator and care service or children's service or the child's home
- providing education and care to a child in emergency situations, including when the family day care educator may require urgent medical care or treatment
- escort (by walking) a child between the FDC residence and:
    - a school
    - another education and care service or children's service
    - the child's home
- providing education and care to a child while the family day care educator attends an appointment provided:
    - the absence is less than four hours
    - the approved provider has approved that absence and
    - parents have been provided notice of the absence

THE FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATOR WILL:

- notify families of their intention to use an educator assistant and request written authorisation/consent
- seek approval from the approved provider on each occasion to utilise educator assistant
- ensure the educator assistant is provided with a comprehensive induction to the residence
- ensure the educator assistant is made aware of any changes to children's medical needs or authorised persons to collect them- authorised nominees
- ensure the educator assistant is aware of:
    - displaying prescribed information including diagram of the FDC service indicated areas of the residence approved to provide education and care
    - location of policies and procedures
    - enrolment information (including authorised nominees)
    - child safe standards including mandatory reporting obligations
    - location of first aid kit
    - location of emergency fire equipment
    - location of exits and evacuation plan
    - emergency phone numbers
    - emergency contact details of all children
    - individual children's medical management plans and emergency action plans
    - individual children's routines
    - procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children from the FDC service
    - children's personal belongings- hats, backpacks, special toy
    - administration procedures for collection of fees, absences, communication with families

- privacy and confidentiality (including use of own mobile phone)

- safe transportation of children policy and procedures.

36. Family day care residence with a swimming pool

Children registered with the Kids Planet Family Day Care Services or an educator's own children (aged under 13 years) are not permitted to swim during care hours, either in a home pool, public pool, spa, beach or public waterway even if in the care of an additional adult Educators who have a pool or spa are required to comply with the following points:

- All pools and outdoor spas will be completely enclosed by a fence which complies with the relevant Australian Standard
- All pools and outdoor spas will comply with all relevant council policies.
- New pool and spa registration and inspection requirements
    - On 1 December 2019, new laws to improve swimming pool and spa safety came into effect in Victoria. They introduce new registration, inspection and certification requirements for property owners.
    - As part of the changes, owners are required to register their pool and spa with their local council and have their safety barrier inspected once every four years.
    - Relocatable pools that do not consist of multiple components and do not require any assembly are not subject to the barrier requirements. An example of such a product is a small inflatable pool that requires no assembly other than inflation.
- All pool equipment / chemical will be inaccessible to children in care
- All windows that allow access to the pool, must not open more than 100mm
- Any object that could assist a child to climb up and over a fence or operate any gate, door or window will be removed

  A notice detailing resuscitation procedures will be permanently attached to a fixture within the pool area.

37. Employment of family day care staff

PURPOSE:

To employ family day care service staff who have relevant qualifications and skills to support family day care educators in their provision of Early Childhood Education and Care.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to the family day care approved provider and family day care service staff.

PRINCIPLE:

To act in an equitable and transparent manner when employing staff to support the work of family day care educators in their provision of early childhood education and care.

POLICY:

Staff will have relevant qualifications and skills to support the family day care educator's provision of early education and care that reflects the service's philosophy.

General Procedure:

Kids planet family day care service will employ qualified staff to support and monitor the practices of family day care educators engaged by the family day care service.

Specific Procedures:

The employment of family day care service staff will be undertaken to meet the approved provider's employment procedure or the procedure as listed, taking regard of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and discrimination legislation.

- Advertise position.
- Upon request by the applicant, an information package given to applicants detailing the job description, selection criteria and employment conditions.
- Applicants are advised to respond to the selection criteria and to provide a current curriculum vitae and certified copies of qualifications and other documentation.
- Applications are received and recorded.
- An interview panel is selected.
- Applications are assessed and shortlisted based on the following criteria: responses to the selection criteria.
- Shortlisted applicants are interviewed by the selected interview panel.
- Referees are checked.
- Second interview is undertaken if required.
- Successful applicant is notified.
- Once successful applicant accepts the position, all other applicants are notified and mechanisms to provide feedback, if requested, are put in place.
- Contract and employment conditions are agreed. This includes but is not limited to commencement date, remuneration (superannuation and any other items if included in the remuneration package) and performance management dates.
- Prior to commencing employment all required documentation as listed below will be provided to the employer.
- Induction and orientation begins.

Kids planet family day care service will assess all applicants based on them meeting the following criteria:

- Aged 18 years or over.
- Current Working with Children Check.
- National Police Clearance issued within the last six months.
- A criminal history declaration covering the period from the date of the police clearance to the first date of employment.
- If the applicant lived or worked outside of Australia at any time within the previous three years a declaration must be completed containing the following declaration: "I have not been convicted or charged with any criminal offence during my absence from Australia." (add dates of absence from Australia).
- A disciplinary proceedings statement.
- Proof of Identity including:
    - Photographic identification;
    - Full name and/or any former name or other name that the applicant has been known by;
    - Residential address;
    - Current contact details;

- Current drivers licence.

- Medical clearance.
- Details and evidence of the applicant's relevant skills, experience, training and qualifications including how the applicant meets the minimum requirements as set out in R.47 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

The following additional criteria are required for the position of:

Supervisor Certificate

The applicants must have:

- adequate knowledge and understanding of the provisions of education and care to children;
- the ability to effectively supervise and manage an education and care service; and
- At least one of the following:
    - at least 3 years' experience working as an educator in an education and care service, or a children's service or a former education and care services law;
    - an approved diploma level education and care qualification;
    - an approved early childhood teaching qualification.

Educational Leader

- The approved provider of an education and care service must designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual as educational leader at the service to lead the development and implementation of educational programs in the service.
- An approved first aid certificate including approved asthma and anaphylaxis management certification

Family Day Care Coordinator

- An approved diploma level education and care qualification;
- An approved first aid certificate including emergency asthma and anaphylaxis certification.

38. Code of Conduct

PURPOSE:

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services aims to establish a common understanding of workplace standards and ethics expected of all employees of the Service. We aim to ensure positive working relationships are formed between all educators, educator assistants, and management, promoting dignity and respect by avoiding behaviour which is or may be perceived as harassing, bullying or intimidating. Educators, educator assistants and management will at all times conduct themselves in an ethical manner and strive to ensure that all interactions are positive and respectful and are in accordance with the Service's philosophy.

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services takes every reasonable effort to accommodate the diversity of all children in implementing the Child Safe Standards. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We recognise the importance of and responsibility for, ensuring our Service provides a safe and supportive environment which respects and fosters the rights and wellbeing of children in our care. We are dedicated in promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, and Educator Assistants of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services, educators, educator assistants, staff, volunteers and students will adhere to the Early Childhood Australian Code of Ethics, Education and Care National Regulations and the National Quality Standard, and Service policies and procedures at all times, promoting positive interactions within the Service and the local community.

RESPECT FOR PEOPLE AND THE SERVICE:

- Our Family Day Care Service is committed to the Service philosophy and values, inclusive of best practice in early childhood education and building positive partnership with children, families and FDC educators
- Employees, educators and management adhere to our *Child Safe Environment Policy* and *Child Protection Policy* at all times and take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and harm
- Employees, educators and management understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility*
- Effective, open, and respectful reciprocal communication and feedback between the FDC Service, educators, children, families, and management is conveyed.
- It is important to treat colleagues, children, and families with respect. Bullying or insulting behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening, or derogatory language or intimidation towards other educators, educator assistants, children, visitors, or families is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Educators are committed to valuing and promoting the safety, health, and wellbeing of educator assistants, volunteers, children, and families.
- Educators are committed to an Equal Opportunity workplace and culture which values the knowledge, experience, and professionalism of all educators and managers, and the diverse heritage of our families and children of the FDC Service.
- Educators and management respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information about child protection concerns confidential and only share information to promote child wellbeing or safety and /or manage risk of family violence with Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS), Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) in Victoria].

EXPECTATIONS OF FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS/ EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS

Educators will:

- ensure their work is carried out proficiently, harmoniously, and effectively. They will act in a professional and respectful manner at all times whilst at work, giving their full attention to their responsibilities and adhering to all Service policies, procedures, Child Safe Standards, Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, and the National Quality Standard
- act honestly and exercise attentiveness in all service operations. They will carry out all lawful

  directions, retaining the right to question any direction which they consider to be unethical. If uncertain they can seek advice from the Coordinator or Approved Provider
- uphold the rights of children and always prioritise their needs
- treat all children and young people with respect
- promote the wellbeing and safety of children and take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- provide adequate supervision of children at all times
- understand their legislative responsibility as mandatory reporters to report any allegation of child abuse, neglect or possible risk of harm to management or Child Protection
- understand their legislative responsibility to report any inappropriate action of any other employee that involves children or young people to management as part of the *Reportable Conduct Scheme*
- participate in all mandatory training

- report any instances of suspected corrupt conduct, mismanagement of government funds or other serious allegation to the appropriate agency (tipoffline@dese.gov.au)
- have a solid understanding of the Service's policies and procedures and the ECA Code of Ethics. If uncertain about the content of any policy or procedure with which they must comply, FDC educators should seek clarification from the Coordinator or Approved Provider
- be courteous and responsive when dealing with other educators, staff, students, visitors, children, and families
- work collaboratively with other FDC educators, coordinators, families and members of the community with courtesy, respect and recognise and value diversity
- be mindful of their duty of care towards themselves and others
- be positive role models for children at all times
- respect the confidential nature of information gained about each child enrolled in our Service
- engage in critical reflection to inform individual and collective decision making and ensure continual improvement.

Educators and educator assistants will NOT

- condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- fail to report information to the approved provider if they know a child has been abused
- engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child
- persistently criticise and/or denigrate a child
- verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear
- encourage a child to communicate with me in a private setting
- share details of sexual experiences with a child
- use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- put children at risk of abuse- refusing food/play, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos)

EXPECTATIONS OF FAMILY DAY CARE COORDINATORS AND THE APPROVED PROVIDER

In addition to the above responsibilities, the FDC coordinator and Approved Provider are expected to:

- promote a collaborative and interconnected Service by developing positive working environments where educators can contribute to the ongoing continuous improvement of the overall Family Day Care Service
- promote leadership by working with educators and providing opportunities for professional development and growth
- provide flexible opportunities to ensure educators and educator assistants can participate in meetings and professional development
- provide ongoing support and feedback to educators and educator assistants
- keep educators informed about essential information and changes and make documents readily accessible to them
- ensure copies of the ECA Code of Ethics is available to educators and families

- model professional behaviour at all times
- implement supportive and effective communication systems, consulting educators in appropriate decision making
- take appropriate action if a breach of the code of conduct occurs
- share skills and knowledge with educators
- give encouragement and constructive feedback to educators, respecting the value of different professional approaches.

REPORTING A BREACH IN THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- all educators and educator assistants are required by law to undergo a Working with Children Check, which is verified by the Approved Provider to ensure it is valid and current
- as mandatory reporters, all educators and educator assistants must report possible risk of harm to children or young persons to the Approved Provider and/or Child Protection
- educators will report any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any colleague that involves children or young people to the Approved Provider as per the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- management will report any allegations or child related misconduct to Child Protection (or reporting authority within your state/territory)

ADHERING TO SERVICE CONFIDENTIALITY

- Unless authorised to do so by legislation, educators and educator assistants must not disclose or use any confidential information without appropriate approval
- Lawful sharing of information with other parties must be to promote the wellbeing or safety of children and adhere to guidelines under Child and Family Information Sharing Schemes (e.g., CISS, FVISS and MARAM in Victoria)
- Educators will respect individual's rights to privacy
- All educators and educator assistants are to ensure that confidential information is not accessed by unauthorised people.
- Educators and educator assistants will adhere to the Service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.

RECORD KEEPING

- Educators will maintain full, accurate, and honest records as required by the Education and Care Services National regulations
- The Approved Provider of the FDC Service has a responsibility to ensure that educators comply with their record keeping obligation outlined in the *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*. (Regulation 183)

DUTY OF CARE

- The Approved Provider, coordinator and educators have a responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others at the workplace to enable compliance with the work health and safety legislation outlined in the *Work Health and Safety Policy.*
- Duty of Care relates to both physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals
- Educators and educator assistants must provide adequate supervision of children at all times to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people in their care. This includes taking all reasonable action to protect children and young people from risk of harm that can be reasonably predicted.

APPROPRIATE USE OF COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

- As a Child Safe Organisation, our FDC Service has the responsibility to ensure children and educators are protected from harm when they engage in with digital technology including social media
- Strict guidelines for the use of social media are outlined in our *Social Media Policy*
- The Administrator controls the content on the page and ensures that the postings are relevant and respectful of the Service, the children, the staff, families, and greater community.
- FDC Educators and other staff members who have a personal Facebook account are not permitted to post any negative comments relating to the Service, children, colleagues, or families. If they choose to 'like' the Service's page they have a responsibility to ensure that their profile picture is an appropriate representation of an early childhood educator. If it is not, we request that they do not 'like' the page.
- Educators are to use their own personal discretion when adding a family of the Service as a 'friend' on Facebook. The FDC Service does not recommend educators or other staff members to add families of the Service as they will be seen still as a representative of the Service and held to the Service's Code of Conduct on all posts on their private 'wall' if families have access.
- Families are asked in our *Social Media Policy* to respect that educators may have a personal policy on adding families due to their professional philosophy and that the FDC Service does not recommend educators to have families as friends on their private account.
- Educators are not permitted to request the 'friendship' of families from the FDC Service
- Educators may be permitted to establish a separate social media account for their business upon approval by the FDC Service Approved Provider
- FDC educators must ensure families have provided written permission for the use of their children's photos in any marketing or social media prior to using them.

PERSONAL PHONE CALLS/MOBILE PHONES/SMART WATCHES

FDC educators have a duty of care to ensure children are protected from potential risk of harm. It is imperative that all FDC educators and educator assistants provide children with their full attention, ensuring supervision is maintained and remains on the children. As FDC educators primarily work on their own, there are times during the day that they may need to make or receive phone calls. Educators must consider children's safety at all times and ensure adequate supervision is provided whilst engaged in a phone conversation. Educators should consider:

- the location of a telephone where educators can easily access them without leaving children unsupervised
- have emergency phone numbers displayed near the phone at all times
- not using personal mobile phones to take photos of children as this is a breach of children's privacy. (A FDC service owned mobile phone or iPad may be used if it's for the purposes of 'observations' etc.)

USE OF ALCOLHOL, DRUGS, AND TOBACCO

- Our FDC Service supports the Smoke Free Environment Act 2000. The company and its employees, engaged educators, residents and volunteers, will follow all conditions outlined in this act
- Our FDC Service is bound by the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Alcohol, drugs, or other substance abuse by employees can have serious adverse effects on their own health and the safety of others. As such whilst providing education and care to children, educators, coordinators, residents and volunteers must not:
- consume illegal drugs or alcohol
- be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- use or possess illegal drugs at any workplace
- drive a vehicle, having consumed alcohol or suffering from the effects of illegal substances.

- Smoking or vaping is NOT permitted in or on the surrounding areas of the FDC residence when care is taking place. (The smoking ban extends to an area of up to 5m around the land the service is approved to provide education and care).
- Educators must ensure that children being educated and cared for as part of the FDC service remain in an environment that is free from tobacco, drugs and alcohol. This includes when transportation for regular outings or excursions is provided for children.
- It is expected that if educators do smoke, the odour of tobacco/e-cigarette smoke will not be detected on their clothing or hands and any items children may contact, is residue free (cigarette butts, ash, matches etc are disposed of or stored away from children at all times).
- Consideration should be given to ventilation and hygiene within the residence to ensure tobacco smoke is not detected.
- The safe storage of any items related to smoking or vaping must be strictly adhered to in the FDC residence (ashtrays, lighters, matches, cigarettes etc.)
- Smoking or vaping is NOT permitted while educators and staff are supervising or participating in excursions.
- FDC educators, coordinators or volunteers undergoing prescribed medical treatment with a controlled substance that may affect the safe performance of their duties are required to report this to the nominated supervisor. A medical certificate may be required prior to their approval to provide education and care.
- All issues pertaining to these matters shall be kept strictly confidential. A breach of this policy may initiate appropriate action including the termination of employment.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Family Day Care educators are to adhere to the following standards:

- long hair is to be clean and neatly tied back: Ensure hair does not hang in your eyes.
- makeup is to be light and natural
- fingernails are to be clean and well groomed
- nail polish (if worn) cannot be chipped
- FDC Educators will follow appropriate oral hygiene practices
- an appropriate deodorant/antiperspirant will be worn
- strong perfumes will not be worn as they may cause allergic reactions in children

BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

All employees and engaged educators of the FDC Service are made fully aware that the following breaches of the Code of Conduct and role responsibilities may lead to termination of employment:

- working under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- refusal to complete required additional training
- possessing or selling drugs at the FDC residence
- immoral, immature, or indecent conduct while educating and caring for children at the FDC residence
- refusing to work as reasonable directed
- not ensuring firearms and ammunition (if relevant) are stored separately and locked away
- bringing disrepute to the FDC Service
- causing disruption or discontent in the relationship between a family and the FDC Service
- disclosure of confidential information

- falsifying documentation
- taking, abusing, defacing, or destroying property owned by the FDC service
- falsification of reports, documents, or wages information
- failure to report for work without notice
- walking off the job
- failure to follow policies and procedures
- vulgarity or disrespectful conduct to families, management or colleagues
- making or publishing false, vicious, or malicious statements about any employee of the Service, or the Service itself.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All employees of the Family Day Care Service are made fully aware that continued abuse of the following may result in disciplinary action. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- unauthorised absence
- using a personal mobile phone or device to take photographs of the children
- consistent or ongoing poor work standard
- carelessness in the performance of duties
- consistent or ongoing low level of enthusiasm
- lack of personal cleanliness and hygiene
- failure to report health, fire, or safety hazards

39. Determining the responsible person at the service

Supervisor Certificate

- Staff who are over 18 years: have adequate knowledge and understating of education and care, have the ability to supervise; have a minimum approved diploma level qualification in education and care or has at least 3 years' experience working as an educator can apply to the regulatory authority to be issued with a supervisor certificate.

Nominated Supervisor

- A holder of a supervisor certificate is appointed to assume the overall responsibilities of operating the family day care service as the nominated supervisor.
- The nominated supervisor is the responsible person in charge.
- The nominated supervisor must be available to provide support and assistance to an educator while they are providing education and care to children.
- This assistance can be through the availability of phone contact if required
- The name and position of the responsible person in charge must be displayed so that it is easily visible at the family day care co-ordination unit.

Certified Supervisor

- A holder of a supervisor certificate can consent to be placed in day to day charge of a service in the absence of the nominated supervisor, however does not assume any of the legal responsibilities
- The certified supervisor must be notified and accept the role before implementation

- In the absence of the nominated supervisor their name must be displayed as the responsible person in charge.

Educational Leader

- The educational leader will be appointed by the approved provider to lead the development and implementation of educational programs in collaboration with family day care coordinator to ensure educators are provided with curriculum direction and to ensure children achieve the

PURPOSE:

This policy provides a framework to ensure that:

- There will always be a 'responsible person' present at all times at Kids Planet Family Day Care Services;
- Kids Planet Family Day Care Services Educational Leader, Nominated or Certified Supervisor is always available to support Family Day Care Educators when they are caring for a FDC child;
- Details of the responsible person are documented and displayed for all users of the service.

PROCEDURE

It is essential that the Kids Planet Family Day Care Services ensures that, at all times that a FDC Educator is caring for a FDC child/ren, either the Educational Leader, Nominated Supervisor (the FDC Coordinator) or a Certified Supervisor are always available to provide support to a Family Day Care Educator. This support can be made available, where appropriate by telephone.

FDC Coordination staff will manage staff attendances, availabilities and leave of absence to ensure compliance with this requirement at all times. All educators have the FDC emergency mobile number and have been advised to ring that number if they require urgent assistance or support.

A record will be kept of the name and position of the Nominated Supervisor or person in day-to-day charge at any given time at the FDC Coordination Office.

40. Environmental Sustainability Policy

We encourage awareness of environmental responsibilities and implement practices that contribute to a sustainable future. Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. Sustainability is often thought about in terms of environmental sustainability—reducing waste, minimising consumption and protecting and conserving wildlife and natural habitats.

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure the environment is safe, clean and sustainable. We believe in educating children about the environment which is promoted through daily practices, resource and interactions. Sustainable practice will be encouraged within the service assisting children and families to become advocates for a sustainable future.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Learning about sustainability starts with everyday practice. We believe environmentally sustainable practices should be embedded into the operations of the Service. Our service is committed to protecting our environment to ensure a sustainable future for our children. This involves educators, children and families working together to protect our environment to ensure a sustainable future for our children through continuous improvement we strive to improve every day.

Management will:

- Network with the local community to keep up to date with current practices and ideas for sustainability. This may include water tanks, grey water system, converting toilet cisterns to dual flush and converting water saving taps.

- Encourage educators, families and children to engage in innovative practices and appreciate the natural environment.
- Ensure the Service joins a preferred provider e.g.: the Environmental Education in Early Childhood (Victoria) Inc. to liaise with other education and care services and keep up to date on practices and ideas for sustainability.
- Where relevant, review policies and procedures within the Service to find more sustainable outcomes.
- Where possible electronic communication will be used to reduce paper use within the office and in each room for newsletters, billing and other communication needs.
- Source resources and materials from Reverse Garbage or second hand stores to use within the Service.

- Ensure sustainable practices are incorporated into the daily routine. These will include:

Sustainable Practice	Ideas
Recycling	- Recycling paper and rubbish - Using recycled water
Gardening	- Planting vegetables, herbs and fruits - Establishing a Worm Farm - Give food scraps to worms or the animals - Educating children and have them participate in 'garden to plate' activities. Educating children about seed sprouting, weeding, vegetable gardens, cooking etc.
Energy Conservation	- Turn off lights and switches when not in use
Water Conservation	- Using half flush on the toilet - Turning off the water when not in use - Encouraging shorter showers - Turning off tap when brushing teeth
Natural Resources & Equipment	- Caring for pets - Reusing natural materials – trees, blocks, boxes etc. - Educating children in the natural decomposition cycle through exposure and participation in worm farms and composting food scraps - Educating children in how to care for pets, letting them actively participate in caring for the service pets.

Educators will:

- Incorporate recycling as part of everyday practice at the Service. Recycling containers will be provided throughout meal times and experiences.
- Role model sustainable practices.
- Discuss sustainable practices with the children and families & local community as part of the curriculum.
- Provide information to families on sustainable practices that are implemented at the Service and encourage the application of these practices in the home environment.
- Share ideas between educators, children and families about sustainable ideas, implementation and resources. This will be followed through our communication strategies, including parent meetings, emails, newsletters and conversations.
- Use a worm farm/composting bin/ to reduce food waste in the Service. Children will be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use in the worm farm or composting bin. Educators will discuss with the children and families, which scraps worms can eat, which foods can be composted. The children will be involved in maintaining the worm farm and compost bin.
- Role model energy and water conservation practices of turning off lights and air-conditioning when a room is not in use, emptying water play containers onto garden areas.
- Seek to purchase equipment that is environmentally friendly where possible. Educators will reduce the amount of plastic and disposable equipment they purchase and select materials that are made of natural materials.
- Use the concept of "reduce, re-use and recycle" which will become part of everyday practice for both children and educators to build lifelong attitudes towards sustainable practices.

