

Cowra Early Childhood Services

Family Daycare



Cowra Early Childhood Services
Learning Through Play

FAMILY DAY CARE

Parent Handbook

Cowra Early Childhood Services
Family Day Care Service
17 Berowra St Cowra NSW 2794

Nominated Supervisor: Melissa 0408 650741
Email: fdc@cecs.com.au

OR find us at www.cecs.com.au or our
Facebook page-Cowra Early Childhood Services

Gawaymbanha

Welcome to Cowra Family Daycare...

We look forward to being part of your child's early years and providing a positive network to support your child's education, development, and wellbeing.

The team at Family Day Care value you as the most important people in your child's life and encourage your input and opinions. We use our knowledge, experience, and role in your child's life to support you and your child through their early childhood years.

Please remember that this is your service and you are welcome at any time. We welcome your family's input and invite you to contribute knowledge, talents, ideas, skills, or your time to our programs. Please feel free to talk with us about your child– their needs, interests, development, and the things that are happening in their lives.

Cowra Family Day Care takes pride in being active within the community and encourage an awareness of our community and the people it represents, through our programs. We welcome you and your family to participate in community and cultural events with Cowra Early Childhood Services throughout the year.

Some other ways you may be able to contribute to your child's service include:

- Donating toys, resources or recycled materials
- Becoming a member of our Management Committee
- Contributing to policy reviews

We will communicate with you regularly via email-you can identify our email as Redbourne, our software provider.

We hope you enjoy your child's time at Cowra Family Day Care.

Melissa Riches

(Director/ Nominated Supervisor)





our vision

To live in a world where all children are nurtured, respected & encouraged to reach their potential.

our mission

We build relationships & provide education & care in a way that nurtures the wellbeing of children & families in a safe, inclusive & respectful environment which lays the foundation for life-long learning. We advocate for & respond to the needs of children & families across the Lachlan region.

our values

passion

We are committed in heart & mind; we energise, engage & inspire others.

diversity

We know that the inclusion of people with different ideas, strengths, interests & cultural backgrounds will help us succeed. We encourage healthy debate & difference of opinion.

integrity

We are honest, open, ethical & fair. Our professionalism is embedded into the CECS community.

leadership

We have courage to shape a better future. We are entrepreneurial, we take risks & strive for meaningful change.

Cowra Family Daycare

-our philosophy

At Cowra Family Day Care:

- We believe that Family Day Care offers a unique and valuable setting for quality early childhood care and education, which lays the foundation for lifelong learning. We believe that all children are successful, competent, and capable learners, who learn best when they can develop a feeling of belonging through secure, positive, nurturing relationships with their educators and peers whilst engaging with safe, inclusive, stimulating, and challenging environments that support a wide variety of open-ended experiences, appropriate risk-taking, exploration, discovery, and creativity.
- We believe that the rights and interests of children are paramount; each child is an active member of our community who has the right to make choices, be listened to and contribute to the group. We believe children should have a say in how they spend their day. Because we believe that play is a child's work, and that children learn through play, our curricula are based on each child's current interests and developmental needs. We believe in supporting children as they develop strong social skills, resilience, kindness, and a sense of what is fair. We are committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and safe environment where every child's rights, voice and wellbeing are protected in line with the Child Safe Standards.
- We believe children should get to play freely, indoors, and out, for extended periods of time, without adult interruption; if we listen and observe, they will show us what they know and how we can support their learning with intentional and spontaneous teaching.
- We believe in fostering feelings of appreciation and responsibility for the natural environment and encouraging respectful use of our precious resources. Children are encouraged to observe and interact with other living and non-living things to develop an understanding of the connectedness and interdependence of humans with their environment.
- We recognise that families are a child's first and most influential teachers and aim to build genuine, collaborative relationships with all families through open, honest, and respectful communication. We encourage families to contribute their knowledge of their child's learning, development, and interests, and we engage with families to support their parenting role, sharing information that may benefit their child's development and wellbeing. We respect and value the diversity of each family's home culture and welcome their involvement in any way they feel comfortable.
- We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first Australians, value the contributions of these cultures, and are committed to ensuring that our services are culturally safe spaces and our curricula include an indigenous perspective.
- We believe in the importance of equity and inclusion and use critical reflection and reflective practice as means of working towards equitable outcomes for all children and their families, and to ensure all children can participate fully in the programs.
- We believe learning is for life; staff and educators work as a team to foster a culture of continual improvement and ongoing learning by regularly participating in opportunities to build on our professional knowledge and development of the individual.

Cowra Family Day Care acknowledges the Wiradjuri people, the traditional owners, and custodians of the land on which we work, learn and play.

Service Information

About Cowra Family Day Care

Cowra Family Day Care was established in 1985; we are a not-for-profit, community-based organisation. Cowra Family Day Care receives its funding through a CCCF grant from the Federal Government and is run by our Coordination Unit.

