



Family Handbook



Colac Otway Shire Family Day Care's Philosophy

- ◆ We believe in contributing to sustainable practices within our service and caring for the environment.
- ◆ We are inclusive of children with "all" abilities.
- ◆ We recognize that all children are unique and deserve to be respected.
- ◆ We believe in providing a nurturing, warm, welcoming and safe environment for children to thrive and learn.
- ◆ We respect the special relationship between children & their families & incorporate this in all our interactions with children.
- ◆ We acknowledge that our community has a diverse range of cultures, values and beliefs which is reflected in our interactions with Families, Children, Educators and the Community.
- ◆ We are proud of "our" service in the way that it is a nurturing family environment.
- ◆ We will respect the privacy & confidentiality of individuals & families
- ◆ We acknowledge and support the personal strengths, professional experiences & diversity which our colleagues bring to their work and to us as a team.
- ◆ We will work together in sharing our goals & practices to achieve the best outcomes for every child in our care.



What is Family Day Care?

Family Day Care (FDC) services support and administer networks of FDC educators who provide flexible care and developmental activities in their own homes for other people's children. To assist with this, each service receives operational support funding from the Australian Government. Both not-for-profit and for-profit providers may operate FDC services.

FDC services are responsible for the effective operation of all components of FDC, including recruiting, training and supporting educators; monitoring care provision; and providing advice, support and information for parents. The service also assists parents to select an appropriate FDC educator for their child.

FDC services can provide flexible care, including all-day care, part-time, casual, before and after school care, and care during school holidays. Some educators may offer overnight or weekend care for parents who are "on call" or work shifts. Educators may be self-employed and supported by an FDC service, while others are employed directly by the service.

FDC educators and services must meet their obligations under the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care (National Quality Framework) and comply with the National Law and National Regulations, and any other applicable state and territory regulations, when providing care to children. An educator may provide care in their home for the maximum number of children, including their own children, in accordance with the National Law and National Regulations.

Priority of Access

One of the main reasons the Australian Government funds child care is to meet the child care needs of Australian families. However, the demand for child care sometimes exceeds supply in some locations. When this happens, it is important for services to allocate places to those families with the greatest need for child care support.

The Australian Government has Priority of Access Guidelines for allocating places in these circumstances. They set out the following three levels of priority, which child care services must follow when filling vacant places:

- ◆ Priority 1 —a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- ◆ Priority 2—a child of a 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*
- ◆ Priority 3—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 whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or who or whose partner are on income support
- ◆ children in families with a non-English speaking background
- ◆ children in socially isolated families
- ◆ children of single parents.

Hours of operation

The Coordination Unit is opened:

Monday through to Friday
8:30am - 5:00pm
Closed on Public Holidays

2-6 Rae Street Colac Vic 3250
Ph 52329400

FDC Educators work flexible hours to meet the needs of parents and families within their community.

Educators can offer a wide range of childcare options e.g. part time, full time, before/after school, school holidays care, overnight care, and weekend care.

Fees for the Service

The fees are to be paid to your Family Day Care Educator on behalf of the Service at the end of each fortnight. You will receive a payment advice from your service that outlines how much you owe for the use of child care. You will need to make arrangements with your Educator on how to pay your fees.

Fees for the use of Colac Otway Family Day Care are as follows:

Main Hours	Rate	Unit
Core Standard Hours (8.00am—6.00pm)	\$7.20-\$7.65	Per hour per child
Non Core Standard Hours (6.00pm—8.00am) this includes Weekend & Public Holidays	\$8.20-\$8.65	Per hour per child

Travel Fees	Rate	Unit
Trips to and from School and Kindergarten etc	\$4.65	Per round trip

Meal Fees	Rate	Unit
Breakfast	\$3.50	Per meal
Morning Tea	\$1.55	Per meal
Lunch	\$4.50	Per meal
Afternoon Tea	\$1.55	Per meal
Dinner	\$6.00	Per meal

Administration Fees

The Service charges families an Administration Levy of \$0.35cents per hour of care per child for the use of the service.

Non Payment of Fees

Child Care will be cancelled if a parent does not make regular payments.

Please contact your FDC Educator if you are having difficulty with payments.

Child Care Benefit

To be eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB) for CCB approved child care the claimant (for example, parent, relationship parent or guardian) **must**:

- ◆ meet (or their partner meets) Australian residency requirements **and**
- ◆ have a Family Tax Benefit (FTB) child (including a relationship child) or regular care child (or a child deemed to be a regular care child) attending an Australian Government CCB approved child care service **and**
- ◆ be liable (or their partner must be liable) to pay for this child care **and**
- ◆ have the child care provided in Australia **and**
- ◆ ensure the child complies with immunisation requirements.

