



CLARENCE
FAMILY DAY CARE
SCHEME

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Bellerive

Information Booklet

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Clarence Family Day Care Scheme is a not-for-profit organisation.

The Scheme is sponsored by Clarence City Council and is part of the Community Services group of that organisation. The Program Administrator as the Nominated Supervisor of the Scheme carries out the day to day management of the service. Relevant council officers provide administrative support. The Program Administrator prepares requested reports for consideration by the council's aldermen.

The Scheme is approved by the Tasmanian Education Department (the Regulatory Authority) and operates within the Education and Care Services National Regulations and the National Quality Framework 2017/18

The Scheme is a member of Family Day Care Australia, which is the national peak body supporting family day care services.

July 2018

Welcome to Clarence Family Day Care Scheme

This information has been prepared so that parents, students and other members of the community can gain a greater understanding of what family day care is and how it works. It attempts to cover the most common issues that may arise.

Please ensure that you read it and if you have any questions contact a member of the coordination unit – phone 62 179 610.

Our office opening hours are 9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

About Family Day Care:

Clarence Family Day Care was established in 1977 to provide quality home based child care. Family day care provides flexible small group care that offers children and their families individual attention and interactions in a supportive family environment. Children can build strong relationships with a familiar educator and group of children. Educators are able to have children from birth until age 12. Educators operate from their own homes and are self employed.

The coordination unit assesses, registers, monitors and supports educators, and offers support to families.

Our scheme operates within the National Quality Framework and abides by the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011. The scheme is committed to ensuring that children in family day care have stimulating, positive interactions and experiences that foster all aspects of their development so that they are able to develop a sense of belonging and become active and confident participants in their world.



Our Philosophy: is available for you to read in your educator's copy of the 'Clarence Family Day Care Policy Folder' or at the coordination unit office.

Vision: our vision is to deliver quality home-based child care that provides flexible responses to meet the unique needs of children and their families and to provide a service that is responsive to the diverse needs of the community.

Goals:

- to provide a welcoming, friendly, safe and nurturing environment
- to provide opportunities for children to grow and develop through a variety of experiences
- to enhance the provision of quality care through support and resources to educators and families
- to promote partnerships between parents, educators, staff and the wider community
- to strive to ensure continuous improvement in all aspects of family day care.

Services provided by our scheme:

Resource library – educators and parents are able to access our resource library which includes information on a variety of topics relating to children's development and wellbeing.

Toys and Equipment – educators are able to borrow a range of toys and books for the children in care to use. There are also stretcher beds available for loan.

Play Sessions – educators are able to participate in play sessions which operate from our facilities in Alma St. A play sessions leader delivers a program that gives children the opportunity to socialise with other children and educators in a larger group setting.

In-service training –educators are encouraged to participate in a wide range of in-service programs to further develop their skills, knowledge and their provision of high quality care.

Referrals – the scheme offers information and support to educators and parents when it is considered that a child may benefit from a referral to another agency.

The Role of the Coordination Unit:

- The coordination unit registers educators in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2017/8. Educators are re-registered every 12 months.
- Our scheme's field coordinators are early childhood trained and visit educators on a regular basis. They offer support, monitor children's development and ensure that the National Quality Standards and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017/18 are maintained. Educators are provided with a written report following each visit.
- Administration officers undertake the clerical tasks required to manage the scheme and ensure compliance with the Commonwealth's Child Care Subsidy, and funding regulations.
- The coordination unit operates a waiting list for children who require care within the scheme. Parents complete an 'application for care' form and return it to the scheme's office. The waiting list is dependent on educators' spaces.
- When the demand for child care exceeds supply, the scheme offers places in accordance with the Australian Government's Priority of Access Guidelines.
- Educators are provided with information on training and in-service opportunities as they arise.
- Coordination unit staff are available to discuss concerns and answer any questions an educator or a parent may have. Office hours are 9.00am-5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Who is a Family Day Care Educator?

- A family day educator is registered by the scheme to care for small groups of children in her/his own home. Potential educators undergo a thorough selection, screening and training process prior to registration to ensure that the Education and Care Services National Regulations are met.
- All educators must participate in, and comply with, the National Quality Standard and Operational Requirements 2018.
- All educators are to have approved first aid, anaphylaxis and asthma training, food handling and child protection training and are to have formal child care qualifications or be actively working towards formal child care qualifications.
- In accordance with the Education and Services National Regulations, an educator may not care for any more than 7 children at any one time, including their own children under the age of 13. A maximum of four children can be under school age. The number of children is also dependent on the number of appropriate car seats and sufficient registered space available in the home.
- An educator is self employed and nominates the hours and days that they wish to work, although all educators in our scheme must be available at least 3 days a week unless otherwise negotiated with the Program Administrator.
- An educator may have an 'educator assistant' who assists in the provision of care. This will be for short periods to provide back-up care when necessary. Parents are to sign a consent form and meet the educator assistant before care is provided by the assistant.
- An educator must have the ability to provide a warm, healthy, stimulating and safe environment.
- An educator must be aware of the social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of the children they have in care.
- An educator is concerned with the development and welfare of each child in her care.
- An educator may offer information and support to parents when requested.



