

Minutes of the Scheme meeting held on Thursday 22nd July 2021 via Microsoft Teams

Present: Kirstie Leaman, Jackie Mianowski, Nita Kitto, Jane Wiggins, Nikki McKeown, Agnes Matthew, Sally Lovell, Nicole Riley, Angelica Sunnucks, Gabrielle Haley, Jonna Vennola, Jodie Murray, Kim Abbott, Jorja Clifford, Belinda Leaman, Jackie Devereaux-McLean, Shantell Saunders, Kylee Mitsakis, Chani Thorp, Jade Thorp, Mel Swards, Tina Sansom-Karppa, Linda Spencer, Lawrice Jack, Robyn Horner, Tracey Mason, Angela Stanley-Gasparin

Apologies: Jess Walker, Debbie Morey, Kate Rolf, Jandi Speakman, Karen Masters, Janet Davey

Guest Speaker – Donna Best. Donna is the scheme's new Inclusion Support person. She has worked in the early childhood area for 20 years and used family day care for her son, so she has an understanding of family day care from a parent's perspective. The Inclusion support program is Commonwealth funded and provides support and strategies, additional funding, specialist equipment and training for educators. Educators can complete a request form along with the parent's permission, Donna will organise a visit to the educator's home to observe the child and she can refer to other agencies if required. She can also organise family meetings to talk through any issues and strategies. Donna left information with Ang if anyone requires it.

Education and Care Unit – Ang, Katrina and Robyn recently attended a very positive meeting with the ECU. The ECU is changing its focus to an awareness- education – compliance approach where they will work together with services on identified issues. Truly unannounced visits will be only as a result of complaints made about an educator directly to the ECU, otherwise notice will be given for visits such as the upcoming monitoring visit. We discussed training, as it is still difficult to organise face-to-face training opportunities. We can request a person from the ECU to come to a scheme meeting and talk about their role, which Ang will do in the near future. Hannah is our new point of contact. There are many on-line training opportunities, but it is sometimes difficult to assess the quality of these. If any educators do a course and find it really worthwhile, please let us know so that we can inform others.

The FDC conference is coming up in October and early bird tickets are still available.

ECU Monitoring visit - Hannah will be conducting a monitoring visit (spot check) on Tuesday 3rd August. She will be in the office at 9.30 and then visit 3-4 educators. Each visit will be around 30-45 minutes. We will not know the educators who have been selected to have a visit until just before each visit starts. Robyn will be available to be present during the visit on the request of the educator.

Quality Area 3 – the physical environment - will be Hannah's focus. We think she will look at both the indoor and outdoor spaces, how they are used, whether they are safe and appropriate for use, how the environment is set up to cater for individual children's interests and needs and supports play-based learning. Educators will need to be able to explain why they have certain toys and equipment available for the children and what they hope the learning outcomes will be.

Educators days/hours of work – it is a requirement under the Education and Care Services National Regulations that schemes know when their educators are working or when they have changed their hours of work, so please let the office know first thing in the morning of the day you are not working. Families can access their care information through their MyGov account and the office is getting an increasing number of phone calls from parents querying their accounts. Educators CANNOT charge parents for days that the educator herself has off.

Families ceasing care – ceasing care forms need to be completed when a child leaves care. Children cannot finish on an absence. If a child finishes on an absence then the Commonwealth can retrieve CCS from the educator for all consecutive absences prior to the child finishing on that absence. Educator/family disputes can get nasty, especially when money is involved, so it is really important that educators keep good records, issue receipts with the dates of care that the payment refers to, and don't allow parents to fall behind in their payments.

Invacuations/evacuations – please ensure you carry these out within each quarter. Some schemes issue reminders with ideas each quarter, but those present at the meeting were happy to leave things as they are. Educators sometimes find it hard to come with ideas for invacuations so Ang and Robyn will develop a list of possible scenarios for these.

Car restraints – Jackie McGuire no longer does car restraint checks. Vinaka at Moonah, the RACT and Baby Bunting at Kingston are now the main providers. If you are using the RACT please book early so that your current check does not expire before you can get an appointment.

Harmony - has changed their fee structure so that the \$4.40 a week fee applies to all their services. Many educators are changing to electronic signatures and are finding it a relatively easy process. Harmony has developed support videos and offers good support overall. Parents have adapted really quickly to signing in electronically. Advantages for educators include immediate payment advices once fortnightly payments have been finalised, fee estimates are automatically calculated, current parent hours and percentages are available. Educators must have current email addresses for their parents. Gabrielle added that educators still need to check their payment advices and keep an eye on what parents are being charged.

Intergenerational playgroup – after a successful term 2 intergenerational playgroup, organisers Allyson and Lisa have had a meeting with Ang and Lawrice to review the event and plan for another one in term 3 and one in term 4. Dates are yet to be confirmed.

QR code – all educators should have received the emails confirming the requirement for every educator to have their QR code available for parents, visitors and office staff who enter the FDC premises during working hours. The visitors register has a different purpose and still needs to be completed. Some educators have their sign-in area separate from their play space but the QR code still needs to be used.

Alma's building works – work will soon begin on alterations to the Alma's senior citizens building and sections of the river side of the car park will be blocked off. It should not affect access to our buildings, but educators need to be aware of builders, trucks and building supplies coming and going from the car park.

Other business – Bellerive Primary School has approached the outside school hours care program to run an after school care program from the playgroup building. It has been approved by the ECU but CCS funding is yet to be finalised, so there is no start date. There will be no impact on playgroups, which will continue as normal.

Educational apps – Tina asked that if any educators were using quality apps suitable for children to use as a guided learning tool, could they please pass them on to Lawrice, who will develop a list to share. Tina added that she doesn't use them a lot, but sometimes they are useful for a child who just needs some quiet time by themselves or when an educator would like to highlight a specific interest area s – eg. birds, fish, dinosaurs etc.

Locked doors – educators may have noticed that the office front door is now locked. This is not because of COVID but because there is a rather disgruntled Outside School Hours Care parent.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm