



# Midcoast Family Day Care Parent Handbook

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with families.

## Welcome.

Our Parent Handbook explains important information you will need to be aware of while your child is enrolled at our service

We strongly recommend you read the provided information and ask questions to confirm your understanding of how the Service operates. You will be required to sign and return the form on the last page of the handbook to confirm you have read and understand the information you have been given in your enrolment pack.

*We have an open-door policy. You and your family are welcome to visit our Service at any time.*

Our office locations are:

- Coffs Harbour – 179 Rose Ave, Coffs Harbour
- Grafton – Shop 7 King Arcade, 22-26 King Street Grafton.

## Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we work, meet and play.

We would like to pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia.

We would like to thank them for allowing us to live, play and explore on their lands.

We are mindful that within and without the bricks and mortar of buildings, the land always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



# Service Information

Our Service caters for children aged 0-12 years. Our Coffs office is open from 8-30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Our Grafton office is open from 8:30am – 4:00pm when staffed. Both offices are closed on NSW public holidays and over the Christmas period.

We service the areas across the Mid North Coast of NSW including The Coffs Coast, The Clarence Valley, Northwest Slopes, Macleay Valley, Hastings Valley, and surrounding areas.

# Contact Information

Coffs Harbour – 02 66527 927

Grafton – 02 6642 3351

Email: [admin@mfdc.net.au](mailto:admin@mfdc.net.au) Website: [www.mfdc.net.au](http://www.mfdc.net.au)

Service Providers: Swanfels Pty Ltd Service

Director: Sue Parker      Nominated Supervisor: Bonnie Rountree      Educational Leader: Danielle Bates

# Fees

Families are required to complete the online Child Care Subsidy assessment via the [myGov](#) website prior to starting at the service. This will determine your eligibility and level of Child Care Subsidy entitlement.

On enrolment we will need the CRN of the person linked with the child, along with the child's CRN so we can confirm register attendance and ensure that you are receiving the appropriate subsidy.

Each educator has their own fee schedule. You will need to discuss fees when you visit or at the time of interview

## Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Child Care Subsidy is a means-tested subsidy paid directly to the Service as a fee reduction. There are 3

factors that will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy, which include:

1. Combined Family Income
2. Activity Test for both parents
3. Service Type

Transitioning to Child Care Subsidy requires families to provide information and confirm current details by using your Centrelink online account through [myGov](#). Here you will be asked to provide your combined family income estimate for the financial year, hours of recognised activity including work, training, study and volunteering and the type of child care your family uses.

# Allowable Absences

You can be paid for any absence from approved care your child attends for up to 42 days per child per financial year. Additional absences beyond 42 days for certain reasons may be approved and paid. Please talk to us about the additional absences.

Public holidays will be counted as an absence if the child would normally have attended the Service on that weekday, and fees have been charged for that day for the child. You can access your child's absence record on your online statement by selecting 'View Child Care Details and Payments' on your [Centrelink online account](#). Please note: No child can start or finish their care on an absence. A full fee will be charged if this occurs.

# Regulatory Authorities

Our Service complies with the National Quality Framework (NQF) including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework (or other Approved Framework) and the National Regulations (Education and Care Services National Regulations).

Our Service is regulated by the new national body for early education and care – the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department in our State/Territory. To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below:

**Quality Assurance and Regulatory Services Directorate. Early Childhood Education, NSW, Department of Education**  
Locked Bag 5107 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124 - [www.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au)  
Phone - 1800 619 113,  
Email: [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)

## Service Closing Time and Late Fees

Please make note: educators set their own closing times. Please ensure you discuss drop off and pick up times with your educator at the time of interview. A late fee may be incurred for children collected after their booked times. This is set by the individual educator.

If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within an hour of the Service closing, then we will contact Department of Education and Communities and the Police to take responsibility of your child.

## Confidentiality

We are committed to protecting your privacy. We support and are bound by privacy laws to ensure strict confidentiality is maintained.

To plan programs with you we need to collect information from you. This information helps us to assess and plan programs in partnership with you. We do not disclose personal information about you or your child to other people or organisations without your consent unless we are required to do so by law. We do not ask for personal information about you or your child from other professionals or organisations without your consent. You can look at the information in your child’s file at any time or request a copy of information in the file.

## Service Policies and Procedures

You will find a copy of our service policies and procedures at each educator’s home, accessible through the SchoolStream App as well as in both offices. We expect our staff and families to adhere to our policies and procedures at all times to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by the National Law and Regulations.