41. A Responsible Person Policy

A Responsible Person must be physically in attendance at all times that the Service is educating and caring for children.

Approved providers are responsible for appointing nominated supervisors and/or persons in day-to-day charge that are aged 18 years or older, fit and proper, and have suitable skills.

PURPOSE

Our Service is committed to meeting our duty of care obligations under the National Law & Regulations to ensure a Responsible Person is on the premises at all times to ensure the health, safety, wellbeing, learning and development of all children at the service is maintained at all times.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Director, Nominated Supervisor, educators, families, students, and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

Name	Definition
Nominated Supervisor	A person with responsibility for the day to day management of an approved service. The Nominated Supervisor has a range of responsibilities under the Law and Regulations that govern the operation of education and care services.
Responsible Person	A person who is physically at the Service and has the role of Nominated Supervisor or duly appointed person. The Responsible Person has consented to be placed in day to day charge of the Service but does not take on the responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor rather they ensure the consistency and continuity in practices.

IMPLEMENTATION

A Responsible Person will be on the premise at all times, and the details of the Responsible Person will be readily available to families & visitors.

If the responsible person needs to change, they will 'hand over' obligations for the role to another duly appointed person at the Service. It is vital that the Responsible Person is documented when taking over this position. The process for determining the Responsible Person will be clear to all educators and staff, and followed at all times. Both the old and new Responsible Person will converse directly and ensure the name of the Responsible Person presented at the Service appropriately reflects who presently holds the position.

Our Service will have one Responsible Person present at all times when caring for and educating children.

A responsible person is:

- An Approved Provider
- A Nominated Supervisor
- A duly appointed person, 18 years or older, fit and proper, and have suitable skills

Management will ensure:

- A Responsible Person is appointed
- The Responsible Person is over the age of 18 years
- They meet the minimum requirements for qualification, experiences and management capabilities
- The Responsible Person has a clear understanding of the role
- The Responsible Person is a fit and proper person
- The Responsible Person has a minimum of 3 years' experience working as an educator in an Education and Care service (Recommended but not compulsory)
- The Responsible Person is on duty during both early and late shifts
- The Responsible Person interchanges with the Nominated Supervisor in their absence.
- Educators are aware that they have to sign off when they have finished their duty and will ensure the Nominated Supervisor or appointed person will sign on and take on the role of Responsible Person.
- Written consent of the Nominated Supervisor role has been accepted
- The staff record has the name of the Responsible Person at the service for each time that children are being educated and cared for by the Service.
- The Nominated Supervisor/appointed person signs their name and present time on the Responsible Service Record.

A Nominated Supervisor/appointed person will:

- Sign their name & present time on the Responsible Service Record
- Provide written consent to accept the role of Responsible Person
- Check that the identity of the Responsible Person in charge of the Service is available to families & visitors
- Inform the Director in the event of absence from the Service due to leave or illness so they can be replaced by another Responsible Person
- Ensure they have a sound understanding of the role of Responsible Person

- Abide by any conditions placed on the Responsible Person
- Understand that a Responsible Person placed in day-to-day charge of the Service does not have the same responsibilities under the National Law as the Nominated Supervisor (i.e.: Director)
- Notify the Regulatory Authority within 7 days of any changes to their personal situation, including a change in mailing address, circumstances that affect their status as fit and proper, such as the suspension or cancellation of a Working with Children Check card or teacher registration, or if they are subject to disciplinary proceedings

42. Respect for Children Policy

Within an early childhood community many different relationships are negotiated with and between children, educators and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible, impacts on how the early childhood community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

PURPOSE

The 8 Principles that underpin practice within the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (V2.0). are focussed on assisting children to make progress in relation to Learning Outcomes. One key principle is Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. Our Service Philosophy guides our interactions and relationships with children. We aim to ensure all educators develop positive relationships with children based on respect and fostering children's self-esteem and development.

Our philosophy guides our interactions and relationships with children. We aim to ensure all educators develop positive relationships with children based on respect and fostering children's self-esteem and development.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, educators, educator assistants, children, families, students, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

All children have a right to feel accepted and respected. This is a principle set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention emphasises the importance of children developing connections to culture and community as a means of fostering a strong sense of personal identity and belonging. Our FDC Service is committed to ensuring all FDC educators and staff are aware of the UNCROC and to educate children on their rights while encouraging children to participate in decisions which affect them within our service.

Our FDC Service is dedicated to protecting children from abuse and neglect and promotes a child safe environment, maintaining children's safety and wellbeing by implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

We promote cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We aim for children to feel safe and secure and we believe in forming strong attachments and connections with the family day care educator, educator assistant, children and families

Educators employed at the FDC Service will implement teaching techniques and strategies to establish secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children and their families. Educators and staff are respectful of diversity and are culturally responsive, respecting multiple cultural ways of *knowing, doing and being* and celebrate the benefits of diversity. (EYLF, V2.0.)

By respecting diversity, educators value and reflect the practices, values and beliefs of families within the curriculum. Educators value children's unique and diverse capacities and capabilities and respect families' home lives. (EYLF. (2022). p. 16)

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

- ensure obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations are met
- ensure educators provide a child safe environment at all times
- ensure minimum staff requirements are met including educator to child rations and staff qualifications
- ensure all staff, educators and volunteers have completed child protection training including mandatory reporting requirements
- ensure no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or inappropriate discipline

EDUCATORS/EDUCATORS ASSISTANT WILL:

- provide a welcoming, child safe, inclusive, comfortable and happy environment where children's concerns are always responded to
- embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum
- create an environment that is flexible and responsive to the strengths, culture, languages, interests and capabilities of each child
- promote children's bodily integrity (respecting their physical space and only using touch when necessary and appropriate)
- support children's consent by acknowledging and respecting a child's right to refuse of say no
- respect each child's uniqueness, displaying appreciation and respect for children as individuals
- use a positive and non-threatening tone when interacting with children in all situations
- ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried
- sit with children during mealtimes, engaging in respectful conversations
- never force a child to do something against their requests: This includes rest, eat, participation in group experiences and activities.
- role model respect to children in everyday dealings with both adults and children
- endeavour to be aware of each individual child's values, culture and feelings, and respond appropriately
- respect and value diversity and not tolerate any discriminatory practices
- encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences at home encouraging them to express their ideas and feelings
- encourage children to request assistance when taking on new challenges, inspiring children's independence and confidence
- regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child
- inspire, encourage and accept each child and encourage them to do the same with their peers by actively:
    - fostering each child's construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity
    - fostering each child's comfortable, empathetic interactions with diverse range of people
    - fostering each child's critical thinking about bias, and to question and enquire
    - fostering each child's ability to stand up for herself/himself and others in the face of bias
- respond respectfully and appropriately to children's attempts as they participate and converse in sustained conversation about their interests
- implement a predictable routine for children with interest-based activities and experiences

- provide a range of planned and spontaneous experiences for children to challenge and maximise learning opportunities
- use a variety of communication strategies inclusive of verbal and non-verbal cues to support the development of relationships with children
- empower children to speak up and raise any concerns
- support children's home language when communicating and interacting to build trust and positive relationships
- respect children and families' diversity and the development of cultural ~~competency~~ responsiveness including LGBTIQA+ and gender diverse young people
- support children and build secure attachments through a collaborative partnership with families
- encourage children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves
- encourage children to work through differences appropriately and with guidance where necessary
- respect each child's uniqueness and communicate that respect to the child
- ensure children are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback
- respond or report to children about how their feedback has been acted upon.

43. Bush Fire Policy

Bushfires are an intrinsic part of Australia's environment. The basic factors which determine whether a bushfire will occur include the presence of fuel, oxygen, and an ignition source. The intensity and speed the bushfire will spread will depend on the current temperature, fuel load (fallen bark, leaf litter, small branches etc.), fuel moisture (Dry fuel will burn quickly, damp or wet fuel may not burn at all), wind speed and slope angle.

This policy outlines the strategies and procedures the Service will adhere to in the event of a bush fire, including information about Service closure during an emergency evacuation.

RELATED POLICIES

Emergency Evacuation Policy Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy Supervision Policy	Administration of First Aid Policy Child Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children and staff from harm and hazards likely to cause injury, including response to bushfires. The potential for extreme fire conditions varies greatly throughout Australia, both in frequency and severity. When experienced close to populated areas, significant loss is possible

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Australian climate is frequently hot, dry and susceptible to drought. The widely varied fire seasons are reflected in the continent's different weather patterns.

It is vital for the Service to be informed and prepared for bush fire conditions and respond appropriately during periods of high fire danger or local bush fire activity.

TECHNOLOGY

A 'bush fire prone area' is an area of land that can support a bushfire or is likely to be subject to bushfire attack. Bush fire prone maps are prepared by local councils and certified by the Country Fire Authority (CFA)

MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- Create and update the Service's emergency and evacuation policies and procedures
- Conduct a risk assessment to identify a potential bush fire risk to the educator and service sites
- Ensure a current emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed at educators home where children are being taken care of
- Ensure Educators practice emergency drills with children every three months
- Ensure educators keep a record of each emergency evacuation drill practiced
- Communicate with staff, Educators, and families about emergency and evacuation policies and procedures
- Discuss bush fire response procedures at team meetings
- Ensure a clear and effective communication procedure during an emergency is implemented
- Conduct an 'emergency first aid kit / backpack audit' to ensure emergency contact information and supplies are current
- Ensure current emergency phone numbers are near the phone, including emergency services and the Department of Education and Communities
- Monitor the bush fire situation when the rating is above High through internet or radio
- Ensure to notify Educators living in the areas listed as high risk (push fire prone areas) on a day declared by fire authorities as being Code Red as per Our Fire Risk Plan. These educators will be required to close on days forecast as Catastrophic (Code Red) fire danger weather and take advice regarding closure on extreme fire danger days.
- The service will inform parents of whose children are with educators located in a bush fire prone are though phone and email before forecast catastrophic weather conditions in particular Fire Ban Districts. Our service will also be directly advised of a closure day.
- On closure days parents will need to make alternative arrangements for their children. The educators and parents will be advise when the educators can be open again.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Examine the home grounds during their indoor and outdoor safety checks
- Ensure they are familiar with the daily Fire Danger Rating (FDR)
- Be prepared by having an organised environment to easy locate:
    - Sign-in sheets
    - Emergency contacts
    - First Aid Kit
    - Assembly Area
    - Emergency bag
- Become familiar and confident with the Service emergency evacuation policies and procedures
- Ensure children are familiar with the emergency exits

- Keep up to date with professional development and training about bush fires and emergency evacuation
- Be familiar with their role and responsibilities in the event of a bush fire

Parents will:

- Provide the service with up to date emergency contacts and keep them current throughout the year
- Follow the advice of the Department of Education and Training
- Ensure that your child is appropriately signed in and out of the attendance sheet for each session
- Be familiar with the service emergency procedure

Fees and Child Care Benefit

- Child Care Subsidy(CCS) is payable for child care fees paid when a child does not attend a service, or a service is closed because of a period of local emergency. CCS is paid for that part of the period for which the child would normally be in care at the service.

