Port Stephens Family Day Care and Newcastle Family Day Care

ENROLMENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

Office Hours
Monday – Friday
9.00am-4.30pm

57 – 59 Port Stephens Street
Raymond Terrace 2324

Postal Address
PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace 2324

Phone: 02 4980 0308
Fax: 02 4987 7463

After Hours Emergency Mobile:
0409 823 346

Email: fdc@portstephens.nsw.gov.au
SERVICE VISION

An innovative provider of choice delivering an accessible and supportive service

PHILOSOPHY

Port Stephens Family Day Care and Newcastle Family Day Care believe in recognising, respecting and valuing each child’s current place in their world, and actively promote belonging, being and becoming by providing a holistic, nurturing and stimulating learning environment.

We believe in and promote a quality service incorporating the core principles of the Early Years Learning Framework to create a better future for our children. Through these core principles we believe the service will continue to develop and strengthen.

Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships and strong partnerships by:

- Working together developing trust, respect and open communication between parents, children, educators and the wider community.

High expectations and equity by:

- Being committed to the role and believing that all children have the capacity to succeed.
- Holding high expectations for their achievements in learning.
- Continuing to strive to create opportunities for all children to achieve learning outcomes.

Respect for diversity by:

- Valuing and reflecting our practices, values and beliefs.
- Honouring the histories, culture, and language, child rearing practices, traditions and lifestyle choices of the families.
- Valuing different capabilities and abilities of the children and their lives.
- Assisting the children with respecting diversity. We believe in providing opportunities for children to learn about similarities and difference and how we can all live together in harmony.

Ongoing learning and reflective practices by:

- Continually seeking ways to build on educator’s professional skills and knowledge.
- Critically reflecting on current practices, philosophy, program and the environment to provide optimum learning opportunities for children to learn and grow.

We believe in being an approachable, supportive and committed childcare service within the Port Stephens and Newcastle communities and cohesive in maintaining our commitment to the educators, children and families.
OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Port Stephens Council Children’s Services are committed to providing friendly, efficient and consistent service to you. Our customers are the families who use or may use our Children’s Services.

We will continuously strive to meet or exceed the service standards and commitments set out in our charter.

WE WILL AIM TO:

- Treat you courteously and with respect
- Exceed your expectations
- Act on our commitments as quickly as possible
- Annually evaluate our Services by asking you the customer for feedback
- Use your feedback as an opportunity to continuously improve our operations
- Value your privacy by treating confidentially all personal information which you provide

FACE TO FACE WE WILL:

- Greet each customer cheerfully
- Assist you with any enquiries
- Wear name badges and give you the relevant staff names in all dealings that we have
- Listen carefully and identify your needs by asking questions and confirming details
- Provide information in plain English which is easy for you to read and understand
- Aim to meet service standards and quality practices at all times
- Always follow up on service commitments that we make
- Be punctual for meetings and appointments

ON THE TELEPHONE WE WILL:

- Answer your call promptly or alternatively ensure an answering service is provided.
- Check messages on the message bank prior to the Office opening
- Check for messages regularly throughout the day.
- Acknowledge your enquiry on the same day.
- Greet you with ‘good morning/good afternoon Port Stephens Children’s Services and introduce ourselves using our first name.
- Establish your requirements and respond accordingly.
- Where possible we will take personal responsibility for your enquiry to reduce the need for additional calls or transfers.
IN WRITING WE WILL:

- Write to you in clear, concise language that is easily understood.
- Send our standard information to you within 7 working days
- Acknowledge your letter within two working days
- Reply to your letter within 7 working days
- Acknowledge your email on the same working day and indicate time frames

WE WILL MEET OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU BY:

- Providing opportunities for you to have your say on decisions that affect you
- Building Customer Service improvement initiatives into our Business Plans
- Recruiting staff who are qualified and who have a positive attitude and exceptional skills in customer service
- Making information available upon request for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensuring access to our service information through various media and publications

HOW YOU CAN HELP US:

You can help us to meet these commitments:

- By reading all relevant information given to you by our service
- By providing accurate and complete details when phoning us with queries
- By treating us with mutual respect
- By phoning to make an appointment if you have a complex enquiry or need to see a specific staff member

HAVE YOUR SAY

As we strive to deliver a quality service, we encourage you to give feedback. Whether you have a request for action, a complaint or a compliment - we would like to hear from you.