Family Day Care is an approved form of childcare that is provided in a qualified family day care educator's own home or approved venue. Educators can provide flexible care for children: full time, part time, casual, emergency, special needs, before and after school as well as vacation care. Children aged 6 weeks to 13 years of age are eligible to access the service. The Coordination Unit's role is to provide a support service for educators and families with its operation overseen by our General Manager and a volunteer Management Committee. The Management Committee is comprised of parents and community members and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the regulatory requirements, effectiveness & efficiency.

Family Day Care Service Staff (Coordination Unit)

Family Day Care Coordination Unit staff include three early childhood trained staff: -

- Director/Nominated Supervisor: Melissa Riches
- Support Coordinators/Educational Leaders: Natalie Clarke and Keira Wills

The scheme is supported by the CECS Administration Team.

Hours of Operation are Monday-Thursday 9am –4pm.

An after-hours emergency number is available to educators.

Service Approval

Cowra Family Day Care service is approved by the Department of Education NSW.

Our Educators

Educators may provide care for a maximum of 7 children under the age of 13. This includes a maximum of 4 children under school age.

All educators hold minimum Certificate III in Children's Services, First Aid, Asthma & Anaphylaxis Emergency Management and Child Protection training. They also hold a valid Working with Children Check and undergo a National Police Check.

Any adult resident of their home must also have successfully undergone a Working with Children Check and a Police Check.



Regulatory Authorities



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and, as well as out of school hours care services across Australia. It consists of:

- National Law and National Regulations
- National Quality Standard
- Assessment and Quality Rating Process
- National Learning Frameworks

National Law and National Regulations

These laws and regulations set national standards covering things such as quality, staffing, safety and operations for services such as long daycare and family daycare. They are enforced by state/territory authorities and overseen by The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes 7 quality areas that are important to outcomes for children.

Assessment and Rating Process

The Assessment and Rating process involves Authorised Officers coming to the service and assessing them under the NQS to ensure that quality care is being provided. These Officers discuss, observe and sight documentation and evidence of quality practices. From their assessments, each service receives a rating in one of 4 possible categories; Significant Improvement Needed, Working Towards, Meeting, Exceeding

National Learning Frameworks

These National Frameworks form the foundation for ensuring that children in all early and middle childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning. The two frameworks used by Cowra Family Daycare are:

- The Early Years Learning Framework v2.0
- My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Aged Care in Australia

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

All early childhood services are required to develop a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) under the National Quality Framework. This ensures that the service is continually thinking about ways they can improve over time. Our first step is to self-assess our own practices against the 7 quality areas, then identify the areas that present opportunities for improvement. We pair these with steps that will be taken to reach that improvement.

The FDC QIP is available at the Coordination Unit to families; we regularly update this document as we reach our goals and add new ones. If you wish to contribute ideas about how you think we can improve, please discuss with your educator, or contact us at the Coordination Unit- we welcome and value your input.



Fee Structure

The Coordination Unit sets a fee range for educators, taking into consideration their qualifications, experience, and the services they can offer their client families. Your fees will cover all the time that your child is with the Educator or is the responsibility of the Educator. The contracted hours are to be negotiated between the Educator and the Parent.

Fee range for standard hours of care is between \$11.00 and \$16.50 per hour.

A Parent Administration Fee is also charged and is additional to the above rate. It is currently \$2.20 per hour per child but is capped at \$35.00 per family per week.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Depending on the family's income and approved activity, the Federal government will pay a percentage of their childcare fees for a specified number of hours of care each week. This is called Child Care Subsidy (CCS). It is the responsibility of the family to contact Centrelink and be assessed for their eligibility for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and to ensure that the CRN is written correctly on the enrolment form. Please notify the Coordination Unit or Administration Team if your percentage or eligible hours for CCS changes.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is applied to both the Educator Fees and the Parent Administration Fees.

Absences

CCS is paid for up to 42 absences for each child across all approved childcare services. Each child receives a new set of absence days at the beginning of each financial year. These absences can be taken for any reason provided the day being reported as an absence is a day on which care would normally be provided.

Additional Absence Days for Exceptional Circumstances

A maximum of 20 additional absences for exceptional circumstances can be approved, and documentation supporting the claim must be provided.

First and Last Day Absences

No Child Care Subsidy is paid for an absence on the first and last day of your child's care. This means that if your child is absent on the first day they are booked to start care, you must pay full fee for that care. Similarly, if your child is absent in the lead up to finishing in care, full fee must be paid for all the absences between the last day of booked care and the last day your child was in care.

Absence Notice

Parents are requested to give notice of a child's non-attendance as soon as possible. Educators are requested to advise parents if they are unavailable to provide care at the earliest possible time, including when they are planning to take leave.