We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures and ask for staff and family participation to ensure our policies and procedures adhere to family’s needs and meet required regulations. Your involvement helps us to improve our service and may lead us to change our policies and procedures.

# Our Team of Staff



Sue Parker – Approved Provider



Bonnie - Manager



Finance - Jolene



Admin – Sandra



CDO - Emily



CDO - Jemma



CDO – Kellie



CDO - Danielle



CDO - Kerri

# Enrolment Information

Prior to commencing at our Service, you will be required to complete all enrolment documentation and pay an administration fee of \$50. This is a one-off fee payable per family. This also entitles one child to a free hat. If more than one is required there is a fee of \$15.00 per hat. You will also be requested to pay a Bond of \$200 for the first enrolment and an additional \$100 for any additional enrolments/ children to secure your child's enrolment. The Bond payment is completely refundable when your child's enrolment ceases.

Please understand that it is essential we have up-to-date information in case of an emergency.

It is important that you notify the Nominated Supervisor (or Responsible Person) of any changes to enrolment information including:

- Address
- Health
- Telephone/mobile numbers
- Contact details
- Family changes
- Emergency contact information details etc.

It is essential that we have copies of your child's immunisation status. Each time your child has an immunisation we require an updated immunisation status. You can access these through your MyGov account. We are also required to have certified copies of any court orders relating to the child.

Each year your educator will require you to complete the following forms to update your enrolment:

- Family Details Update Form
- Skin Care, Sunscreen and Other Products Authority
- Excursion Authorisations (for routine excursions)
- Medical Risk Minimisation Plans (where applicable).

In the circumstance that you have a new sibling entering care – a new enrolment form needs to be completed.

## Court Orders

Parents must notify your educator or the service if there are any Court Orders affecting residency of their children. A copy is also required to be given to the Service. ***Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting a child.***

## Goals for your child at our Service

***"We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being." Maria Montessori***

Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning. Children's early learning influences their life chances.

We will create a range of short and long-term goals for your child that we will program to and observe on which will be based on the outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework and include:

- Mutual respect and empathy
- Concern and responsibility for self and others

- A sense of self worth
- Social awareness
- Importance of sustainability
- Self-discipline
- Habits of initiative and persistence
- Creative intelligence and imagination
- Self-confidence as an independent learner
- A love of learning



We strongly encourage communication between families and educators to ensure continuity in what we are delivering to your child and acknowledge that the role of the Educator is to work in partnership with families; children's first and most influential educators.

## Educational Program

We follow the Early Years Learning Framework and My Time Our Place as per our programming policy. This is Australia's first national Early Years Learning Framework for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to twelve years and through the transition to school.

We are committed to providing a developmental and play based program, which caters for each child's individual needs, abilities and interests. Our program will continue to develop as we use the relationships children have with their families and communities, working in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our programs.

We encourage children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests and routine. We use conversations, actions and play as the basis for learning, involving the children as partners in discovery and wonder. We encourage children by promoting their independence and self-help skills, assisting within the routine and involving the children in interest-based projects to further enhance their learning and knowledge. We value children and family input and encourage family involvement in order to gather a comprehensive and holistic view of the child.

We know children learn effectively through play and Educators who are diligent in supporting each child. Applying strong intentional teaching practices will provide the children with an authentic and meaningful learning environment that challenges, supports and nurtures a child's development.

If we have any areas of concern, we will inform you and advise where help may be pursued, e.g. speech therapist. We understand this is a sensitive topic and it is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with parent



# Early Years Learning Framework

Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children’s lives as characterized by Belonging, Being and Becoming.

**Belonging:** Experiencing belonging – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighborhood and a wider community. Belonging acknowledges children’s interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

**Being:** Childhood is a time to be, seek and make meaning of the world. Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children’s lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life’s joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

**Becoming:** Children’s identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.



## Early Years Learning and My Time Our Place Outcomes



## Parent Participation

The Service has an Open Door Policy and actively seeks and encourages families to be involved in the Service. This can range from evaluating and adding input to your child's program and observations, volunteering within the Service and sharing skills & experiences that the children and the program will benefit from.

Your involvement can be as formal or active as you like as time permits. We respect that time is limited for most families and we ask that you inform us as to your preferred way of communication. You can arrange meetings with your child's Educator at a time that suits you throughout the year. Together with the educators, we offer communication via email, SMS, Facebook and Newsletters. We seek input from

families on all aspects of the Service but in particular, your child's goals, observations and program. Each educator also has their own programming book that they pride themselves on – you are free to view this on a regular basis.

