



Melton City Council Family Day Care

Educator's Family Members Information Booklet

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Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm

What is Family Day Care?

Family Day Care (FDC) provides full time, part time, before and after school, weekend, 24 hour and emergency care in the home of carefully selected Educators and is available 52 weeks of the year, seven days a week, depending on vacancies and Educator availability.

Child care is provided in small groups and Educators can care for up to seven children at any one time, with no more than four children under school age. The Educator's own children are included in these ratios, regardless of where they are and who they are with.

Educators are recruited, approved and supported by the qualified and professional staff of the FDC Coordination Unit. The homes of all approved Educators must meet strict safety requirements and comply with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, the City of Melton Policies and Procedures and all other Commonwealth & State Legislation. Family Day Care is accredited by the Quality Assessment and Rating process through the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Family Day Care is an inclusive service and welcomes children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children who may have an additional need.

Will becoming a Family Day Care Educator affect my family?

Family Day Care, being a home-based service, will impact on the Educator's family and any other household members.

Family members also provide children in care the opportunity to enrich their lives further often providing the children with opportunities to interact with extended family, such as grandparents.

Family Day Care enables children to remain connected to their community while away from their parents and guardians through participation in kindergarten, school, child focused excursions and activities within the community, e.g. story time at the Melton Library. School age children are able to be cared for in the same environment as their younger siblings enabling the opportunity for family bonds to continue to develop and normalising childhood experiences while the children are away from their parents.

Family Day Care also provides an opportunity for the Educator's own children to experience positive relationships and develop their social skills and expand their network of friends.

Part of the challenge of providing a quality home-based child care service is making sure that all of the household members are aware of the expectations, the implications and the potential limitations to their existing lifestyle, when undertaking such a career. To have a successful home-based Family Day Care service it is necessary to engage all family members, seeking their co-operation and commitment to quality homebased care.

It is essential that Educators involve their family members in the decision to undertake Family Day Care and to prepare them for the additional responsibilities that are part of having Family Day Care children in their home. (Refer to roles and responsibilities page.)

Interactions:

It is important for all household members to be aware that the Educator is solely responsible for the Family Day Care children, however all the members of the household play an important role and have a huge impact on the children's experience of Family Day Care.

It is essential that all interactions with the children in care and their families are positive and respectful. It is also important that the interactions between the Educators and their family members are respectful.

Will I need to make changes to my home?

You will be required to make changes to your home both inside and outside. Many of the changes will be required to ensure the home is a suitable environment in which to undertake home-based child care.

Some of the changes maybe for safety reasons, others will be to ensure there is enough space to provide quality care at the required standard.

Discussion and agreement with family members will need to take place about the areas that will be available for Family Day Care and those areas that will be out of bounds. For example a household member may not wish to have a Family Day Care child sleep in his/her bedroom.

All areas of your home available during care hours must meet the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, the Melton City Council safety requirements and National Quality Standards. All safety requirements will need to be maintained at all times there are children in care.

Visitors during Family Day Care Hours:

The Educator and all family members need to be aware that all visitors to the home, while Family Day Care children are in care, are required to adhere to all of Council's Children's Services Policies and Procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, appropriate use of language and behaviour, as well as not smoking, drinking alcohol and not to assume any responsibility for children in care. The Policies and Procedures are available on the Melton City Council website www.melton.vic.gov.au

In compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations all visitors are required to sign in and out if visiting the Educators home whilst Family Day Care children are in care.

Child Protection:

All Family Day Care Educators, all household members and all regular visitors to the Family Day Care home, 18 years and older, are required to obtain a satisfactory Working with Children's Check and National Police Check, and pay the associated costs, prior to the Educator becoming registered with the Service.

All Educators and Family Day Care Staff are required to report children who may be at risk of harm or abuse, and to follow the Melton City Council Children's Services Policies.

Educators or other members of the Educator's family or household may be at risk of a possible child protection allegation. All allegations made must be investigated. The Educator has a duty of care to ensure they provide a safe, caring and nurturing environment for the children. Educators and all other household members need to ensure they are protected from possible allegations.

Initial and ongoing training on child protection is provided. The Melton City Council Children's Services Policies are available on the Melton City Council website www.melton.vic.gov.au

Reportable Conduct Scheme:

Allegations of child abuse against a staff member, contractor or volunteer must be reported to the Commission for Children and Young People within 3 days. If you are aware of an allegation of child abuse against a staff member, contractor or volunteer you must raise this with the Coordination Unit staff member, or in the event they are not contactable the Child Safety Officer, immediately.

Child Safe Standards:

Victoria has introduced compulsory minimum standards for organisations that provide services for children to better protect children from abuse.

Since 1 January 2017, the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) is the oversight body for the Standards. The Department is a co-regulator for organisations it funds and regulates, enabling existing regulatory and funding mechanisms to be used to drive continuous improvement.