VICTORIA SPECIFICATIONS

VICTORIA
• Early Childhood Service at the highest risk of fire danger are placed on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register • Inclusion on this register is a trigger for Early Childhood Services to pre-emptively close on days declared Code Red in their Bureau of Meteorology district • For information regarding emergency closures and relocations https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx

44. Multi-Cultural Policy

Australia is an increasingly multi-cultural society and as we recognise more cultural and ethnic diversity, it is imperative we lead children in recognising and respecting similarities and differences in cultures. The cultural beliefs represented within our Family Day Care Service and wider community helps to form the foundation of the program being implemented to ensure we are promoting an inclusive environment for all children.

PURPOSE

To develop affirmative attitudes, concepts, and beliefs towards the acceptance of diversity and different cultures. Respect for diversity is a key element of quality care. Recognising, understanding and respecting cultural practices and beliefs are essential for the development of identity and self-esteem.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, and Educators of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Approved Provider/Coordinator/Educators/Educator Assistants/Staff will ensure:

- That all children and families are treated equally and fairly and with respect at all times.
- The Family Day Care Service creates and maintains links with local cultural communities.
- A sense of inclusion for all families is embraced within the FDC Service.
- There is specific programming and cultural awareness activities and experiences, identifying similarities and differences and learning about a variety of cultural celebrations.
- The FDC Service builds and maintains cultural resources to appropriately reflect cultures within the Service and community.

- Children, families, and staff respect and value others, including those who are different from themselves.
- Children, staff, and families' cultural backgrounds are reflected in developing routines and programs consistent with best practice and that allow positive outcomes for all stakeholders.
- Communication for families can be translated into their home language as required.
- Educators and Educator Assistants attend professional learning opportunities to develop a better understanding of cultural diversity.
- To acknowledge the unique cultural and social perspectives of each family.
- That all children and families have equal access to the FDC Service, and are welcomed and respected regardless of race, culture, colour of skin, socio-economic status, ability, family composition, belief systems or lifestyles.
- Positive attitudes are role-modelled towards differences in appearance, culture, and lifestyle.
- Adherence to the Code of Ethics.

When working with children, Educators and Educator Assistants will ensure:

- Encourage children to respect and value others, including those who are different from themselves.
- Ensure children do not exclude others on the basis of differences such as race, sex, or ability.
- Ensure that the self-identity of each child is valued and respected.
- Encourage children to explore and accept diversity.
- Challenge bias and stereotypes.
- Provide an inclusive environment.
- Address bias or comments about difference and treat as an opportunity to increase children's understandings.
- Model inclusive practices.
- Use unbiased language: Avoid racist, sexist, discriminatory, and/or stereotyped remarks or comments.
- Ensure own interactions are caring and responsive to all children in the FDC Service.
- Demonstrate respect for all children and families.
- Ensure all displays, posters, children's books, and other materials are monitored to ensure they are inclusive of all people.
- Be sensitive to specific cultural behaviour or dress, which may be different to their own.
- Ensure each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities, and interests are consistently, actively and appropriately incorporated into all aspects of the program
- Develop deep understanding in the culture and language of the FDC Service families and in that of the broader community, without compromising their cultural identities.

45. Anti-Bias & Inclusion Policy

All children have the right to be treated equally. Diversity in all its forms should be embraced within Early Childhood Services to help develop positive and accepting attitudes in children, and to help them gain a better understanding of their care environment, community, country and the world.

PURPOSE

We aim to provide an inclusive environment for all children, families and educators, acknowledging the uniqueness of everyone regardless of their additional need and abilities, race, gender, sexuality religion, culture,

physical and mental abilities and socio-economic background. This policy ensures all children; families and staff are welcome, treated equitably and with respect.

SCOPE
This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Family Day Care Service

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Anti-Bias and Inclusion policy underpins the philosophy of the Family Day Care Service. The role of educators is to encourage children to share and learn about the individuality of each child and their family and their role in the Service. This policy aims to assist children to form positive social relationships and to learn to accept the diversity of members of the Service community.

'Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living, celebrate the benefits of diversity and have an ability to understand and honour differences. This is evident in everyday practice when Educators demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural competence in a two-way process with families and communities.' (EYLF Page 16)

In Relation to Cultural or National Origin and Racial Identity:

- Children and Educators will have access to information and training about other cultures/racial identity, especially those relevant in the Family Day Care Service.
- Educators will work with one another, families and children to continue to extend both their individual and communities cultural competence.
- Educators will expose children to a wide variety of concrete materials from daily life of families/cultures.
- Where possible, the Family Day Care Service will employ Educators that reflect various cultural, national origin and racial identities.
- Educators will affirm and foster children's knowledge and pride in cultural identity.
- Educators will foster children's curiosity, enjoyment and empathetic awareness of cultural differences and similarities.
- Educators will teach children to overcome any inappropriate responses triggered by cultural differences.
- Educators will encourage children to ask about their own and other's physical characteristics.
- Educators will enable children to feel pride, but not superiority, about their racial identity.
- Educators will help children to become aware of our shared physical characteristics – what makes us all human.
- Educators will encourage parent input into the program, sharing culture, racial identity i.e. First language and to participate on a level that they feel comfortable.
- Educators will collect information from each family on enrolment and incorporate it in the program to meet individual family needs re: ethnicity and home language.
- Educators where possible will use both the Educators and children's first language verbally and visually within the Family Day Care Service environment.
- Educators will respect all cultures by presenting photographs, pictures, play equipment, books, posters, music, dramatic play and dolls that will encourage open discussion and exploration.
- Where possible creative materials will include 2D and 3D materials of different skin tones.
- Educators will present books that reflect different languages and children's first language.
- Educators will know and understand the needs, strengths and attitudes of each culture who attend the Service.
- Educators will challenge inappropriate or stereotypical conversation with children

In Relation to Gender Equity

- Educators will ensure that all children are given equal opportunities to engage in all experiences and interactions regardless of their gender.
- Educators will monitor and reflect on their own interactions for bias and reflect regularly on the language used with children.
- Educators will aim to use gender inclusive language.
- Educators will offer opportunities for both male and female family members to be equally involved within the program.
- Educators will assist children to identify stereotypes and unfair treatment so that they can discuss ways in which to include the perspectives of others.
- Educators will be positive role models.
- Educators will provide resource materials that are not stereotypical.
- Educators will provide diversity of gender play e.g. Mechanic workshop, males and females in work and play clothes.
- Educators will provide a balance of men and women involved in a variety of jobs in and out of the home e.g. Show men and women repair-people, doctors, beautician, police officer, salesperson, teacher etc.

In Relation to Diversity in Family Composition

- Educators will create an environment that is welcoming to all families.
- Educators will respect each family, and work in partnership to support the child's emergent identity as an individual, member of their family, our Service and the community.
- Educators will provide resources, books, puzzles that reflect diversity in family structure including same sex, single parent, extended, nuclear, step and adopted families.
- Educators will engage in simple discussion about families that focus on fact rather than values e.g. "some children live with their Mum or Dad, some children live with their mum and dad, some with grandparents, and some with two mums or two dads.
- Educators will be encouraged to seek awareness and reflect on his/her own feelings, beliefs and background and evaluating the effect these may have on their attitudes and interactions with families.
- Educators will incorporate various family lifestyle choices during discussions ensuing that they reflect diversity in income. They will treat all families regardless of socioeconomic background with respect.
- The Educators and children will discuss how members of the community can support one another through the provision of resources, donations of goods or time etc.

In Relation to Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander People;

- Educators will deepen their own knowledge and understanding of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander culture through attending professional development, reading current information and regularly reflecting together as a team to embed Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and culture into the program in a positive way, consistent with how local Indigenous community wish to be presented.
- The Family Day Care Service will develop an acknowledgement of country, which will be displayed and will be conveyed during special events and incorporated into the program on a regular basis.
- Educators will develop awareness/understanding about the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander people as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians.

- Educators will show respect for the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander culture, aiming to instill sensitivity/appreciation of the culture and a knowing and valuing of individuals.
- Educators will encourage access of the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander community into the mainstream of children services.
- Educators will show sensitivity and respect the numerous Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander languages by incorporating where possible verbal and visual language into the Service environment.
- Educators will access and encourage involvement of the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander families, Educators and community members who have a vast knowledge of their culture.

In relation to ability

- Educators will provide an inclusive educational environment in which all children can succeed.
- Educators will promote acceptance, respect and appreciation for individuals varying abilities.
- Educators will consult with all families and other professionals to enable full participation in the program for children with varying abilities. Educators will evaluate and alter the environment to enable all children to develop autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride.
- Educators will provide children and parents with developmentally appropriate information about varying abilities to foster understandings that we are all similar and different.
- Educators will empower all children in their own learning to ensure that they gain a feeling of self-respect.
- Educators will treat all children equally and develop an understanding that everyone has something important to contribute.
- Educators will observe all children and with family consultation, provide an individualised program to extend the child's interests and abilities.
- Educators will display images of people of a range of ages, including elderly people and young children doing different activities.
- Educators will create an environment where all children can participate in activities and experiences

Promoting inclusion and diversity into the curriculum

- Educators will promote positive influences, modelling appropriate communication, non-bias or gender specific language and attitudes
- Educators will take a flexible approach with children and families
- Educators will develop appropriate expectations for each child
- Management will assist Educators with the development of required skills and knowledge for working with children and families
- Management and Educators will work with Inclusions support facilitators to aid the inclusion of children with additional needs
- Educators will explore the values and uniqueness of the diversity within the service. These opportunities will form part of the curriculum
- Educators treat children with respect by answering their questions honestly
- Educators will adapt activities, interactions, communication, the environment and documentation to ensure all children and families are actively included to participate in the curriculum

- Educators will provide children with a range of resources, equipment and opportunities to enhance their awareness of ad access to diversity
- Educators will incorporate children's home language
- Educators will reflect on the curriculum ensuring inclusive practice and goals set for children are being met
- Educators will involve families in the planning of learning opportunities reflective of their culture

46. Additional needs Policy

Including children with additional needs requires Educators to extend upon the strategies they already use in providing quality care for children. It is imperative for Educators to develop a comprehensive understanding of each child's interests and abilities and implement a program and environment that is receptive to their needs and inclusion.

PURPOSE

To be responsible for each child, irrespective of their additional needs and abilities, Kids Planet Family Day Care Services aims to provide a supportive and inclusive environment that sanctions each child to fully participate in its education and care at the Service. Educators will remain encouraging, unprejudiced and supportive, ensuring that all children are treated equally and fairly and have the opportunity to grow and develop to their individual potential.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, Educator Assistants, children, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

In accordance with The National Quality Standard, our Service positively responds to and welcomes children with additional needs including those who:

- Are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders
- Are recent arrivals in Australia
- Have a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- Live in isolated geographic locations
- Are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress
- Are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Are experiencing language and communication difficulties
- Have a diagnosed disability—physical, sensory, intellectual, or autism spectrum disorder
- Have a medical or health condition
- Demonstrate challenging behaviours and behavioural or psychological disorders
- Have developmental delays
- Have learning difficulties
- Are gifted or have special talents
- Have other extra support needs.