If you have any concerns, please see your child's educator or the Nominated Supervisor. We have a grievance procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns

## Your occupation or hobby

You are the most important person in their world. We welcome all parents to the Service to talk about their occupation or hobby (e.g. music, craft, cooking). Everything parents do interest's children and these talks are the best educational resources you can provide for the Service.

Educators can use information that has come from discussions about occupations and hobbies in their program and the ideas explored can turn into interest projects providing valuable learning.

## Your home culture

Your home culture is most welcome in our Service. We would greatly appreciate if you were able to share with our Service aspects of your culture and family life. This would assist us to enrich the lives of all our families and children.

## Reading (especially good for grandparents)

Children love to be read to. If you or your parents have the time please contact your Educators to organise a day for reading.

## Recycled items

We are always on the lookout for recyclable items. Please discuss this with your educator.



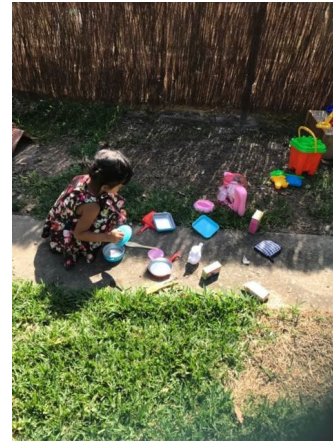
# Suggestions

Parents are welcome to visit or call the Service at any time. If you have any suggestions or ideas on how we best can work together in the Service please let us know.

## Communication

Everyone has a different communication style, preference and time. we understand that mornings and afternoon can be a little rushed, and may not be the best time to discuss your child's day. We have many other methods of communication and information sharing for families:

- Newsletters,
- Emails
- Letters
- Facebook / social media platforms and Apps
- Phone calls and text messaging
- Face to face conversations



## Arrival and Departure

For safety and security reasons all children must be signed in on arrival and out upon collection each day they attend care. The exact time must be noted on the attendance record. No child will be allowed to leave our service with any person who is not an authorised person as stated on the child's enrolment form, unless prior arrangements are made with the educator with photo ID of who they are and written confirmation from the authorised parent or guardian.

## Preparing your child for care

Orientation is an important start for your child and family to connect to the service. We encourage each child to attend the Service in the company of a family member at the time of interview. This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program, the lay out of the educators' home, where to find things, provide Educators with additional information about your child and how we can best support their transition and settling period.

If your child is reluctant to attend, please discuss this with your Educator so that they can develop strategies with you to support the transition from home to Family Day Care. You are welcome to take photos of your child in our environment to show and discuss at home.

Communication between home and your educator must be open and happen often to best support your child during this time. There may be tears and extra tight hugs when saying goodbye for the first few weeks but there are always cuddles, reassurance and genuine care from Educators for both the children and their families. Sometimes this experience is upsetting more so for the family, not the child. We understand this and offer support through phone calls during the day, photos and open communication.

## Saying goodbye

Ideally, your child will be settled at an activity before you leave, however some children find it hard to settle until their parents have gone. What works best is a set routine so try to establish the care routine from the orientation process. Being well organised and avoiding a rush usually results in a calm start to the day.

Most children will want to have a look around first to see who else has arrived and to look at what activities are available. Please tell your child when you are leaving as they may become upset if they haven't had the opportunity to say goodbye. This will gain trust from the child, not only in you but in the Educator who is reassuring your child about their day and when you will return. Rest assured, your educator will contact you if your child becomes distressed.

# What to bring to the Service

## Backpack

For independence, we work towards all children being able to recognise and open their own bag. Let them be involved in selecting the bag and taking ownership of it. Please ensure it is large enough to hold all their belongings and is clearly labelled. Obviously, this does not apply to babies and some toddlers

## Morning tea and lunch

Please note - some educators do provide lunch as part of their service. Please check with your individual educator upon interview. If your educator doesn't provide food, then morning tea can be sent in either a medium-sized snap-lock bag (which can be reused) or if you prefer a small container, clearly labelled with their name. Also include one drink bottle - again with their name on it. Educators always provide water and cups, but a drink bottle is a great start. Please discuss fridge access with your educator as the fridge may also be the family fridge or inaccessible.