If your educator is unable to provide care, you **will not** be charged.

Late Fees

Parents are to contact their Educator prior to the end of their contracted hours if they are going to be late. Late fees may apply for the extra time and is at the discretion of the educator. This will be charged in 15-minute intervals.

The Contract of Care

Permanent bookings are made between families and their Educator, who acts on behalf of the scheme, and documented on a Parent/ Scheme agreement form. Changes to permanent days or hours of care can be negotiated with the Educator, who then submits a “change of booking request” to the Admin. team via Harmony. Parents may request a copy of their contract.

Standard hours Care

- provided between the hours of 8am and 6pm from Monday to Friday.

Non-standard hours

- Any care provided outside the hours of 8am and 6pm from Monday to Friday.

Casual on Call

- Where care is booked on an irregular basis.

Termination of Care

Parents are to discuss termination of care notices with their Educator when completing the Parent/Scheme Agreement and signing the Fee Schedule. Notice required varies between educators.

Overnight Care

Overnight care must be approved by the Coordination Unit; Parents are to contact the Coordination unit if overnight care is required.

School Aged Children

Before or After school care for school aged children is contracted for school term only. Parents and Educators are required to recontract for school holidays. School holiday care needs to be booked, and a Parent/Scheme Agreement completed in advance. All other care will attract the Casual on call rate.



Child Protection and Safety

Cowra Early Childhood Services 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 Service embeds the NSW Child Safe Standards 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 ensure all educators, staff, visitors 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 Service adheres to the [National Model Code and Guidelines](#) for taking images or videos of children released by ACECQA 1 July 2024.

Cowra Family Daycare
is committed to implementing the Child Safe Standards.

- STANDARD 1**
Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
- STANDARD 2**
Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
- STANDARD 3**
Families and communities are informed and involved
- STANDARD 4**
Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
- STANDARD 5**
People working with children are suitable and supported
- STANDARD 6**
Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused
- STANDARD 7**
Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
- STANDARD 8**
Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
- STANDARD 9**
Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved
- STANDARD 10**
Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

For more information on the Child Safe Standards visit www.ocg.nsw.gov.au

NSW GOVERNMENT | Office of the Children's Guardian

Beginning Care

The Enrolment Process

If you require care for your child, the Coordination Unit will supply you with contact details of available educators. Please contact this educator to arrange a suitable time to visit their service. It is recommended that you prepare any questions you may want to ask the educator in advance and discuss your child's needs at this time.

After this meeting, please contact the Coordination Unit and let us know if you decide to place your children in the care of that educator. Prior to commencing care, you will be required to complete all enrolment documentation and pay the annual enrolment fee of \$50 per child (only one enrolment fee per child is paid if using multiple CECS services).

Please understand that it is essential that we have up to date information in the event of an emergency. It is important that you notify the Nominated Supervisor/Director OR Administration Team if any of the below changes:

- Address
- Telephone Numbers
- Contact Details
- Emergency Contacts/Authorized Adults to collect
- Health or Medical needs
- Court Orders or Parenting Arrangements

Attending Care

Your child must be signed in on arrival and out upon departure. Please be advised that no child will be allowed to leave our service with an adult who is not authorised on the enrolment form to collect. You may add an adult to collect your child by writing via text, fax or email to the Coordination Unit or Administration Team. If your child's educator has not yet met this person, they may be requested to provide photo identification.

A child will not be released into the care of a person who is prohibited by a court order. The court order must be provided to the Coordination Unit and Administration Team.

Mealtimes

Some educators provide meals and some do not, meaning you will be required to pack a lunchbox for your child. Cowra Family Daycare Educators follow the Munch and Move program which supports the healthy development of young children from birth to five years of age attending early childhood services in NSW. Please send your child with enough healthy, nutritious foods to last the day.



It is crucial that you notify your educator of any allergies and intolerances. If so, a Medical Action Plan will be required from your doctor.



Sleep/Rest

All children will be provided with appropriate opportunities for sleep and rest during their time at care. Please discuss your child's sleep/rest needs with your educator. Our educators are required to follow our Sleep and Rest Policy which is guided by Red Nose Australia.

Pack your child a **HEALTHY LUNCH BOX**



Choose a variety of foods from each food group

Fruit



Vegetables



Dairy



Wholegrains



Lean meat & alternatives



A Healthy Lunch Box



**MAKE WATER
YOUR DRINK**



**PACK ICE BRICKS
TO KEEP FOOD
COOL**



**USE A THERMOS
TO KEEP FOOD
WARM**



Health

Illnesses, Infections and Medications

Illness of a Child Policy Excerpt

The health of children, families and educators is of the highest priority in our service. If your child is ill or has a contagious disease, your child will not be accepted into care.