We understand that additional needs may be temporary or permanent with diverse origins, which require different responses. Supporting children with additional needs enables them to participate and feel included; this also helps promote their strengths and may reduce their risk of developing mental health difficulties. Strategies for supporting children with additional needs can differ significantly, because every child is unique.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Approved Provider, Coordinator and Educators will ensure:

- The indoor and outdoor environment and equipment is designed or adapted to ensure access and participation for all children, supporting the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- The program and curriculum is inclusive and meets the individual needs of children with additional needs.
- The FDC Service works with external professionals and families to verify the educational program and learning environment is most suited to each child with additional needs, including children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds. We will keep a copy of any specific plans or instructions provided by external resource providers and professionals for children with additional needs.
- Children's sensory sensitivities to pressure, texture, smell, noise, or colour is considered within the environment.
- Children are encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at the FDC Service by developing trusting relationships with educators, other children, and the community.
- Families are encouraged to meet with the Educators who will be working with the child to ensure an understanding of the child's needs, appropriate methods for communication, and to ascertain that suitable resources and support is provided to both the family and the child.
- Support Educators through providing professional development and opportunities to network with professional agencies to ensure Educators are meeting the needs of each individual child.
- Seek assistance, training, and where possible, financial funding from inclusive support agencies to promote the development of skills in children with identified additional needs.
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality for children and families is maintained.

Educator/Educator Assistants will:

- Treat children equally and fairly.
- Create an inclusive program, which is adaptable and supportive of all children.
- Advocate for children's rights.
- Conduct specific observations on the individual child, outlining their interests, strengths, and developmental needs.
- Meet with families of children with additional needs to familiarise themselves with the specific communication needs of each child. Communication could include verbal and non-verbal communication skills and cues and may necessitate the use of things such as sign language, the use of images, and/or learning key words in the child's home language.
- Establish a means for frequent communication with parents of children with additional needs through a communication book, verbal daily information exchanges, and/or formal and informal meetings.
- Develop an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) for each child that will be kept on file at the FDC Service and shared with families, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services.
- Work with other professionals who play a role in supporting the child's development.
- Seek specific professional intervention and training in order to meet the individual child's needs.
- Create a flexible environment, which can be adapted to each child's needs within the FDC Service to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- Implement programming experiences and activities, encouraging all children to explore and participate.

- Listen carefully to all children's concerns and discuss issues of inclusion and exclusion, and fair and unfair behaviour.
- Act as role models by displaying appropriate behaviour and language, being consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, attention, or assistance.
- Discuss a wide range of emotions, thoughts, and views constructively with the children within a supportive environment.
- Not judge or compare one child's development with another.
- Work with all families to meet children's developmental needs in order to build strengths and capabilities.
- Work collaboratively with health professionals and families together to discuss and plan to support children.
- Talk to children about differences and acceptance.
- Provide opportunities for all children to play and learn together, promoting cooperative, caring, and pro social behaviours.

47. Pregnancy inn Early Childhood Policy.

Kids Planet Family Day Care Services promotes a safe work environment for children, educators, families and staff. Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will strive to protect the safety of educators and their unborn child, through appropriate practices and information.

PURPOSE
To ensure that pregnant educators are provided with the support and information needed, working in compliance with Regulations and Laws, and Work, Health and Safety practices.
SCOPE
This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, and Educator Assistants of the Family Day Care Service.

Practices for educators

All educators are expected to comply with WHS and other legislative requirements when working whilst pregnant.

Educators may take up to 12 months unpaid parental leave.

Educators may take extended parental leave with written notice, any extended parental leave over 12 months may, at the discretion of the scheme manager, require the educator to undertake refresher training before recommencement of family day care duties.

Educators should:-

- be aware that whilst pregnant there is a greater risk of back pain and injury.
- be aware of other health risks e.g. specific infectious diseases: toxoplasmosis, rubella, 5th disease, varicella, cytomegalovirus (CMV), herpes simplex virus, hepatitis B.
- be aware of and take responsibility for their own immunisation status.
- ensure that practices and procedures are modified if practical to reduce the likelihood of back injury and other health related risks.
- conduct and apply risk management processes to certain tasks, practices or procedures if necessary.
- ensure health and hygiene practices are implemented at all times *(see all health and hygiene policies)*

Educator responsibilities:

- Provide a written letter to the scheme manager at least 6 weeks prior to the educators due date

stating the intended period of maternity leave, detailing the last date of care to be provided for families and the approximate date of return from parental leave. Educator registration with the scheme will be suspended during this period.

- Provide written information to all families in your care regarding your last day of care and proposed return date.
- Assist families in seeking alternate care if possible with the assistance of the coordination unit if required.

Returning to family day care:

- At least two weeks prior to returning to work the educator must undergo a home safety check by the coordination unit to ensure the family day care environment is safe prior to reinstating educator registration.
- If the annual re-registration date has passed during parental leave a full Annual Home Safety Check must be completed for re- registration.
- Before the return from parental leave, educators are to obtain a medical certificate from a medical practitioner to state they are able to return to work, caring for children.
- Educators are to ensure all documentation, insurances and other legislative requirements are in place and submitted to the coordination unit, before the recommencement of family day care duties.

48. Educator Agreement Termination Or Suspension

Our service Kids Planet Family Day Care Services is committed to ensuring that a fair and equitable process for termination and/or suspension of Educators.

SCOPE:

This document applies to all Educators, Families and Coordination Unit Staff of our Service.

RATIONALE:

To ensure that the most appropriate Educators are registered with Kids Planet Family Day Care Services and where termination or suspension is necessary, it is conducted in a fair and transparent way ensuring a natural justice process is provided.

PROCESS:

Termination of the Educator Agreement by the EDUCATOR

An Educator wishing to terminate the Educator Agreement is required to give a minimum of two weeks' notice in writing to the Manager and parents of children in care, unless exceptional circumstances arise and the termination must be actioned immediately.

Exceptional circumstances exist if:

(a) the Educator is injured or ill

(b) the Educator has a family member who is injured or ill

(c) an unexpected event such as house fire, local bush fire or other emergency.

Termination of the Educator Agreement by Kids Planet Family Day Care Services (see Educator Agreement)

Our service maintains the right to terminate the services of an Educator for;

- failure to provide a standard of education and care acceptable to the service,
- being in breach of Kids Planet Family Day Care Services Educators Agreement or

- practices implied in that agreement and/or the Education and Care Services National Act 2010 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- In the event that a Working With Children Check or Criminal History Check reveals offences relevant to the provision of care and education of children.

PROCEDURE for termination of the Educator Agreement by the SERVICE

Termination will usually not take place until a process of three warnings has been implemented. However, the service may immediately terminate the agreement or issue a 'First and Final' warning if it is deemed warranted. The Educator will have the option of having a support person present at any formal meeting that is held in relation to the termination process.

WRITTEN RECORDS

Written records will be kept at all stages of discussions in the procedure. All Coordination Unit staff involved in the procedure are responsible for ensuring that this occurs. All participants must sign written records.

FIRST WARNING

The object of the first warning shall be to endeavour to remedy the unsatisfactory situation for both the service and the Educator. The relevant coordinator will raise her/his concerns with the Educator. The concerns will be specific and examples of the breach of the Educator Agreement or practice will be cited verbally and in writing to the Educator.

The Educator will be informed verbally and in writing by the Co-ordinator of the period of time (not more than two weeks) within which the Educator must improve/rectify the area/s cited as causing concern and the steps which are to be taken to resolve the issues. If deemed appropriate, the Educator may be suspended pending to resolution of the issue (see 'suspension' below).

The relevant Coordination Unit staff are to be involved in ensuring that the Educator has access to appropriate resources and information to enable her/him to meet the requirements of the service, for example, in-service training (either through internal or external agencies) and/or access to information about general community services that may be of assistance as well.

At the expiration of the period mentioned in the first warning, the Educator, co-ordinator and Manager shall meet to review the Educator's situation against the standards and process previously agreed to. At this point the issue may be considered resolved, otherwise, further actions will be implemented.

SECOND WARNING

If the initial concern has not been resolved and/or a new concern has arisen, the Educator may be issued with a further Second Warning. The same process for review will be used as above (see First Warning).

If at the end of this period, satisfactory progress has not been made a Final Warning will be issued.

FINAL WARNING

If at the expiration of the period specified in the second warning the Educator has shown insufficient improvement the situation that has caused concern, the Educator will be required to meet with Manager. At this meeting the situation will be reviewed and all issues discussed in a final attempt to resolve the problems causing concern. The Educator will not be given more than one week to comply with requirements of the service. These requirements will be specified, in writing, to the Educator.

NOTICE OF TERMINATION

If the final notice referred to above is not complied with to the satisfaction of the service, the Educator will be notified verbally and in writing by the Manager that the Agreement between the Educator and the service will be terminated immediately. This notification will state the reasons for termination.

The parents of all children in care will receive verbal and written notification of termination from the Manager. Parents will be offered alternate care through the service, if and where vacancies exist.

PROCEDURE FOR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION (see Educator Agreement)

The Educator Agreement may be immediately terminated should any of the following occur:

- Educator being impaired by drugs or using alcohol or illicit drugs whilst children are in care through the family day care service.
- Educator is found to be culent in their childcare claims.
- Breach of the education and care services national regulations 2011 or any state and federal laws that pertains to the safety or wellbeing of the child, for example, child abuse.

The co-ordinator in conjunction with the Manager will immediate terminate the Agreement. The Educator will receive verbal and written notification of the termination. This notification will state the reasons for termination.

The parents of all children in care with the Educator will receive verbal and written notification of the termination. Parents will be offered alternate care through the service, where vacancies exist.

APPEALING AGAINST IMMEDIATE TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT:

An Educator who feels she/he has had their agreement unreasonably terminated may appeal to the Manager.

SUSPENSION OF AGREEMENT

Suspension of the Agreement will take place in any of the following instances:

- Where the Educator or any member of the Educator's household is subject to investigation by any state or federal authority in relation to matters which may affect the children in care and/or their families.
- Where the service find out the educator's or person over 18 residing in the care residence's work with children card has been suspended.
- Where the co-ordination through the manager may need to further investigate an issue or pass onto the Department Of Education and Training Victoria an issue for investigation.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

Suspension from the service will be until such time the Manager is satisfied that the issue is resolved and not prior to being notified, in writing, by the Educator and/or the Department of Education and Training Victoria that the matter which resulted in the suspension has been dealt with by the relevant authority and that returning the children to the Educator will have no adverse effects on them or their families.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

An Educator who feels she/he has had their agreement unreasonably suspended may appeal to the Manager. Educators should supply notice that they intend to appeal within five working days.

49. Safe Transportation Policy

Educators working within our Family Day Care Service often provide transportation of children as part of our education and care service. This may include transporting children between the Family Day Care residence and other locations to participate in regular outings such as play groups, library visits, walks in the park or collecting children from homes or schools.

Compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations is mandatory to ensure the safety of children at all times and new provisions and amendments to these regulations are reflected in our procedures and policy for transportation and the safe handover of children.

We acknowledge our ensuring duty of care obligations by adhering to relevant legislation providing adequate supervision of children at all times, maintaining correct educator to child ratios, maintaining accurate attendance records and providing appropriate child restraints for children under our care.

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure that all children being educated and cared for by our Family Day Care Service are adequately supervised at all times. This includes ensuring educator to child ratios are met whenever and wherever the service is operating including providing transportation as part of our service activity.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Educators, Educator Assistants, children, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The safety of children enrolled at our service is paramount. Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. Appropriate safety measures have been implemented through our comprehensive risk assessment process to ensure supervision is adequate at all times including transportation. Educator to child ratios are adhered to in addition to ensuring the maximum numbers on the service approval are not breached at any time. Adequate supervision is therefore not static as it is dependent upon a range of considerations documented in risk assessments. (e.g. when FDC educators travel together in a larger vehicle for an excursion).

Definitions (effective 1 October 2020)

Regular outing: in relation to an education and care service, means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination

(a) that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program; and

(b) where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are substantially the same on each outing

Regular transportation: in relation to an education and care service, means the transportation by the service or arranged by the service (other than as part of an excursion) of a child being educated and cared for by the service, where the circumstances relevant to a risk assessment are substantially the same for each occasion on which the child is transported.