Children are asked to bring their lunch in a plastic lunch box with a lid that they can open. Please put your child's name on both bottom (at each end) and the lid. Please think about your child's ability to unwrap their lunch and open such things as muesli bars. Educators can provide tips to make this easier for your child.

## Lunch box example

We try to encourage a healthy lunch within our Service. Please see images below for lunch box suggestions



## Breastfeeding

Our Service supports breastfeeding. Families that are breastfeeding should ask educators to be made aware of our policies on storing and serving breast milk. Families that are formula feeding should also consult our policy to be aware on how we need the formula prepared and stored.

# What food to pack your child for a busy day at our Service

It is expected that we see your child consume 50% of the RDI at the Service.

## Recommended daily intakes

Recommended average number of standard serves per day in accordance with Nutrition Australia.

Toddlers	Vegetables & legumes	Fruit	Grains (cereal)	Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, seeds, legumes, beans	Milk, yoghurt, cheese & alternatives	Allowance for additional serves from any food group*
GIRLS AND BOYS 1-2 YEARS	2-3	0.5	4	1	1-1.5	0
GIRLS AND BOYS 2-3 YEARS	2.5	1	4	1	1.5	0-1

CHILDREN	Vegetables & legumes	Fruit	Grains (cereal)	Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, seeds, legumes, beans	Milk, yoghurt, cheese & alternatives	Allowance for additional serves from any food group*
GIRLS 4-8 YEARS	4.5	1.5	4	1.5	1.5	0-1
GIRLS 9-11 YEARS	5	2	4	2.5	3	0-3
BOYS 4-8 YEARS	4.5	1.5	4	1.5	2	0-2.5
BOYS 9-11 YEARS	5	2	5	2.5	2.5	0-3

Reference: Nutrition Australia

<http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resource/australian-dietary-guidelines-recommended-daily-intakes>

## Clothing

It is helpful to your child if they are dressed in non- restrictive, serviceable and easy to wash clothes so that they feel free to join in all the activities and to develop independence. Shoes also, need to allow children freedom to run, climb, hop & jump as well as being easy for the child to take off and put on by him/her.

Bare feet may be encouraged by some educators – this is so children can feel the different textures of the ground (sand and grass), has been proven to restore our ‘natural’ walking patterns, taps into ‘earthing’ properties (getting rid of negative energy from our bodies), builds immune system, improves safety in terms of children’s balance etc.

## Spare clothes

Every now and then accidents occur and it may be necessary for your child to get changed into a fresh set. Please include a complete change of clothes every day which can stay in your child’s bag...just in case!

## Toys

Educators have an abundance of toys and we ask that children do not bring in toys from home. This eliminates toys getting lost, broken, disappointment for other children and responsibility on Educators to track numerous toys throughout the day.

## Physical Play

Physical play includes activities that use physical movements to allow children to use their energy, enhance their concentration, motivation, learning and wellbeing. We feel physical play is a vital part of everyday life. We believe in providing children with a range of physical activities and experience on a daily occurrence for them to challenge their large and small muscles, allowing them to gain increasing control over their bodies as they learn the importance of physical play.

Physical play provides children with the opportunity to:

- Develop strong bones and muscles,
- Improve strength and balance
- Develop Flexibility and coordination
- Develop Fundamental Movement Skills
- Develop spatial awareness
- Develop mathematical concepts
- Be confident as they learn to control their bodies and understand their limits
- Learn to cooperate and share with others
- Promote healthy growth and development



## Sustainability

Our Service is passionate about sustainability. We believe in supporting children to appreciate and care for the environment by embedding sustainable practice into the daily operation of our Service, infrastructure and learning. In order to empower our sustainability program we emphasise children’s ability to make a difference, enabling them to learn and appreciate their environment in an engaging, fun and exciting manner. We do this by involving children in discussion about sustainable practice, encouraging them to participate in a recycling program, reducing energy and conserving water. We aim to provide children with the skills and knowledge required to become environmentally responsible.

## Rest and Sleep

Rest and sleep routine varies according to individual needs. Our educators aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. They may provide stretcher beds for children and play soft music in the background. Your child may wish to bring a security item to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest or sleep needs with Educators.

## Sun Safety

Children and Educators will wear hats and appropriate clothing when outside. Staff will encourage children, by way of modelling behaviour, to avoid excessive exposure to the sun and to wear suitable sunscreen (at least SPF 30+), which is reapplied according to the manufacturer's recommendations. We ask that children come to the Service with sunscreen already applied so they are able to participate in outdoor play immediately and not have to wait the 20 minutes after application.