From 1 July 2009, the Department of Human Services recognises all couples, opposite-sex and same-sex.

Foster families who meet the eligibility criteria are also able to claim CCB. Families are not eligible for CCB for care provided as part of the compulsory education program in the state or territory in which the care is provided.

Child Care Rebate

To be eligible for the Child Care Rebate (CCR) families **must**:

- ◆ have used CCB approved care **and**
- ◆ have been eligible for CCB* (entitled at the zero rate or more) **and**
- ◆ have met the work, training, study test—for the purposes of the CCR**

Foster, shared care, kinship and grandparent families who meet the eligibility criteria are also able to receive CCR.

*There is no income test for the CCR. If families are eligible for CCB but their CCB entitlement is zero due to income, they may still be eligible for the CCR.

** Families can meet the work test for CCR if they participate in work related commitment at some time during the week or have an exemption. No minimum number of hours is required.

Parents are required to lodge a Child Care Benefit claim with Centrelink before they start care.

The Service requires the customer reference number (CRN) of the registered parent and the children attending care. If you also wish to claim the CCR through the service you must notify Centrelink as well.

If you are claiming JET funding the service requires a copy of your JET approval letter from Centrelink.

Absence from care

CCB is paid for up to 42 absence days for each child per financial year.

Absence days are referred to as "Initial 42 days absence" in the family assistance law.

- ◆ Each child receives a new set of initial 42 absence days at the beginning of the financial year.
- ◆ These absence days can be taken for any reason (provided the day being reported as an absence is a day on which care would have otherwise been provided).
- ◆ These absence days cannot be reported before a child has begun care or after a child has left care.

If your child is absent from care you will need to notify your FDC Educator as soon as possible. If your child is absent on their first day of care or their last day of day care, under CCB guidelines you will not be entitled to CCB for that day and you will be required to pay full fee for the care. The number of absence days each of your children in care have taken are outlined on your payment advice each fortnight.

Once all the first 42 absence days have been used CCB will also be payable for absences taken for these reasons:

- ◆ Illness (with a medical certificate)
- ◆ Non-immunisation (with written evidence)
- ◆ Rostered days off/rotating shift work (with written evidence)
- ◆ Temporary closure of a school or pupil-free days
- ◆ Periods of local emergency
- ◆ Shared care arrangements due to a court order, parenting plan or parenting order (with copy of documentation)
- ◆ Attendance at preschool
- ◆ Exceptional circumstances

Absence days taken for the above reasons, after the first 42 absence days have been used, are called "additional absence days". There is no limit on the number of these days for which CCB may be paid, as long as:

- ◆ They are taken for the reasons specified above, and
- ◆ Supporting documentation (where required) is provided, and
- ◆ They are days on which care would otherwise have been provided.

If you are going on holidays you need to let your FDC Educator know as soon as possible these absences are covered under your 42 days with CCB.

What to bring to Family Day Care

Parents should bring the following items to Family Day Care in consultation with their Educator:

- ◆ Nappies & wipes (if your child is not toilet trained)
- ◆ Plastic bags for soiled clothes & nappies
- ◆ Change of clothes
- ◆ Warm jacket on cool days
- ◆ Sun hat/Beanie (sun hats need to be broad brim hats in accordance with our Sun Smart Policy)
- ◆ Lunch Box (it's recommended that parents put in enough food for the day plus a little bit more as children's appetite changes while they are in care, also we advocate healthy eating in FDC).
- ◆ Drink Bottle - water is preferred.
- ◆ Milk bottles, formula or breast milk (if child is being bottle feed)
- ◆ Bed Linen - Cot Sheets, blankets or sleeping bag
- ◆ Comfort toy if required.

Share information with your FDC Educator

Our service uses a variety of communication strategies to suit the needs of families using our service. It is important that families and Educators seek opportunities to discuss your child's experiences and interests. This can be done through:

- ◆ Informal conversations when children arrive and leave
- ◆ Daily diaries/communication books
- ◆ Telephone conversations
- ◆ Communication boards/signs for information about things such as individual children's eating, sleeping, nappy changing/toileting during the day
- ◆ Information an activity displays describing the experiences that the children have been involved in

Useful information about starting child care

- ◆ Many children experience some anxiety about separating from their parents or caregivers when they start care. This is normal, and may take a little time to resolve depending upon the child's age and temperament
- ◆ When children first attend care they are often susceptible to illnesses. This is because their immune system has not yet developed to cope with exposure to the large number of other children that they come into contact with in care
- ◆ Children may do or eat things that they would not normally at home, as they respond to the new environment and to modeling by other adults and children.