Written authorisation: authorisation given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise the child being transported by the service or on transportation arranged by the service. If the transportation is regular transportation, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period. The authorisation must state:

(a) the child's name; and

(b) the reason the child is to be transported; and

(c) if the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings; and

(d) if the authorisation is not for a regular transportation, the date the child is to be transported; and

(e) a description of the proposed pick-up location and destination; and

(f) the means of transport; and

(g) the period of time during which the child is to be transported; and

(h) the anticipated number of children likely to be transported; and

(i) the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children during the transportation; and

(j) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and

(k) that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the education and care service; and

(l) that written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the education and care service.

Transport specific risk assessment

As per the Education and Care Services National Law, our FDC Service will 'ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children…from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury' (Section 167).

Our FDC Educators will conduct comprehensive transport specific risk assessments to minimize and manage all potential risks for transporting children before authorisation is sought to transport a child from the Approved Provider. [Reg. 102B, 102D (4)].

A risk assessment will be undertaken at least annually for 'regular transportation' of children. Each time a FDC Educator transports, or arranges, the transport of children as part of an excursion, a new risk assessment will be conducted. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our service.

Our risk assessment process is guided by will:

- identify any hazards or potential hazards that transporting the child may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of the child
- assess the risk of harm or potential harm using a risk matrix
- specify how the identified risks will be managed by eliminating or minimising the impact using control measures
- evaluate the current risk or potential harm by implementing control measures
- review and monitor the risk or potential harm to ensure it continues to be managed as a low risk

source: Risk assessment and management ACECQA (2020)

Our risk assessment will consider:

(a) the proposed route and duration of the transportation; and

(b) the proposed pick-up location and destination; and

(c) the means of transport; and

(d) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints (as per the law of our jurisdiction); and

(e) any water hazards; and

(f) the number of adults and children involved in the transportation; and

(g) given the risks posed by transportation, the number of educators or other responsible adults to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialized skills are required; and

(h) whether any items should be readily available during transportation (mobile phone, list of emergency contact numbers) and;

(i) the process for entering and exiting-

(j) the education and care service premises; and

(k) the pick-up location or destination (as required); and

(l) procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.

The Coordinator and FDC Educator will ensure:

- risk assessments are carried out prior to seeking authorisation for transporting children is made with the Approved Provider

- risk assessments for 'regular transportation' are evaluated regularly to ensure potential risks are identified and managed
- risk assessments for 'regular transportation' are reviewed at least annually
- details of the safest route for travel, type of vehicle and required restraints are included in the risk assessment
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury
- compliance with first aid requirements of Regulation 136 are met at all times
- parents/guardians complete a written authorisation for transportation of their child and a copy of this is filed in the child's enrolment record
- children are instructed on processes for entering and exiting the service premises and are aware of the pick-up and destination locations
- children's attendance is checked against an accurate attendance record showing when children are within the care of the FDC service. The record of attendance must record the time that the child arrives and departs
- children's attendance is checked by the FDC educator before departure from the designated pick up location and marked as present as they disembark from the vehicle
- procedures for the safe handover of children between the Service and other educational site is documented correctly (if applicable)
- educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times
- children exit the vehicle using the 'safety door'
- children wear approved seatbelts/restraints whilst the vehicle is in motion
- children are never left unattended in the vehicle
- education on road safety for children is included in the Service's programming (for example Kids and Traffic, Vic Roads Primary School roads information)
- safety rules are developed with children to ensure a clear understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- they are aware of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of a vehicle crash involving children from the service
- a working mobile phone is carried in case of emergency
- a list of emergency contact numbers for the children being transported is available at all times
- every effort will be made to notify parents/educator of delays returning to the Service if applicable
- relevant criminal history requirements and Working with Children Checks are made for any person transporting children. WWCC is recorded in staff records.
- the FDC educator or person driving the vehicle/bus holds a current Australian driver's licence
- any allegation of misconduct of the educator or other adult will be reported immediately as per the Reportable Conduct Scheme detailed in our Child Protection Policy and/or Child Safe Environment Policy.

Safe Maintenance of transportation vehicle

The Coordinator and FDC Educator will ensure:

- the transportation vehicle is fitted with the required child restraints, approved by the Roads and Traffic Authorities (see Rule 266 of the Australian Road Rules)
- the vehicle has enough fuel to transport the children each day as in accordance to schedule
- the vehicle is registered, roadworthy and insured (general legal requirements and best practice standards are adhered to)
- any repairs are completed as soon as possible by a qualified mechanic
- all drivers hold a current Australian driver's licence, licenced to carry the required number of passengers for the vehicle
- in the event of any mechanical or other breakdown, children will be kept safe, comfortable and occupied with suitable activities
- every effort will be made to notify parents/educator of delays returning to the Service if applicable

The Approved Provider, Coordinator and FDC Educators will ensure:

- driver's licence is current, and they are licenced to carry the required number of passengers for the purpose
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- they adhere to the road rules and regulations mandated by law within each state/territory
- children remain seated and do not behave in a dangerous or inappropriate manner
- the vehicle is parked in a secure and safe location for children to access
- the number of passengers does not exceed the legal requirement
- a working mobile phone is taken in case of an emergency
- an easily recognised and suitably equipped first aid kit is easily accessible during transportation
- FDC educators and Educator Assistants accompanying children during transportation hold:
  - an approved first aid qualification
  - a current approved anaphylaxis management training qualification and
  - an approved emergency asthma management training qualification.

Picking up children and during transportation

The FDC Educator and/or Educator Assistant will ensure:

- the vehicle/bus will be parked in a safe location where children are not required to cross any roads (if this is unavoidable, a risk assessment and dedicated procedure for crossing the road will be completed)
- the children's attendance record is checked by the educator as children assemble in a predetermined location at the residence prior to embarking the vehicle
- children are continuously supervised during transportation by the educator, ensuring they have clear vision of all children
- children are to remain seated until the vehicle/bus has completely stopped
- the designated driver of the vehicle/bus complies with all appropriate road, safety and transport regulations

- under no circumstances will the driver of the vehicle/bus supervising the children use handheld mobile phones unless safely parked
- under no circumstances will the driver and/or FDC educator supervising children be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- the designated driver of the vehicle has the right, if required to stop in a safe place until the children conform to the safety guidelines. Parents will be notified if their child continues to be challenging and/or behaving in a dangerous manner.

Dropping off children

- children are to remain seated until the vehicle/bus has completely stopped
- the FDC educator/educator assistant will assist children to safely disembark the vehicle/bus
- children will exit the vehicle/bus using the 'safety door' or door located near the kerb or within the driveway of the residence
- the children's attendance record will be checked by the FDC educator as they assemble in a predetermined location at the end of the journey
- the FDC educator will conduct a final sweep of the vehicle/bus, checking on and under seats to ensure there are no children or belongings left behind
- once inside the residence, the children are signed in which will provide an additional attendance check to confirm all are present

Families will:

- adhere to the Service's Arrival and Departure Policy and Safe Transportation Policy
- communicate any change in transportation requirements for their child with their FDC Educator as soon as they are aware (for example: no transport is required on a particular day as the child has returned home from school due to illness)
- notify the Service if their child is going to be absent on a particular day and not require transport
- ensure written permission for transportation of their child by the Service is granted by either the parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record
- update emergency contact numbers regularly.

50. SAFE ARRIVAL OF CHILDREN POLICY

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Family Day Care (FDC) Services must have policies and procedures in place for the safe arrival of children who travel to or from an education and care service premises [ACECQA, 2023]. This may include children traveling between the Family Day Care residence and educational facilities such as an Outside School Hours Care service, preschool, school, long day care service or any other service which provides education and care to children.

PURPOSE

Our Family Day Care Service aims to ensure the safe and secure arrival and departure of all children into our service who may be travelling to or from another early childhood service or education facility. We are committed to identifying and minimising risks and potential hazards to ensure children are not placed at risk of harm or hazard when travelling between other educational facilities and our FDC Service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, staff, coordinator, educators,

educator assistants, families, children and visitors (including contractors) of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The safety of children enrolled at our FDC Service is paramount. Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. Appropriate safety measures have been implemented through our comprehensive risk assessment process to ensure supervision is adequate at all times including when children are travelling between our FDC Service and an educational facility. We are advocates for children and have a strong commitment to child safety and establishing and maintaining a child safe environment.

DEFINITION:

An education or early childhood service includes a school, an education and care service (including Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Outside School Hours Care), a children's service or any other service which provides education or care to children.

Examples of travel between education or early childhood services may include, but is not limited to:

- A child travelling from the FDC Service to school or from school to the FDC Service
- A child travelling from the FDC Service to preschool/kindy or from the preschool/kindy to the FDC Service
- A child travelling from the FDC Service to an OSHC Service or from the OSHC Service to the FDC Service

SAFE ARRIVAL OF CHILDREN SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The approved provider, in conjunction with FDC educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment in order to identify any potential risk/s or hazards and ensure the safe arrival and departure of children who are travelling between our FDC Service and an educational facility.

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated to facilitate continuous improvement in our service.

If a risk concerning a child's travel is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must update the safe arrival of children policy and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Our risk assessment will consider and include the following information:

- the age, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- the roles and responsibilities of;
    - the nominated supervisor of each service (where applicable)
    - the child's parents/family member
    - an authorised nominee listed on the child's enrolment form
    - a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee listed on the child's enrolment form (if applicable)
    - the role and responsibilities of the service the care of which the child is entering or leaving
- communication arrangements made between the service the child is leaving from, and the service the child is entering, including arrangements if the child is missing or unaccounted for
- procedures to be followed if a child is missing or unaccounted for during travel between services
- educator to child ratios required for adequate supervision during travel between services
- the proposed route and destination, including proximity to harm and hazards
- the process for entering and exiting the service premises and the pickup location or destination (as required)

- procedures to be followed to ensure children only leave the service in accordance with written authorisation from the parent or authorised nominee listed on the child's enrolment form

(ACECQA 2023)

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/FDC COORDINATOR WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- take reasonable steps to ensure all staff, educators, visitors, families, children follow this policy and related procedure
- ensure all staff, educators and educator assistants are inducted in the Safe Arrival of Children Policy and procedure
- ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily available and accessible to FDC educators, coordinators, educator assistants, staff and families
- clearly communicate any updates to policies and procedures to FDC educators and educator assistants
- develop a Safe Arrival of Children Procedure to clearly outline roles, responsibilities and obligations for the FDC educator, families and the educational facility when children are travelling between services
- conduct a risk assessment to identify any risks or hazards that may pose a risk to children's health, safety or wellbeing as they travel between the FDC service and an educational facility
- consult with staff, educators, families and children (where applicable) during the preparation of a risk assessment
- consult with the educational facility during the preparation of a risk assessment
- review the risk assessment annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised
- notify families at least 14 days in advance of any changes to policy or procedures - as per regulations
- provide induction training to new educators and staff of this policy and related procedure
- provide ongoing training and information to coordinators, nominated supervisors, educators and educator assistants to ensure they can fulfil their roles and provide a child safe environment for all children and young people
- develop open communication channels and strategies between families, our service, FDC educators and the educational facility
- request families complete a Safe Travel Agreement Form prior to children travelling between the FDC service and another educational facility
- advise families to inform the FDC educator of any change in attendance or routine that may affect the child's safe arrival or departure as soon as they are aware
- ensure the Administration of First Aid Policy and Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy is implemented in the event of a serious incident, injury, trauma or medical emergency, including contacting emergency services and notifying parents/guardians as required
- ensure FDC educators keep accurate attendance records recording the following:
    - the time and date children arrive or depart the FDC service
    - the signature of the person who has collected or delivered the child to the FDC service or the signature of the Nominated Supervisor or FDC educator in accordance with the *Delivery of Children to, and collection from Education and Care Service Premises Policy*