IF YOU CAN SUGGEST WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN SERVE YOU BETTER PLEASE CONTACT:

The Children’s Services Coordinator in writing or by telephone

The Children’s Service Coordinator
PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace, NSW 2324
Ph. 02 4980 0301
PORT STEPHENS FAMILY DAY CARE and
NEWCASTLE FAMILY DAY CARE

Port Stephens Family Day Care and Newcastle Family Day Care welcome you and your family to our service and trust that your time with us will be a happy and rewarding experience.

This Enrolment Booklet has been compiled to benefit both you and your child as it is designed to answer any questions you may have prior to your child commencing care.

The Service has extensive Policies and Procedures which are available for you to access by contacting the Family Day Care Coordination Unit or at your Educator’s home.

The Federal Government funds our Family Day Care Service to provide child care places. The Scheme is licensed by the State Government; The Department of Education and Communities (DECS). Port Stephens Council sponsors our Scheme as part of its Community Services Program.

Port Stephens Family Day Care and Newcastle Family Day Care have a network of experienced and registered Educators who provide care for children in their own homes. Educators are carefully selected and supervised, and operate under the Education and Cares Services National Regulations. Children aged between the age of 6 weeks and 13 years are nurtured in a small group setting and through the Educators individualised programming are encouraged to further develop their skills and knowledge.
NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The Australian Government and state and territory governments recognise the importance of increasing their focus on the early years to ensure the wellbeing of children throughout their lives and to lift the productivity of our nation as a whole.

The National Quality Framework aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement in education and care services through:

- A National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care
- A National Quality Assessment and Rating Process
- Streamlined regulatory arrangements
- A new national body jointly governed by “The Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)" to oversee the new system

This process allows FDC to continually evaluate their service in order to improve the quality of care and service in the areas of:

- Educational Program and Practice
- Health and Safety
- Physical Environment
- Staffing Arrangements
- Relationships with Children
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Leadership and Management

OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Friday 9.00am-4.30pm

An after hours answering machine service is available to record your messages on 4980 0308. Your recorded message will be answered as soon as possible the next working day.

In the case of EMERGENCIES you can contact our mobile service on 0409 823 346 and either speak directly to a staff member or leave a message on the message bank and your recorded message will be answered as soon as possible.

The Family Day Care Office is closed on Public Holidays and over the Christmas period. In case of EMERGENCIES you can contact our mobile service during this time.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are welcome to contact the FDC office and arrange a meeting with staff to discuss your child’s development or any concerns you may have.

We welcome parent participation and involvement, through surveys and suggestions our website http://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/live/childrens-services and our Facebook group.
NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are distributed to families throughout the year to keep families up to date with important happenings within our Service. Please ensure your email address is up to date so you do not miss out on any information. Educators receive monthly newsletters.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Priority of Access is determined by The Department of Education and Training (DET)

Sometimes, there may be a waiting list for child care services and to ensure the system is fair the Australian Government has “Priority of Access Guidelines” for allocating places in these circumstances. They are used when there is a waiting list for a child care service or when a number of parents are applying for a limited number of vacant places. Every approved child care service has to abide by the guidelines and tell you about them when you enroll your child into care.

PRIORITIES

- First Priority: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Second Priority: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the ‘A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999’
- Third Priority: any other child.
Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families which include an individual or whose partner are on income support
- children in families from a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents

A child care service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority. They can only do so if you

- are notified when your child first entered care that your service follows this policy
- are given at least 14 days notice of the need for your child to vacate

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Outside School Hours Care is primarily for school children. A service may ask a child not yet in school to leave care if a child who is in school applies for a place.

CHILD CARE BENEFIT & CHILD CARE REBATE

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a subsidy from the Federal Government to assist families with the cost of their care. 50% Tax Rebate (from July 08) is a further Federal Government initiative for all taxpayers using approved child care to assist them with their child care costs.

For more information:

- visit the website at www.humanservices.gov.au
- visit your nearest Family Assistance Office (FAO), located in Medicare or Centrelink Offices
- call FAO on 13 6150 between 8am-8pm (local time) Mon-Fri

CCB and CCR will not be calculated unless you have provided Port Stephens Family Day Care or Newcastle Family Day Care with Customer Reference Numbers (CRN) for you and your children.

* If you choose to pay full fees for care and then make a claim at the end of the financial year, you will need to supply FDC with your CRN so that the Family Assistance Office will have a record of your child care usage.
FEES

Our Service has a Deregulated Fee System. Educators are classified as self-employed and are free to charge the rate that they feel is appropriate for the Service they offer, within the Services Fee Range Fee Schedule. It is recommended that Educators discuss their fee schedule with families at the interview. As part of the Educators business practice, it is a requirement that prior to a parent/guardian commencing care they pay a full fee (no CCB) of two weeks in advance.

