

Minutes of the scheme meeting held on 16th March 2021 via Microsoft Teams

Present: Jess Walker, Jayne Wiggins, Kylee Mitsakis, Nita Kitto, Jackie Miansowski, Angelica Sunnucks, Debbie Morey, Chani Thorp, Linda Spencer, Tina Sansom-Karrpa, Jade Thorp, Jorja Clifford, Nikki Mckeown, Jodie Murray, Karen Masters, Angela Stanley-Gasparin, Robyn Horner, Lawrice Jack, Tracey Mason

Apologies: Janet Davey, Mel Swards, Maree Woods-Trezise, Shantell Saunders

General business:

A&R report – we received our latest assessment and rating report on Thursday and we were again assessed as working towards. We still need to do some work around QA 7.1 – that policies and procedures are understood and implemented by educators; to review the induction process for new educators to ensure they understand their duty of care and their roles and responsibilities; to review the registration and re-registration process so that potential hazards in each educator’s home are identified and managed. Quality Area 2.2 also needs some work, again around managing risks and providing a child safe environment, adequate supervision, and other adults within the family day care residence. ACECQA has published information on active supervision and there is a focus on services’ provision of adequate supervision by ACECQA and the ECU. Although this isn’t the result we would have liked, Ang and Robyn have a meeting with Janelle from the ECU next week to discuss the report. The council’s solicitor is also considering contesting the outcome.

Sleep registers and transporting children logs – both need to be completed. The templates are attached for those educators who haven’t designed their own. If educators would like hard copies, please contact Robyn.

Play sessions – will no longer operate on Thursdays due to low attendances. The play sessions building is going to be redeveloped to make it more fit-for-purpose. Ang and John Toohey had a meeting with the architect last week and hope to start work in 4th term. The same architect designed our current building and has some innovative ideas for both inside and outside. If educators have ideas they would like to be considered please pass these on to Ang. We have also been approached by Bellerive Primary School to run an after school program. This will be in the same building but will not impact on family day care.

Security - although the main office doors are now locked, educators are still very welcome. There have been issues with an outside school hours care parent, the police are involved and the doors will remain locked for the foreseeable future. Please ring the bell.

New staff – as Ang mentioned in her last email Melissa White from the Clarence Council office will be working here Mondays and Tuesdays while Lucy is still on leave. Melissa will be working in admin which will allow Kati to spend some time working on the FDC portal. We understand how important it is for on-line enrolments as well as educator information to all be on-line. However Ang and Lucy are the only 2 staff who work full time in FDC and as discussed there is not yet a date for Lucy’s return to work.

Managing sickness – several educators asked that a newsletter goes out to parents from the office about managing colds, especially in the light of recent cases of RSV – respiratory syncytial virus. RSV is the most common cause of respiratory and breathing infections in children and is one of the frequent causes of the common cold. A question was asked whether educators could ask parents to have their children COVID tested. No. Neither educators nor scheme staff can ask for this test. Only a medical practitioner can refer. The newsletter will go out soon.

Policies – the ECU has a current focus on policies and educators’ understanding of their scheme’s policies and procedures. Ours are now out of draft and are being checked to ensure they link with the new regulations. They will be distributed soon so please ensure that you are familiar with them. Changes include

- Educator’s families – visitors staying longer than 2 weeks may need WWVP checks;
- Educator’s health and wellbeing – has quite a few changes
- Evening and overnight care – children can’t sleep in a thoroughfare, no airbeds, camp beds, no sharing with older children
- Excursions – definitions added; visits to other educator’s homes to comply with space requirements; driveway safety

- Governance – changes to definitions in accordance with ACECQA requirements
- Healthy children – changes to physical activity and expansion of children’s wellbeing
- Immunisations – outbreaks added
- Guiding children’s behaviour – includes cyber bullying
- Interactions – accepting children for who they are added
- Managing emergencies – traumatic situations added
- Partnerships with families – changes around wording especially educators considering the parents’ perspectives – what’s it like to be in their shoes?
- Registration – now includes tenants, dual care
- Sleep safety is now a separate policy and not included in maintaining a safe environment
- Supervision – definition of active supervision and reporting of accidents
- Toys and resources – added that educators can develop their own policies around the use of bikes and wearing of helmets; trampolines moved from maintaining a safe environment to toys
- Use of technology - now includes tech wearables, having screen-free days, devices in communal areas and the ‘internet of toys’
- Water safety is now a separate policy

A question was asked about the definition of internet of toys. This includes interactive app-enabled toys that collect data. Educators (and parents) need to be aware of the privacy and security of their children. The eSafety commissioner website has some excellent material – www.esafety.com.au

Meeting closed 7.45pm.