FDC EDUCATORS/ EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- implement a risk assessment to identify and manage any risks or hazards that may pose a risk to children's health, safety or wellbeing as they travel between the FDC service and an educational facility
- implement procedures for the safe handover of children between the FDC Service and educational facility is documented correctly and clearly communicated with all stakeholders
- ensure enrolment records are kept up to date for all children, including authorisations from families
- ensure accurate attendance records are kept up to date recording the following:
    - the time and date children arrive or depart the FDC service
    - the signature of the person who has collected or delivered the child to the FDC service or the signature of the Nominated Supervisor or FDC educator in accordance with the *Delivery of Children to, and collection from Education and Care Service Premises Policy*
- cross check children's attendance against an accurate attendance record showing when children are within the care of the FDC educator
- follow the Safe Transportation Policy at all times to ensure regulations are met when children embark and disembark from vehicles during travel between our FDC service and other educational facilities
- ensure regulations and policies are followed when educator assistants may be supervising children between the FDC service and educational facility (see below)
- implement the Administration of First Aid Policy and Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy in the event of a serious incident, injury, trauma or medical emergency, including contacting emergency services and notifying parents/guardians as required
- ensure that when leaving the FDC service, children are given into the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment form or a person authorised by the parent or authorised nominee; or given into the care of a person in accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee
- discuss safe travel strategies with children prior to children travelling between the FDC service and the educational facility to ensure children are supported to feel safe and act responsibly
- ensure families complete a Safe Travel Agreement Form prior to children travelling between the FDC service and an educational facility
- communicate any changes to travel routine to family members, other educators and the nominated supervisor

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the Service's Delivery of children to, and collection from Education and Care Service Premises Policy and Safe Arrival of Children Policy
- communicate any changes in routine and activities that may affect the child's safe arrival or departure as soon as they are aware
- notify the Service and FDC educator if their child is going to be absent on a particular day or session
- provide emergency contact details and phone numbers upon enrolment and update emergency contact details and phone numbers regularly (as required)
- complete a Safe Travel Agreement Form detailing circumstances where children will travel between the FDC service and an educational facility.

EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS

An educator assistant may be engaged to assist in the transportation or escorting of children to and from the FDC service to or from another educational facility. Educator assistants must be approved and engaged by the approved provider prior to assisting the FDC educator in accordance with regulation 144. All educator assistants

will be provided with a comprehensive induction, including procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children from the FDC service.

Written consent must be obtained by each parent before an educator assistant provides assistance in the following circumstances:

- in the absence of the family day care educator, transporting a child between a residence and school or another educator and care service or children's service or the child's home
- escort (by walking) a child between the FDC residence and:
    - a school
    - another education and care service or children's service
    - the child's home

MISSING OR UNACCOUNTED CHILD

The FDC Service and FDC educator will develop clear procedures to follow in case of a missing or unaccounted child who is deemed missing whilst travelling to or from the FDC Service from an educational facility. Parents must advise the FDC educator or FDC service staff as early as possible of any changes to the child's routine or activity.

If the child does not arrive at the FDC Service at the predetermined time the FDC educator will:

- check the Safe Travel Agreement Form and any communication from the family if the child does not arrive at the FDC service at the pre-determined time.
- contact the educational facility and confirm the child left the educational facility at the arranged time
- contact the parents or authorised nominee to determine the location of the child
- contact the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person to advise of the situation
- where possible, help conduct a search of the route of travel, ensuring supervision of all children within care
- liaise with Police, emergency services and parents as required
- complete an incident, injury, trauma and accident record as soon as possible
- If the child does not arrive at the educational facility at the predetermined time, the FDC educator will:
- assist the educational facility to provide details when the child left the FDC service.
- where possible, assist in a search of the route of travel, ensuring supervision of all children within care.
- contact the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person and advise of the situation.
- liaise with parents and the police/emergency services if required.

The FDC Service will notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious incident, including if a child is missing or unaccounted for when travelling between the FDC Service and an educational facility.

51. SAFE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS POLICY

Our Family Day Care (FDC) Service is committed to fostering a culture that creates and maintains a safe online environment with support and collaboration from staff, Family Day Care (FDC) educators, families and community. As a child safe organisation, our FDC Service embeds the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and continuously addresses risks to ensure children are safe in physical and online environments. Digital technologies have become an integral part of many children's daily lives. For this reason, it is important that our educators are not only familiar with the use of digital technologies, but are able to guide children's

understanding of, and ability to interact, engage, access and use a range of digital technology in a child safe environment.

PURPOSE

Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount and our FDC Service has the responsibility to provide and maintain a safe and secure working and learning environment for staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, children, visitors and contractors, including online environments. We aim to create and maintain a positive digital safe culture that works in conjunction with our FDC Service philosophy, and privacy and legislative requirements to ensure the safety of enrolled children, educators and families.

The use of Close Circuit Television (CCTV) installed at the FDC Service residence aims to address crime prevention strategies to reduce concerns, deal with complaints and support investigations. Our FDC Service adheres to the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) and comply with the Australian Privacy Principles.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the FDC Service.

TERMINOLOGY	
Artificial intelligence (AI)	An engineered system that generates predictive outputs such as content, forecasts, recommendations, or decisions for a given sent of human defined objectives or parameters without explicit programming.
Cyberbullying	When someone uses the internet to be mean to a child or young person so they feel bad or upset
Cyber safety	Safe and responsible use of the internet and equipment/devices, including mobile phones and devices.
Disclosure	Process by which a child conveys or attempts to convey that they are being or have been sexually abuses, or by which an adult conveys or attempts to convey that they were sexually abused as a child
Generative artificial intelligence (AI)	A branch of AI that develops generative models with the capability of learning to generate novel content such as images, text and other media with similar properties as their training data
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
Illegal content	Includes: images and videos of child sexual abuse Content that advocates terrorist acts Content that promotes, incites or instructs in crim or violence Footage of real violence, cruelty and criminal activity
Optical Surveillance Device	Has the same meaning as in section 6(1) of the Surveillance Devices Act 2004 of the Commonwealth
Online hate	Any hateful posts about a person or group based on their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or gender
Smart toys	Smart toys generally require an internet connection to operate as the computing task is on a central server

Sexting	Sending a sexual message or text, with or without a photo or video. It can be done using a phone service or any platform that allows people to connect via an online message or chat function
Unwanted contact	Any type of online communication that makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or harassed.

Source: Glossary to NQF Child Safe Culture and Online Safety Guides- ACECQA 2025

IMPLEMENTATION

Our FDC Service uses digital technology and electronic devices as a tool for learning with children, documenting their learning and development, communicating with families and the wider community, supporting program planning and administration tasks and enhancing safety and security through systems such as sign in/out platforms and CCTV monitoring. Our educators are diligent in ensuring children are only able to access age-appropriate technology on a FDC Service issued device.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES USED AT THE SERVICE

The Kids Planet Family Day Care Services will inform staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, visitors, volunteers and family members that the use of personal electronic devices used to take photos, record audio or capture video of children who are being educated and cared for at the FDC Service is strictly prohibited. This includes items such as tablets, phones, digital cameras, smart watches, META sunglasses and personal storage and file transfer media (such as SD cards, USB drives, hard drives and cloud storage). These devices should not be in the possession of FDC educators, staff or visitors (e.g. ECIP professionals) while working directly with children. Exemptions may apply where required for operational activities, for example excursions or transportation.

The approved provider will inform staff, educators and visitors of exemptions that may warrant a person to use or be in possession of a personal electronic device that can be used to take images or videos. Staff, educators or visitors with an exemption must not use the personal device to take images or videos of children. Exemptions need to be provided for in writing by the approved provider and may include:

- Emergency communication during incidents such as a lost child, injury, lockdown, or evacuation
- Personal health needs requiring device use (e.g. heart or blood sugar monitoring)
- Disability related communication needs
- Urgent family matters (e.g. critically ill or dying family member)
- Local emergency event to receive alerts (e.g. government bushfire or evacuation notifications)

Our FDC Service will develop and maintain a register of all electronic devices used within the FDC Service and educators residences work area. This register will include details such as the device type, date of purchase, intended use, educator details, security settings, and any features related to connectivity, data storage, or recording capabilities. Devices recorded in the register may include, but are not limited to, computers, tablets, mobile phones, cameras, CCTV systems, audio recorders, smart toys, baby monitors and any other internet connected.

Children enrolled at our FDC Service are not permitted to bring electronic devices to the FDC Service residence, unless an exception has been discussed with the approved provider or FDC educator where the device may be required to support a diagnosed medical condition or disability. If a child brings an electronic device to the FDC Service, it will be switched off and stored in a locked cupboard if available or in the child's bag.

IMAGES AND VIDEOS

The approved provider is responsible for determining who is authorised to take, use, store and destroy images and videos of children using Service issued digital devices. Images and videos will be stored securely with password protection, with access limited to authorised personnel only. Images and videos of children must only be taken and used in accordance with FDC Service policies, and careful consideration given to the purpose of the

image or video. FDC educators and FDC coordinators will engage in discussions that consider the intent, appropriateness, context and consent involved in capturing and using the images and videos, ensuring the process aligns with children's learning, wellbeing and right to privacy.

Our FDC Service will regularly review how digital data, including images and videos of children, is stored. Back-ups of all digital data, whether offline or online (such as a cloud-based service), will be performed each month. Digital data stored at the FDC Service will be destroyed in accordance with the *Record Keeping and Retention Policy* and procedure. The approved provider and FDC educator will ensure staff, educators, educator assistants, visitors and volunteers do not transfer images or videos from FDC Service issued devices to personal devices, unauthorised transferring of digital data may result in disciplinary action.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND ACTIVE SUPERVISION

The approved provider, nominated supervisor, management and FDC educators will:

- ensure children are always supervised and never left unattended whilst an electronic device is connected to the internet
- provide a child safe environment to children- reminding them if they encounter anything unexpected that makes them feel uncomfortable, scared or upset, they can seek support from educators
- reflect on our FDC Service residence physical environment, layout and design to ensure it supports child safe practices when children are engaged in using technology
    - perform regular audits to identify risks to children's safety and changes in room environment set-ups that can indicate areas of higher-risk and become supervision 'blind spots'
    - only permit children to use devices in open areas where FDC educators can monitor children's use
    - be aware of high-risk behaviours for children online, including uploading private information or images, engaging with inappropriate content (inadvertently or purposefully), making in-app purchases, and interacting with unsafe individuals
    - ensure all visitors and volunteers are supervised at all times
    - ensure all devices are password protected with access for FDC educators or staff only
- where digital devices are used during transportation and excursions, they must be used in accordance with practices outlined within this policy and associated procedure.

SOFTWARE PROGRAMS AND APPS

Our FDC Service uses a range of secure software programs and apps on FDC Service-issued devices to support the educational program and administration of the FDC Service. All apps used by staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, visitors and children are carefully selected, regularly checked and kept up to date with the latest available system updates. Access to software programs and apps are password protected to ensure the privacy of children, families, FDC educators and staff. Each user is required to create their own user account and ensure log in, and password information is not shared.