The Standards are:

- Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
- A Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

In applying each Standard organisations must embed the following three key principles in their approach:

- Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- Promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promoting the safety of children with a disability.

Educational Program and Planning:

Educators with the City of Melton Family Day Care Service will be required to plan for the children in care to ensure the children's needs are met. These plans need to be based on the individual needs, interests and developmental stages of each child. Plans need to be flexible to allow for unexpected situations and opportunities that occur and to enable the children to enjoy the moment. Plans are to be displayed in an area seen by parents. Parents are encouraged to observe the plan regularly.

Children and families are also encouraged to contribute to planning.

Activities provided shall stimulate and develop each child's skills and interests, balancing a range of indoor and outdoor play.

Any Electronic device programs are to be age appropriate. This includes, but is not limited to, television, computers, tablets, iPods and phones. Strict ratings apply, children in care may watch programs up to G rating, and PG can be seen, by school children, with parental written permission. Things to consider when using this type of technology: Is it age appropriate, child focused, carefully planned, monitored and evaluated?

Educator Contact:

Fieldworkers undertake unannounced and appointment visits to your home to ensure that the children in care are receiving quality child care, and to support the Educator in their role. Observations are noted relating to the care environment, safety, hygiene, child development and child and Educator interactions and any other interactions taking place in the care environment during the home visit.

Parents/guardians expect this type of monitoring to be taking place while their children are in care.

It is also a requirement of the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.

Training and professional development:

Professional development plays an integral part in ensuring skills and knowledge is current, maintained and extended.

Educators with Melton City Council are required to attend a minimum of two in-service training sessions per year as approved by the FDC Coordination Unit, as well as the required regulated training. These aim to increase knowledge and skills and professional development associated with being a Family Day Care Educator. The Educator must ensure these are always current and pay the associated costs.

A minimum completed Certificate III in Children's Services or equivalent approved ACECQA qualification is to be obtained prior to becoming a contracted Educator with Melton City Council.

Insurance:

Educators are required to have appropriate insurance covering public liability and professional indemnity. This cost is incurred by the Educator.

Roles and Responsibilities of Educator's family members are to ensure that:

- The children in care feel welcome and have a sense of belonging in their new environment.
- There is no smoking in the Family Day Care environment or car while Family Day Care children are in care.
- Illegal drugs and alcohol are not to be consumed while Family Day Care children are in care.
- It is understood that the Educator is the primary person responsible for the direct care of the Family Day Care children. This includes supervision and behaviour guidance in accordance with the Children's Services Policies
- All interactions are respectful during Family Day Care hours of operation.
- Explicit language, shouting, aggressive or disrespectful behaviour is not engaged in while children are in care.
- All information about any family accessing your home-based child care environment remains confidential at all times.
- The individual child rearing practices and diversity of each family is respected.
- Family Day Care is an inclusive service and is welcoming to children from culturally and linguistically diverse background as well as children who may have an additional need.
- Each family member is responsible for ensuring the environment remains free from any identified hazards at all times while children are in care.
- There is an awareness of the Occupational Health and Safety requirements.
- There is a balance between family life and professional life.
- It's important that there is discussion with all family members regarding the type and hours of care and the impact this will have on family life and routines.

- All residents and regular visitors 18 years and over will undergo a Police Check and a Working with Children Check. Successful Working with Children Checks are required to remain current and linked with Melton City Council Family Day Care.
- There is an understanding of the importance of informing the Educator and the FDC Coordination Unit of any issues relating to suspected child abuse.
- There is an awareness of the legal responsibilities involved in providing a formal child care service.
- There is a requirement to comply with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, as well as the Melton City council Children's services Policies and Procedures.
- There is an awareness of the role of the FDC Coordination Unit. It is the Fieldworker's responsibility to address any issues that may arise that are contrary to quality child care. A collaborative approach will be encouraged to clarify any misunderstandings. This includes any breaches of legislation, either specific to the provision of home based child care or any laws in the broader social context that have a direct or indirect effect on quality child care.

Legislation:

Family Day Care is required to comply with all aspects of the law. These include, but are not limited to, the following Acts of Parliament:

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2009

Working with Children Act 2005

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999 (the Family assistance Administration Act)

Family & Community Services (2000 Budget and Related Measures) Act 2000

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999 (the Family Assistance Act),

Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004.

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (No Jab, No Play)

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Child, Youth and Families Act 2005

All other necessary Local, State and Federal Laws.

Family Day Care Educators are also required to comply with a range of Standards and practices relating to the Early Childhood Industry for example, National Quality Standards. The National and State Early Years Learning Frameworks.

Most of the above acts; Standards and Regulations will have an impact on your family and other household members. It is important that anyone who is likely to be affected by the work knows the implications prior to making a commitment. When you begin to use your home for paid work it becomes a workplace during the hours of operation and as with other workplaces there are restrictions.