If your child becomes ill whilst in care you will be contacted immediately and asked to pick the child up as soon as possible. Educators are unable to care for a sick child while caring for other children. It is the parent's responsibility to inform their Family Day Care Service if an infectious condition has been diagnosed in their family.

Your educator will follow the guidance of Staying Healthy in Childcare-6th Edition, as well as several CECS policies and procedures in relation to illness. Listed below is some information from these policies. Should you wish to see the policies in their entirety, please don't hesitate to contact us at the Coordination Unit or ask your educator.

Administration of Paracetamol and Medication Policy Excerpt

FDC educators will only administer Prescription Medication. Over-the-counter medication will not be given unless the child's doctor has written it as a prescription, where a name label, dosage and date etc are included. A medication form needs to be filled in by the parent or an authorised person and signed by the educator each time it is administered.

Medication will only be administered if it is current and in the prescribed bottle, clearly labelled with a prescription label, with the child's full name and dosage required. Medication must be handed to the FDC Educator upon arrival; it will be placed in the appropriate storage area. Please do not leave medications in children's bags as other children may find them. If your child has a medical condition that requires long-term medication, please notify your educator/s so that emergency procedures can be discussed.

Infectious Diseases Policy Excerpt

Educators will exclude children who are sick or infectious with illnesses. These include, but are not limited to Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis, Ringworm, Diarrhoea, Rubella, Influenza, Impetigo, Whooping Cough, Hand, Foot & Mouth, Coronavirus etc.

Please be mindful that your educator has a duty of care to not only herself, but the children in her care. Sending your sick child will put other families at risk, can prevent your educator from operating the service and adds additional cleaning requirements for your educator. Your child is too sick to attend care if:

- Your child requires paracetamol or ibuprofen to get through their day
- They have multiple symptoms of illness e.g. green runny nose, coughing, irritability, changes in appetite or sleep, fevers, muscle aches, headaches, diarrhea, vomiting, increased clinginess, seeking comfort etc.

Please ask yourself the following questions if you are unsure about sending your child to care:

- Will my child be well enough to participate in the day comfortably and happily?
- Will my educator be able to care for my child, without it affecting their ability to care for the other children?
- Could my child pass on illness to their peers or educator?

Please collect your child promptly if your child becomes unwell while in care.

Medical Conditions Policy Excerpt

Anaphylaxis: Children who are diagnosed as having Anaphylaxis MUST have an Anaphylaxis Management Plan completed by their doctor. This plan must be updated annually, and it is the responsibility of the parent to provide the educator and Coordination Unit with the updated copy. A Risk Minimisation Plan will then be created with the parent and educator.

Food Allergies: Children with allergies and intolerances will only be given food that is prepared specifically for them (usually by the parent). If the educator provides food, the foods that they serve must be approved by the family.

Specific Medical Conditions: Specific Medical Conditions for example, Epilepsy or Diabetes etc will require an Emergency Medical Plan approved by a doctor prior to commencing care, when the child is diagnosed, when treatment changes or at least annually. A Risk Management Plan will then be created with the parent and educator.

Any child with specific medical conditions or health care needs CANNOT attend care without their required medications on site e.g. EpiPens, asthma puffers etc.

Please ensure you maintain open communication with your educator and provide updates with any changes in your child's medical conditions.

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Excerpt

Under National Law, section 263, Early Childhood Services are required to comply with Australian privacy law, which includes the Privacy Act 1988 (the Act). Cowra Family Daycare aims to ensure that the confidentiality of information and files relating to the children, families, staff and visitors using CECS is always upheld. We will ensure that all records and information are held in a secure place and will only ever be released to people who have a legal right to access this information.

To protect your personal information, we maintain physical, technical and administrative safeguards. These include but are not limited to any hard copies being stored in a locked cupboard, all computers are password protected, with staff being provided with a unique usernames and passwords. Access to such information will be restricted to key personnel and we have high security software installed on all devices.

All CECS staff are required to adhere to the ECA Code of Ethics and must read and sign our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy annually.

CECS-Managing Children with Asthma Policy Excerpt

A child diagnosed with Asthma will be required to obtain an Asthma Action Plan that is prepared in consultation with a doctor. This action plan will need to be updated annually, or whenever medication or management changes. A Risk Minimisation Plan will then be created between the parent and educator.

The above information on this page, and the one previous, are all excerpts from our policies and procedures. Should you wish to see any of our policies in their entirety, please contact us on the details provided on the next page and we can arrange a copy for you.

Complaints, Feedback and Comments

If for any reason, you wish to make a complaint or provide feedback of any nature, please contact us.

Cowra FDC Nominated Supervisor
Melissa Riches
0408 650 741
fdc@cecs.com.au
17 Berowra St. Cowra NSW 2794

General Manager/Management Committee
Libby Ewing-Jarvie
0414 987 258
admin@cecs.com.au
17 Berowra St. Cowra NSW 2794

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