## SUN HAT

A sun protective hat must be worn every day when playing outside for protection against the sun. Please make sure to include it in your child's bag every day regardless of the weather conditions.



## Immunisation

From 1 January 2018, children who are unvaccinated due to their parent's conscientious objection can no longer be enrolled in child care. The Public Health Act 2010 prevents NSW child care centres from enrolling children unless approved documentation is provided that indicates that the child:

- Is fully immunised for their age
- Has a medical reason not be vaccinated
- Is on a recognised catch up schedule

The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age five. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

Children with medical contraindications or natural immunity for certain diseases will continue to be exempt from the requirements.

Families eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and have children less than 20 years of age, who may not meet the new immunisation requirements, will be notified by Centrelink.

# When should I not send my child to the Service?

Our Service is a busy and demanding day for the bodies and minds of our children, we are not equipped to care for sick children; however, we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care. To try and prevent the spread of disease, please monitor your child's health and watch for:

- A runny, green nose
- High temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic

Please do not bring your child to the Service if they display any of the above symptoms. If a child becomes ill whilst at the Service the child's parents or person responsible for the child will be contacted to organise collection of the child. If the child is unable to be collected, educators will contact the child's emergency contact for collection.

When the child is collected, the family will have the following information made available to them to present to their doctor: symptoms, date of onset, general behaviour of the child leading up to the illness and any action taken.

Your child should not attend the Service if they have had Panadol or Neurofen within 24 hours for a temperature. It is extremely important that staff members are aware if a child has had either medication, so we do not re-administer and potentially overdose.

The other consideration is that medication of any type should not be added to a child's bottle. Children who are on antibiotics are to be kept away from the Service for the first 24 hours to allow the child to rest and the risk of spreading the infection to decrease.

If your child has been away due to illness, please check with the Service as to whether or not you will need a certificate before your child returns.

Further information can be found in our Infectious Disease Policy in our Policy and Procedure Book.

## Medication

Educators can only administer medication prescribed by a doctor. They cannot administer non-prescription drugs or dietary supplements unless a doctor provides the Service with written authorisation.

Educators can only administer medication to a child from its original packaging with pharmacy instruction sticker.

On arrival at the Service families, must give medication to Educators for safe storage and complete a medication authorisation form. Under no circumstances should medication be left in children's bags.

## Allergies or Asthma

It is vital that we are aware of any allergies or asthma and other medical conditions. Families are required to explain any allergy, asthma and medical conditions on the enrolment form as well as provide us with the diagnosis from the doctor. The Service has a procedure the staff follow to minimise allergic reactions, asthma attacks, and other medical related episodes. The Service requires an Action Plan filled in by your Doctor to assist in managing your child's needs. The Action Plan is to be updated every 12 months.

## Accidents

The Nominated Supervisor will contact parents immediately if a child is involved in a serious incident at the Service. As a matter of extreme importance parents must ensure that the Service has up to date emergency contact numbers. An incident report will be filled out for all accidents, injuries and illnesses of a serious nature. This will contain details of the accident /injury/illness, any first aid that was administered, and be signed by an educator and the parent.

## Emergency Drills

Throughout the year the Service will hold emergency drills, which occur at any given time throughout the day. These are carried out in a well-organised and orderly manner. Educators also get their fire extinguishers and blankets tested regularly in their Service. An emergency evacuation plan will be displayed at each exit. All children will participate on these emergency and evacuation drills at some point throughout the year and will be required to leave the service space for the purpose of emergency evacuation drills. This will only be for a short period of time to ensure the educator is able to safely evacuate the registered service space with the children.

### Workplace Health and Safety

We welcome all feedback regarding the safety of our Service. If you see something that concerns you regarding safe work practices, the safety of building and equipment or general Work health and Safety, please contact the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

## Educator Ratio and Qualifications

We meet all legal requirements in relation to child to educator ratios and the qualifications of our educators. All Educators will hold First Aid qualifications, have Working with Children Checks and National Police checks completed.

Our Educators are also encouraged to attend further professional training and development. We try to offer them with a range of options throughout the year.

For further details on the qualifications of the Educators, please contact our Nominated Supervisor.



## Thank you and final welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read through our Parent Handbook. I hope the information within has been insightful and helpful. We look forward to welcoming you into our Midcoast Family Day Care extended family.

Sincerely

Staff and educators at Midcoast Family Day Care