The approved provider will ensure programs which require additional background checks, such as CCS Software, are only accessed by authorised staff and FDC educators who have completed necessary screening processes in accordance with Family Assistance Law. Our educational program software is used by educators to share observations, photos, videos, daily reports, and learning portfolios with families in a secure, closed platform. In addition, our FDC Service may use accounting and payroll software such as Harmony or Xero, HR systems, and compliance tools. These platforms assist in managing the FDC Service's financial, staffing, and operational requirements.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) INTERACTIONS AND GUIDELINES

FDC educators or staff using AI are to be aware of limitations, privacy risks, and the potential for errors in the information it provides. AI can support and assist FDC educators and FDC coordinators as a documentation tool; however, it is their responsibility to ensure the information's accuracy and not rely upon it as an authoritative

source. Staff and educators should ensure they enter original work into the AI program and are required to monitor, verify, and check information obtained from AI to ensure specific details are contextually relevant. Data and privacy concerns must be addressed, and FDC educators or staff should not enter details which may identify individual children, such as names and date of birth.

CONFIDENTIAL AND PRIVACY GUIDELINES

Our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* applies to all use of digital technology and online environments. All staff, FDC educators, and visitors must ensure that any information, images, or digital content related to children, families, and the FDC Service is collected, stored, used, and shared in accordance with privacy legislation and FDC Service procedures, to maintain confidentiality and protect the safety and wellbeing of children. The nominated supervisor will advise the approved provider as soon as possible regarding any potential threat to security information and access to data sensitive information. Our FDC Service will follow practices outlined within the *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Procedure* to protect personal and sensitive digital data.

The approved provider will notify the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) in the event of a possible data breach by using the online Notifiable Data Breach Form. This could include:

- a device containing personal information about children and/or families is lost or stolen (parent names and phone numbers, dates of birth, allergies, parent phone numbers)
- a data base with personal information about children and/or families is hacked
- personal information about a child is mistakenly given to the wrong person (portfolios, child developmental report)
- this applies to any possible breach within the FDC Service or if the device is left behind whilst on an excursion
- ensure FDC educators and educator assistants are aware of their mandatory reporting requirements and report any concerns related to child safety including inappropriate use of digital technology to the approved provider or nominated supervisor.

IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF ONLINE ABUSE AND SAFETY CONCERNS

Our FDC Service will implement measures to keep children safe whilst using digital technology and accessing online environments.

The approved provider, nominated supervisor and management will:

- ensure all staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, students and volunteers are aware of their mandatory reporting obligations and promptly report any concerns related to child safety, including inappropriate use of digital technology, to the approved provider or nominated supervisor [See *Child Protection Policy*]
- support FDC educators and educator assistants to:
  - encourage children to seek support if they encounter anything unexpected that makes them feel uncomfortable, scared or upset
  - listen sensitively and respond appropriately to any disclosures children may make relating to unsafe online interactions or exposure to inappropriate content, adhering to the *Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Guidance: Bullying Policy* and reporting procedures
  - respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services to management
- ensure all concerns are documented and responded to promptly and appropriately, with support provided to the child and their family as required
- report any suspected cases of online abuse to the relevant authorities, including the eSafety Commissioner and Police, in accordance with legal requirements and child protection procedures

- notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours, via NQAITS, if a child is involved in a serious incident, including any unsafe online interactions, exposure to inappropriate content, or suspected online abuse.

USE OF CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) MONITORING

Our FDC Service uses Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) to monitor the physical environment of FDC Service residence. Our FDC Service will regularly review guidance on the use of surveillance devices, including information provided by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Our FDC Service does not use baby monitors as a form of surveillance. Access to the monitor is restricted through a password-protected system to ensure security and prevent unauthorised viewing. Families are informed the FDC Service residence uses CCTV as a surveillance method during enrolment and orientation to the FDC Service.

CAMERA USE

A sign will be placed at the entrance of the FDC Service to advise families and visitors about the surveillance.

CAMERA LOCATIONS

The entrance and exit points

Cameras are not installed in private areas such as bathrooms or shower areas (for adults or children). All cameras are clearly visible.

The CCTV recording system operates in real mode, monitoring the site continuously 24 hours a day. Footage and information collected via the recording system will be governed by Australian Privacy Principles and all relevant staff and FDC educators will be kept up to date with requirements under Australia's privacy law. CCTV footage is kept on the approved service mobile device for a period of up to 2 weeks. Any recorded footage will be destroyed or de-identified when it is no longer needed for the purpose it was collected.

Access to CCTV footage at the FDC Service is strictly controlled and protected by secure, password-protected systems. Only authorised personnel are permitted to access the footage, in accordance with privacy laws and Service policies. The approved provider is responsible for determining who is authorised to access CCTV footage. CCTV footage will not be accessible to external parties (e.g., staff members, other educators or families) without appropriate authorisation. Any requests to view CCTV footage will be managed in accordance with Australian Law.

Access to the recordings will only be disclosed to:

1. the Ombudsman Victoria to assist with investigations on 'child protection' (e.g., risk of harm, abuse, neglect and ill treatment).
2. to a member or officer of a law enforcement agency e.g., Police for use in assisting with investigations.
3. the approved provider, nominated supervisor on duty to investigate situations that may have occurred.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/MANAGEMENT/FDC COORDINATOR WILL ENSURE:

- that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- FDC educators, educator assistants, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- new FDC educators, educator assistants, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of the *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* and procedure as part of their induction and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- families are aware of this *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* and procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- they promote and support a child safe environment, ensuring adherence to the *Child Safe Environment and Child Protection Policies*
- the Victoria Child Safe Standards is embedded into the organisational structure and operations

- all staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, volunteers and students are aware of current child protection law, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, Victoria Child Safe Standards and their duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to children
- professional learning is provided to FDC educators and staff relating to the safe use of digital technologies and online environments
- develop and monitor an *Electronic Device Register* for all electronic devices used at the FDC Service/residence
- appropriate ratios and adequate supervision are maintained for children at all times including when using digital technology and accessing online environments
- students, volunteers, family members and/or visitors are never left alone with a child whilst at the Service under any circumstances
- all staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, family members, volunteers and students are aware of the National Model Code and Guidelines and adhere to these recommendations for taking images or video of children including:
    - personal electronic devices or personal storage devices, that can take images or videos, are not used by FDC educators, educator assistants, family members, staff, visitors or volunteers when working directly with children
    - staff and FDC educators only use electronic devices issued by the FDC Service for taking images or videos of children enrolled at the FDC Service
    - FDC Service issued devices are securely configured, monitored and maintained to prevent unauthorised access
    - visitors who are supporting children at the FDC Service (NDIS funded support professionals, Inclusion Support Professionals) obtain written authorisation from parents/guardians to capture images or video of a child for observation/documentation purposes only. (See *ECIP Confidentiality Agreement*)
- children, FDC educators and parents are aware of our FDC Service's complaints handling process to raise any concerns they may have about the use of digital technologies or any other matter (see: *Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- the FDC Service *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* is adhered to at all times by staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, families, visitors, volunteers and students
- parents/guardians are informed of how the FDC Service will take, use, store and destroy images and videos of children enrolled at the FDC Service during enrolment and orientation
- written authorisation is requested from families to take, use, store and destroy digital documentation including images and videos of children
- images or videos of children are not taken, used or stored without prior parent/guardian authorisation
- written authorisation is obtained from parents/guardians for children to use electronic devices (See: *Cyber Safety Authorisation*)
- Written authorisation is obtained from parents/guardians to collect and share personal information, images or videos of their children online (Website, Facebook, Instagram or Harmony documentation portal.
- families are informed to withdraw authorisation, a written request is required
- images and videos for individual children are deleted or destroyed and removed from storage when authorisation has been revoked from the parent/guardian
- they review how images and videos are stored on a regular basis and ensure new educators and staff have access to relevant folders and files, if required, in accordance with their role

- digital data is stored securely, whether offline or online, using a cloud-based service, and that data is archived regularly (monthly is recommended)
- images and videos are deleted or destroyed and removed from storage devices in accordance with the *Record Keeping and Retention Policy,* images and videos used for documenting children's learning and development must be held for 3 years after the child's last day of attendance
- external agencies or specialists are consulted if concerns are identified relating to online abuse, cyberbullying or digital safety risks
- policies and procedures reflect a commitment to equity and diversity, protect children's privacy, and empower children to be independent
- collaboration with relevant professionals, as required, to support equitable access to digital technologies for all children
- they remain informed of privacy legislation through monitoring of updated from relevant government authorities such as the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)
- a risk assessment is conducted regarding the use of digital technologies by staff, FDC educators and children at the Service, including accessing online environments
- risk assessments for digital technology and online environments are reviewed annually or as soon as possible after becoming aware of any circumstances that may affect the safety, health or wellbeing of children
- policies and procedures are reviewed following an identification of risks following the review of risk assessments relating to the use of digital technologies and online environments
- staff, FDC educators, educator assistants, family members, families and children are informed of updates to policies, procedures or legislation relating to digital technologies and online environments
- a review of practices is conducted following an incident involving digital technologies or online environments, including an assessment of areas for improvement
- to install and maintain anti-virus and internet security systems including firewalls to block access to unsuitable web sites, newsgroups and chat rooms
- educators are informed of, and adhere to recommended timeframes for 'screen time' according to Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines:
    - children birth to one year should not spend any time in front of a screen
    - children 2 to 5 years of age should be limited to less than one hour per day
    - children 5-12 years of age should limit screen time for entertainment to no more than 2 hours a day.
- they share information to families about recommended screen time limits based on *Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines.*

FDC EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- adhere to the *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* and associated procedure
- participate in practical training related to digital safety, privacy protection and responsible use of technology
- understand the critical importance of implementing active supervision strategies when children are accessing online environments to keep children safe
- promote and contribute to a culture of child safety and wellbeing in all aspects of our FDC Service's operations, including when accessing digital technologies and online learning environments

- not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or video of children at the FDC Service, access social media (Facebook, Instagram or other) or breach children and families' privacy
- keep passwords confidential and log out of devices and software programs after each use
- ask permission before taking photos of children on any device and explain to children how photos of them will be used and where they may be published
- ensure children's personal information where children can be identified such as name, address, age, date of birth etc. is not shared online
- ensure that screen time is NOT used as a reward or to manage challenging behaviours under any circumstances
- introduce concepts to children about online safety at age-appropriate levels
- support children's understanding of online safety by providing age-appropriate guidance, discussions and activities that help them to recognise safe and unsafe online behaviours
- consult with children about matters that impact them, including the use of digital technologies and online environments, to ensure their voices are heard and respected in a meaningful way.

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* and associated procedure
- not use personal electronic devices, such as mobile phones, smart watches or META sunglasses, to take photos, record audio, or capture video of children being educated and cared for at the FDC Service
- be aware that sometimes other children in the FDC Service may feature in the same photos, videos, and/or observations as their children. In these cases, families are never to duplicate or upload them to the internet/social networking sites or share them with anyone other than family members.

VISITORS, VOLUNTEERS AND FAMILY MEMBERS WILL:

- adhere to the *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* and associated procedure whilst visiting the FDC Service
- not use personal electronic devices, such as mobile phones smart watches or META sunglasses, to take photos, record audio, or capture video of children being educated and cared for at the FDC Service
- report any concerns related to child safety, including inappropriate use of digital technology, to the approved provider or nominated supervisor
- obtain written authorisation from parents/guardians to capture images or video of a child for observation/documentation purposes only. This applies to visitors who are supporting children at the FDC Service (NDIS funded support professionals, Inclusion Support professionals) (See *ECIP Confidentiality Agreement*).

BREACH OF POLICY

Staff members or FDC educators who fail to adhere to this policy may be in breach of their terms of employment or engagement and may face disciplinary action. Visitors or volunteers who fail to comply to this policy may face termination of their engagement. Family members who do not comply with this policy may place their child's enrolment at risk and limit the family members access to the FDC Service.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Our *Policies* will be updated and reviewed annually in consultation with families, staff, educators and management.