Educators will inform and provide written notification to the Children’s Services Office and all attending families two weeks prior to any changes to their fees.

Payment is due to your Educator based on the care agreement. If the contracted care is unable to be met due to the child or family being ill or away, fees are still applicable. If the Educator is not able to meet the contracted hours due to annual leave or illness payment is not due. If the Educator or family request a change to the contracted hours a variation contract can be agreed upon.

RECEIPTING AND PAYMENT

We are required to provide families with a statement once every three months. This statement tells you what care has been provided, the fees charged and the CCB and CCR that has been paid. An Educator is responsible for collecting and receipting money paid to them by families. It is recommended that they provide you with regular receipts.

Payment of fees for care must be paid for on the first day of care each week.
- All contracted care must be paid for.
- Normal fees apply if children are unable to attend due to illness.

If a family’s regular Educator is unavailable for any reason and the family chooses to use care with another Educator, the Family is required to pay the Relief Educator according to her fee schedule. It is the family’s responsibility to ask what fee the Relief Educator charges prior to booking care with that Educator.

ADMINISTRATION LEVY

Port Stephens Family Day Care and Newcastle Family Day Care charge an Administration Levy of $1.30 per child per hour or part thereof & is added to the fee payable to the Educator. This fee contributes towards the day-to-day administration of the service.

ABSENCES

CCB can be paid for in some situations if you are charged for child care when your child is absent. CCB is paid for up to 42 absences for each child per financial year across all approved child care services except Occasional Care. These absence days can be taken for any reason with no evidence required. CCB may also be paid for additional absences above the 42 days for certain reasons. There is no limit on these days but supporting evidence may be required.
PERMISSION FORMS

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent/Photographs/Before & After School arrangements

This form is completed and given to your Educator prior to starting care. Permission is sought
• to apply sunscreen and insect repellent
• for an Educator to photograph your child
• for transport arrangements travelling to and from school (where applicable)

EXCURSIONS
(not including before and after school care arrangements)

Educators can conduct two types of Excursions:
• Routine Excursion
• Non Routine Excursion

Educators are required by regulation to ensure parents sign these forms prior to the excursion occurring. Routine excursion forms are only required to be signed once by the parent. These forms are then updated annually.

If you are not happy about your child participating in an excursion please discuss the matter with your Educator.

If Educators are transporting children in their car, they are required to have a current RTA Certificate stating that their child care restraints meet Australian Standards and are fitted correctly. RTA certificates are updated annually.

Our Excursion Policy and Transporting of Children Policy are available on our website.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Service has an extensive Policies and Procedures manual. Feel free to read these - a copy is available at the Children’s Services Office and on our website. Your Educator also has a complete set that you are able to read or refer to.
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

STEVE BERNASCONI - Community Services Section Manager
(AUTHORIZED PROVIDER DELEGATE)
- Has been employed with PSC since 1998
- Responsibilities: Recreation; Libraries; Children’s Services; Waste; Community Options

LYNETTE FITZ HENRY - Children’s Services Co-ordinator
- Has been employed with PSC since 1994
- Responsibilities: Family Day Care; Children’s Services; Pre-school; Outside School Hours;

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for the management of the Scheme; accountable to the Federal and State Governments and to Port Stephens Council.

KARYN POWTER - Family Day Care Managing Co-ordinator
(NOMINATED SUPERVISOR)
- Monday-Friday
- Diploma of Children’s Services
- Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management
- Has been employed with PSC since 1998

Coordinators provide support to Educators to ensure quality care is provided. Educators and children are visited on a regular basis. Co-ordinators ensure that the Educators adhere to all Regulations, Scheme Policies and Procedures.

KERENE SMITH - Family Day Care Co-ordinator
- Monday- Friday
- Diploma of Children’s Services
- Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management
- Has been employed with PSC since 2010

MELANIE COLEMAN - Family Day Care Co-ordinator
- Wednesday-Friday
- Diploma of Children's Services
- Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management
- Has been employed with PSC since 2011

SUE HAWKINS - Administration Officer
- Monday-Friday
- Has been employed with PSC since 2005

YVONNE JOHNSTONE - Administration Officer
- Monday-Wednesday
- Has been employed with PSC since 1990