



Prospective Educator Information Booklet



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About Port Stephens Council Children's Services

Port Stephens Council has operated Children Services since 1980. Originally this included Newcastle Family Day Care, Port Stephens Family Day Care, 8 OOSH Services (located at Medowie – two services, Raymond Terrace – two services, Seaham, Fern Bay, Tomaree, Shoal Bay) and Port Stephens Mobile Preschool at various locations throughout Port Stephens.

We have recently joined our two family day care services under the one banner of Thrive Kids Family Day Care with approximately 50 Educators with room to grow. Our service is rated “Meeting” the National Quality Standards.

We have Educators throughout the Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Cessnock, Maitland and Central Coast regions but are looking to expand our horizons to other areas.

What is Family Day Care

Family Day Care is an approved form of child care where Educators provide quality education and care in their own homes for children (6 weeks-13 years of age). Family Day Care Educators are early childhood education and care professionals who are registered with a family day care service that is responsible for approving, mentoring, training and ensure compliance of Educators.

There are many reasons why people want to offer family day care in their homes. Some find that caring for other children is a good way to provide playmates and companionship for their own children. Some want to earn an income without having to work outside of the home while others may have started by offering to care for the child of a neighbour; many others enter Family Day Care because they truly enjoy working with children in a small group setting. Whatever the reasons, if you respect, understand and enjoy children and know how to provide for their growth and development, your Family Day Care business will more likely succeed

What Is The Co-Ordination Unit?

The Coordination Unit includes the Managing Coordinator, Coordinators and Administration Officers.

The Coordination Units role is to ensure that the Education and Care Services National Regulations, National Quality Standards and the service policies and procedures are met and maintained by Educators.

The Coordination unit will provide:

SUPPORT

- regular monitor and support visits for all Educators
- weekly visits for new Educators
- programming support

- scheme meetings to provide information on legislative requirements or changes, opportunities to network with other Educators
- professional and ongoing training which includes training on experiences to use within your Family Day Care environment

ASSISTANCE

- mentoring and development
- strategies to support children in care
- emergency situations
- setting up of your Family Day Care environment
- applying for funding for inclusion support
- marketing
- work health and safety
- fire testing and tagging
- online timesheets

REFERRALS

- families requiring care
- Educators on extended leave requesting families transfer
- request for care from organisations e.g. Benevolent Society, Samaritans

PAYMENT

- Child Care subsidy on behalf of families for care provided
- purchasing of resources on behalf of Educators

FEES

- Educators determine their own fees within the range set by Port Stephens Council

Assessment and Rating

Our services are assessed and rated by the Australian Children's Education and Quality Authority (ACECQA).

The objective of the National Quality Standards is to ensure that children in Family Day Care have stimulating, positive experiences and interactions that foster all aspects of their development.

Educators are required to maintain the minimum standard as stated in the Guide to National Quality Standards. A copy of this document can be viewed on the ACECQA'S website:



To become a Family Day Care Educator you must:

Provide the following documents:

- Certificate III in Children's Services (minimum) or enrolment confirmation in Childcare specific course
- Current First Aid and CPR certificates
- Current Anaphylaxis Management certificate
- Current Emergency Asthma Management certificate
- Medical check confirming you are physically and emotionally able to care for children (Medical Practitioner to complete form)
- National Police Check and Working with Children Check number.
- Anyone over 18 year's old living in your house must also undergo a National Police check, Volunteer Working with Children Check
- Have a PRODA number
- Written permission to operate a family day care service from your landlord (if you rent your home)
- Public liability insurance

Ensure you:

- Have an appropriate understanding of children's needs and development.
- Are responsive to children.
- Are able to communicate effectively with children and families
- Are over 18 years of age
- Provide a smoke free, safe, friendly and educational learning environment
- Make any pets inaccessible to children in your care or develop a risk assessment to ensure children/parents safety.
- Have a computer or similar and internet for business information and communication
- Participate in ongoing professional development including child protection training
- Understand that you will be a small business operator and while the Coordination Unit works hard to place children with Educators income cannot be guaranteed
- Sign and abide by Port Stephens Council Family Day Care Educator Agreement
- Maintain recertification of the minimum standards required from ACECQA

Educator's Family

As the words 'Family Day Care' indicate, caring for children in your home involves the whole family. If you have a partner, children or other family members living in your house you should, as a family, talk over your plans before starting because members of the Educator's family can play an important role in the children's experience.