Meeting an Educator:

As soon as an educator is available, the coordination unit staff will notify you of the educator's name and phone number so that you can arrange a convenient time to meet the educator in her home. At this meeting you may like to discuss the following points:

- what is the daily routine?
- do you go out and where do you go?
- what type of car restraint will my child use in your car?
- what sort of activities do you do with the children?
- where will my child sleep?
- do you have pets and where are they kept?
- what are the ages of the other children in care?

Other topics for discussion may include:

- the days and hours the educator can offer you and any additional care you may require in the future (if known)
- the educator's fee structure, fees and when these are to be paid
- arrival and departure procedures
- your child's favourite things
- any fears your child may have
- extra clothing and accessories such as sunscreen that you will need to provide
- eating habits and food preferences
- sleep times – if applicable
- toileting – if applicable
- behaviour management techniques used by the educator
- your child's medical history, medication, allergies, any special dietary or cultural requirements
- procedures for when your child is unwell

Look for how the educator interacts with other children in her care and with her own children. Don't be afraid to voice your expectations and needs about your child's care –the educator needs to know all your requirements so that she can provide you with the care that best suits you and your child.

Ask to see the educator's profile and policies. She will also have a copy of the scheme's policies and procedures for you to view.

After the visit think about what you particularly liked about the educator and her environment. Is the atmosphere relaxed and happy? Did you feel welcome? Will it suit your child? Will there be activities that foster your child's creativity? Are the children encouraged to explore their world? Did the home seem well organised, clean and tidy? Did you have any concerns? Do you need to contact the educator or the coordination unit for further information?

Once you have made a decision, phone the office to confirm your placement and to complete the documentation necessary for the placement to go ahead. If you wish to meet another educator please contact the office.



When your child starts in care:

Familiarisation visits are important for you, your child and the educator. If your child has not been left before, it may take several visits for him/her to feel comfortable about being left with someone else.

Sometimes a child finds separation difficult. Delaying your departure may make this more distressing for your child. Be positive, say goodbye, wave at the door and leave. Don't sneak off while your child is distracted – it may mean that he/she will not develop a sense of security either in care or with you at home. You are welcome to phone your educator at any time to see how your child is getting along.

Talk to your child about being in care and include a special toy or comforter that links care with home.

Some children settle very quickly. This does not mean that they don't love you! It indicates that they feel secure and confident and ready to try new experiences.

Ensure that you pack enough food for your child - children in care often eat more than they do at home. Please see the enclosed information for more information and lunch box ideas.

Put aside some time occasionally at the beginning or end of the day to chat to your educator. In this way you can prevent small concerns from becoming big issues. Effective communication ensures that you are able to develop a relationship with your educator that is based on confidence, trust and mutual respect.

Your responsibilities:

- **Child Care Subsidy** is paid by the Commonwealth Government to assist parents with the cost of care. You must contact Centrelink through your myGov account prior to the commencement of care. Care cannot commence until Clarence Family Day Care has this information and can formally enrol your child with the Australian Government Department of Education. For more information on this process, visit education.gov.au/childcare
- **Delivery and collection of your child** can only be by you or a person nominated by you on your child's admission form. If at any time an unauthorised person is to collect your child, you must inform the educator in writing prior to that person collecting your child. The educator is entitled to ask the person for identification.
- **Signing your child in and out of care** noting the actual times of care is a legal requirement and is to be completed by the person delivering and collecting your child. Absences must also be signed for.



- **Booked hours** are to be adhered to unless you have negotiated otherwise with your educator. The educator is entitled to charge a late fee and this is not covered by Child Care Subsidy.
- **Changing hours of care** needs to be negotiated with your educator. For permanent changes in your booked days and/or hours you are required to give your educator notice as stated on her fee schedule and complete a new contract of care.
- **Change of enrolment details** such as change of address, phone numbers or contact names, must be forwarded to your educator and the office immediately.
- **Paying your educator** should be discussed at your first meeting. Payments are made directly to the educator and parents are expected to pay in full for the booked hours as stated on the contract of care. Educators are operating their own business and are entitled to be paid promptly. Even if you are on the maximum CCS percentage there is a gap fee to be paid.

It is important that you do not let your child care fees become overdue. If you are having difficulty paying, please talk it over with your educator as you may be able to make alternative payment arrangements.