Saying goodbye

- ◆ Work with your FDC Educator, preferably before commencing care, to plan strategies to assist you and your child to manage separation. For example, the child may have a special toy or comfort item or the Educator might take your child to the front window to wave goodbye so that it could be incorporated into the separation ritual.
- ◆ Spend some unhurried time with your child at your FDC Educators care environment, and then say "goodbye" calmly and confidently, reassuring your child that you will collect them later.
- ◆ Leave when you say you are going to leave. Continuing to stay for 'one more minute' can increase yours and your child's anxiety.
- ◆ Always say goodbye to your child. While it may be tempting to leave quietly, while your child is happily engaged in play, this can cause children to feel anxious and distrustful.

Education Program

The Educational Program for each child in Family Day Care must 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
- ◆ The child will be an effective communicator

We encourage parents to contribute to their FDC Educators Education Program whenever possible.

Policies and Procedures

Families are able to see the services policies and procedures at anytime and are encouraged to do so. The folder with this information is located in each FDC Educators care environment.

Our policies are reviewed frequently and we give parents opportunities to provide input into these policies.

Access to Information

Parents are entitled to request access to information pertaining to their child at any time. Information such as:

- ◆ About the content and operation of the Educational program so far as it relates to that child
- ◆ Information about the child's participation in the program.
- ◆ Assessments of the child's developmental needs and interests
- ◆ The period of time that the child has been educated and cared for by the service

Timesheets/Attendance Records

Parents are required to sign the FDC Timesheets every time their child either attends care or is booked into care. If your child is away from care and was scheduled to be there you will need to sign for that day of care.

Parents must use their legal signature when signing timesheet. Timesheets can only be signed by a person who is eighteen years or over.

If your child is absent from care you must arrange a time with your Educator to have that absent signed for before the end of the fortnight.

Excursions & Routine Outings

Educators at times take children on outings such as to the park, library, school & kindergarten. These outings can be valuable experiences for children's learning and development. Parents are required to complete a Routine/Non routine permission form if they wish their children to take part in these activities.

Medical Conditions

All children that have a medical condition attending Family Day Care must provide a medical management plan outlining their condition and the medical treatment of that condition.

Medical conditions may include Asthma, anaphylaxis or Diabetes.

The medical management plan must be kept up to date at all times.

Medical management plans must be completed in consultation with a medical professional.

Illnesses & Infectious Diseases

FDC Educators are not expected to care for children who are unwell as they may infect healthy children and your FDC Educator and their family.

It's the parents responsibility to inform their Educator if their child has developed an infectious or communicable disease.

The child/ren are to be excluded from care until the infectious period has passed. Parents can obtain the exclusion period information from the Department of Health.

Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts

(Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009)

Statutory Rule

A person in charge of a primary school or children's services centre must not allow a child to attend the primary school or children's services centre for the period or in the circumstances:

- (a) specified in column 2 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 1 of the Table in Schedule 7; or
- (b) specified in column 3 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child has been in contact with a person who is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 1 of the Table in Schedule 7.

The person in charge of a primary school or children's services centre, when directed to do so by the Secretary, must ensure that a child enrolled at the primary school or children's services centre who is not immunised against a vaccine preventable disease (VPD) specified by the Secretary in that direction, does not attend the school or centre until the Secretary directs that such attendance can be resumed. (Note—VPDs are marked in the table with an asterisk (*). Contact the Department on 1300 651 160 for further advice about exclusion and these diseases.)

Schedule 7 — Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009)

In this Schedule, medical certificate means a certificate of a registered medical practitioner.

[1] Conditions	[2] Exclusion of cases	[3] Exclusion of Contacts
Amoebiasis (<i>Entamoeba histolytica</i>)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Campylobacter	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Secretary
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until at least 4 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	Not excluded
Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Herpes (cold sores)	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible	Not excluded
Human immunodeficiency virus infection (HIV/AIDS virus)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded

Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres
for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts

[1] Conditions	[2] Exclusion of cases	[3] Exclusion of Contacts
Measles*	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case, or received NHIG within 144 hours of exposure, they may return to the facility
Meningitis (bacteria — other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
Meningococcal infection*	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
Mumps*	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
Pertussis* (Whooping cough)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
Poliomyelitis*	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
Salmonella, Shigella	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well	Not excluded
Tuberculosis	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary	Not excluded
Worms (Intestinal)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded

Further information

For further information about exclusions mentioned in this document, please contact the Department of Health's Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit on 1300 651 160 or visit the www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas.

January 2010