It is essential that Educators family member:

- Treat everyone – staff, parents and children with respect.
- Adhere to the Education and Care Services National Regulations and service policies such as non-smoking and alcohol/drug free home whilst children are in care.
- Interact in a positive manner with children and their families.
- Ensure all behaviour guidance is implemented by the Educator
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Ensure that only child appropriate TV programs, videos, games and books are accessible to Family Day Care children.
- Remember that all visitors to the home who are 13 years and over are required to sign the visitor's book.
- Recognise the need for privacy when the Educator is discussing issues with staff and/or parents.
- Ensure that dress is appropriate at all times when children are in care.
- Ensure the use of non-offensive language and tone of voice at all times when children are in care.

Smoking, drugs and alcohol

The Family Day Care service is to be a 'smoke free' environment. Educators, family members, parents and visitors are not permitted to smoke in the home whilst children are in care, nor in vehicles that children registered with Family Day Care are being transported in.

If a person wishes to smoke in the environment when children are not in care, ashtrays will need to be cleaned of ash and cigarettes prior to children arrival. Lighters, matches and cigarettes must be stored out of reach before the children re-enter care. Homes will need to be ventilated to reduce the smell of smoke.

Educators are to ensure that they maintain a drug and alcohol free environment at all times when children are in care.

Taxation

Family Day Care Educators are regarded as being self-employed by the Australian Taxation Office. It is the responsibility of the Educator to seek financial and taxation advice; however there are a number of business deductions available to Educators and this makes Family Day Care an attractive business proposition.

Memberships

Educators are encouraged to join NSW Family Day Care and Family Day Care Australia. These organisations work to represent Educator's, both nationally and at a state level. Membership to Family Day Care Australia entitles members to reduced insurance costs, an informative magazine, publications and resources at discounted prices, as well as being kept up to date on Family Day Care issues.

What support does the Coordination Unit provide?

Our coordination unit has an extensive range of experience in supporting educators in all areas of operating their business.

- Certainty of regular payments due to Council reserves
- Harmony Web software program: attendances, CCS
- Monthly monitor and support visits
- 24 hour phone support
- Educators on call for emergency support (Coordinators have all required qualifications to supervise children)
- One on one administration support to establish and conduct your business
- Professional training in a range of areas including programming, child protection, risk assessments, manual handling etc.
- Service meetings in different locations to allow Educators to access vital networking opportunities and to receive up to date regulatory and legislative information.
- Educator Facebook page that allows you to interact with other Educators, source relief Educators etc.
- Educator Agreement; this details both your and our commitment to ensuring you are supported and compliant with regulations and law.
- Compliance Book; gives you a monthly checklist to ensure you have all documentation and checks required.
- We provide you with all documentation in both paper and digital formats
- Educator Portal: this has a range of documents e.g. Staying Healthy in Childcare, Regulations etc to support you (updated annually)
- Supported playgroups once a month and individual play sessions or Play in the Park group activities
- Resources (sourced at reduced costs)
- Educational Leaders with a wealth of knowledge who can support you in determining the best way to capture your planning cycle to ensure compliance
- Transition to School program
- Fire testing and tagging (yearly and at no cost to you)

PLEASE NOTE

The following council resources available to support you in the operation of your service include Legal, Communications, Marketing, IT, Human Resources and Risk Management teams



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PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU
A row of four small, square social media icons: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.