- **If your educator is taking personal leave** and is unable to provide you with child care, then the payment of fees is not required.
- **Food and clothing** is to be supplied by you. Please ensure that you have included plenty of spare clothes and that your child has enough nutritional food to eat and drink. Please make sure that you understand the educator's fees and charges for any extra food provided. We recommend that you dress your child in comfortable easy-wear clothing. Children love messy play but good clothes don't! Children enjoy outside play regardless of the weather, so include a warm coat in winter. For further information refer to the educator's and the scheme's nutrition and weather protection policies.

Other information:



- **An administration levy** is payable on all booked hours regardless of absences. The levy is paid to the scheme through your educator.
- **A holding fee** is charged to reserve a child's place with the educator when the child is absent. This is usually the full fee. Check with the educator on your first visit.
- **Public holidays** are to be paid for if the child is normally in care and your educator would normally be available to work on that day.
- **Allowable absences** occur when a child is not in care due to holidays, sickness and casual absence days. Every child is eligible for 42 absences per financial year, including public holidays. If a child exceeds the limit of 42 days then the full fee will apply unless parents provide the required documentation.
- **Cancelling care** requires you to give notice to your educator as stated on her fee schedule. If the child is not in care for this time, full fee is charged as the Australian Government Department of Education does not pay Child Care Subsidy in lieu of notice.
- **Catching a bus or walking to and from school or** are options for some children. You must complete a consent form available from your educator before your child does this. The educator's responsibility commences when the child arrives at her home.
- **Excursions** are undertaken by many educators. Educators must have an excursion policy and accompanying risk management plans, and you will be asked to sign a consent form for all regular and non-routine excursions. Please discuss excursions with your educator at the time of your child's placement.
- **Sickness** – when your child is unwell please consider very carefully whether it is reasonable for him/her to be going into care. Asking an educator to accept a sick child places all other children at risk of infection and can cause great inconvenience to other families and to the educator.

Educators must maintain adequate supervision of all children in care and are not in a position to care for a child who is ill. If a child becomes unwell whilst in care then parents are to accept responsibility for collecting their child as soon as possible.

- **Infectious diseases** are common in children. When children spend time in child care and are exposed to larger numbers of children, infections can spread very quickly. The scheme has policies and procedures in place to reduce the risk of illness and cross contamination. When a child is absent due to illness the educator or the scheme's program administrator reserves the right to request a medical certificate from the family doctor stating that the child is fit to return to care.
- **Exclusions** – some infectious diseases require an exclusion period and educators follow the guidelines set down by the National Health and Medical Research Council in 'Staying Healthy - Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services'.

Diseases with exclusion periods include:

campylobacter	influenza	scabies
chickenpox	measles	school sores
conjunctivitis	meningitis (viral)	scarlet fever
diarrhoea	meningococcal	strep throat
diphtheria	mumps	tuberculosis
giardiasis	pneumococcal	viral gastroenteritis
hand foot & mouth	rotavirus	whooping cough
head lice	ringworm	
hepatitis A	rubella	
impetigo	salmonella	



- **Medical conditions** are to be discussed with your educator at the first interview. Parents must complete a medication consent form for children who are on any medication, including long term medications such as asthma medication. Please note that not all educators administer medication to children in care.
- **Mandatory reporting of child abuse and/or neglect** – Clarence Family Day Care Scheme is committed to the care and protection of children and young people. The *Child and Young Persons and their Families Act 1997* aims of to provide for the care and protection of children in a manner that maximises child’s opportunity to grow up in a safe and stable environment and to reach his or her full potential. Under the Act educators and coordination unit staff are ‘prescribed persons’ and as such are legally required to report any current concerns they may have in regards to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child.
- **Confidentiality** is expected of all people involved in the scheme.

Concerns, complaints and grievances procedures:

An essential part of the provision of quality child care is the development of a safe and trusting environment where all participants feel able to come forward with any concerns in the knowledge that the educator or the Program Administrator will take prompt and appropriate actions to address those concerns. If you have an issue regarding any aspect of your child’s care please discuss this firstly with your educator and/or the Program Administrator. Any concerns you have will be dealt with promptly, fairly, sensitively and confidentially, and every attempt will be made to reach a resolution. If this process is not successful then the complaint can be referred to the Manager of Customer Services, Clarence City Council.

For further information please refer to Clarence Family Day Care Scheme Policies and Guidelines, Policy – Complaints and Grievances, which is available either from your educator or by contacting the coordination unit.

Clarence Family Day Care Scheme hopes that your time with the scheme is a nurturing and enriching experience for you and your child. We welcome your feedback and suggestions on ways to improve our service. If you have any comments or concerns at all please contact the office.

