

EDUCATION AND CARE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Home Visit (CCFDC)

Introduction

A home visit is defined as a visit by a staff member from the Family Day Care (FDC) Coordination Unit to the Educator's home at any time of the day during their hours of operation. Home visits can be conducted on any day and anywhere that the Educator is visiting and family day care is occurring. For example, the Educator's home, play session (FDC operated or Educator operated), parks and libraries.

Home visits are regular visits made by the FDC Coordination Unit to support and monitor the Educator and the developmental progress of the children in their care. Each Educator is appointed to a Child Development Officer for support, although all Child Development Officers and the Centre Director are available if needed.

Home visits aim to further develop the partnership between the Coordination Unit, Educators, children and their families (parents, guardians, care givers). In FDC the Coordination Unit staff and Educators work in partnerships by sharing information, discussing issues and ensuring families and children are provided with quality care and education that meets the National Quality Framework as well as Cumberland City Council's Education and Care guiding principles, policies and procedures. These partnerships need to facilitate genuine team work based on respect, equity and recognition of each other's strengths and skills, and encourage positive outcomes for children and their families.

Home visits aim to ensure the provision of quality care and education for children by providing support to Educators on a regular basis and monitoring quality care is being provided and the Educator is complying with Cumberland City Council's Education and Care guiding principles, policies and procedures, as well as the National Quality Framework.

Educators will be informed during the recruitment, selection and induction process about the importance of home visits in the Educator's home as a teaching tool and an opportunity to provide support to the Educator in their role.

During home visits, the children in care will be observed in their FDC environments. Families can be assured that children are being observed by both the Educator and the Child Development Officer during the visit.

During the visit, the Educator will be supported in developing procedures which reflect best practices and assist Educators in meeting their professional and personal responsibilities. Home visits provide opportunities for informal learning, encouraging reflective thinking, and promote modelling of appropriate practices and behaviours. Home visits also provide an opportunity to share information about individual children in care, child development, as well as modelling of appropriate practices and behaviours.

Home visits can either be spontaneous or scheduled. Spontaneous visits allow the Child Development Officer to gain an insight into the different interactions and behaviours of Educators and the children who are being cared for and educated. They also provide opportunities for Educators to be observed fulfilling their roles and responsibilities in their home environment. These visits also allow the Child Development Officer to directly

observe children's agency in their active learning environment, without concern that the observed activities have been specially prepared.

Scheduled visits allow the Educator to reflect in preparation for the visit. This may involve Educators developing a list of questions to discuss, planning on involving the Child Development Officer in the visit or preparing a child who is fearful of new people or situations.

During the home visit, the Coordination Unit staff will:

- endeavour to visit and/or conduct phone visits with Educators every three to four weeks, or more often if required. Extra visits may be scheduled to address professional development, complaints or when requested by the Educator
- maintain regular contact and maintain open communication with Educators, by phone, email, play session, outings, and drop-in visits or training sessions
- carry out home visits at different times of the day, morning, midday and afternoon. Home visits will also be carried out on different days of the week to ensure that the Child Development Officer is able to meet all of the children in care. The days and times of the visits will be within the Educator's operational hours
- discuss ways that the Educators can plan and evaluate children's learning and development
- address any concerns or issues that may arise from either the Educator or the Coordination Unit
- observe and interact with children in care and share information with families on a regular basis
- deliver and discuss new guiding principles, as well as guiding principles that have been updated and how they affect the Educators' roles
- support Educators in developing procedures and routines which reflect best practices and work in their environment
- support Educators to develop quarterly goals as part of the Educators' Quality Improvement Plan
- sign in the Educator's visitor book at the commencement and conclusion of a home visit as a record of attendance.

In addition to this, during the home visit, the Child Development Officer will provide assistance and access to information and resources, such as current recommendations from recognised authorities, play and learning equipment and information relating to changes in the National Quality Framework.

Educators' roles and responsibilities during a home visit

- Educators need to ensure that they support the home visit guiding principle by being available and welcoming to the Child Development Officer who is conducting the home visit.
- Educators are required to participate in the home visit through clear, open and honest communication.
- Educators must follow the Cumberland City Council's Code of Conduct and Education and Care Code of Conduct.

- Educators to inform the Coordination Unit if they are going out or not working. This will ensure that the Child Development Officer does not visit Educators who are out or not working. This will also help in determining the location of Educators and FDC children in case of emergencies.
- Refer to follow ups from previous visits and ensure tasks are completed.

This guiding principle aims to support the Coordination Unit and Educators by:

- ensuring all people are treated equitably
- protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of children, families, Educators and Coordination Unit staff in FDC
- communicating with Educators about their legal and licensing obligations to the services' stakeholders
- maintaining positive lines of communication when collaborating with children, families, staff, Educators and Educators' families
- strengthening the relationship between the Educator and Coordination Unit staff
- developing strategies that assist Educators and Educators' families to balance their needs and the needs of those children and families using care
- promoting opportunities for two way communication between all stakeholders.

During the home visit, a Reflection of Educator and Child Development Officer Home Visit form will be completed in consultation between the Educator and Child Development Officer. This form will include what was observed, what was discussed, the children's experiences and interactions during the visit as well as other areas relating to the National Quality Framework. At the end of the home visit, the Educator and Child Development Officer will read the form together and both will sign stating that they have read and understood everything on the form. A copy will be emailed to the Educator during the visit and the original will be kept electronically at the Coordination Unit. Any follow ups required will be kept in the Educator's Home Visit folder kept at the Coordination Unit.

In addition to home visits, the Educators will undergo an annual home safety audit, which includes home safety, checking car safety paper work, medical checks which include Educators' overall health and well-being, prescription medication currently on and frequency of medication as recommended by doctor and an update of personal information and signing Educator Agreement.

Areas that are covered during home visits

Monitoring the quality of care

The quality of care provided shall be determined by:

- the quality of educator/child/family communication
- the appropriateness of behaviour management techniques by the Educator
- documentation of children's learning and development
- maintenance of administration, record keeping in accordance with guiding principles and regulations
- presentation of the home
- routine times.

Monitoring the care environment

The environment of care provided shall be determined by

- health and hygiene standards
- Work, Health and Safety standards
- evidence of meeting the interests and needs of the children in care.

Supporting the Educator

Coordination unit staff and Educators work together in achieving and discussing:

- meeting the developmental needs of the children in care
- planning for children's interests and experiences
- issues and concerns of each of the families using the Educators' services
- professional learning and development
- administration and accountability requirements.

Observing the children in care

Child Development Officers will identify and discuss:

- children's developmental needs
- the appropriateness of experiences in relation to children's ages, development and interests
- experiences that are sensitive to children's backgrounds and families' cultures
- behaviour management techniques
- communication strategies with families.

Issues which arise from the service

Coordination unit staff will identify and discuss:

- services' guiding principles, policies, procedures, regulations and the National Quality Framework
- Educators' duty of care and code of conduct
- confidentiality issues relating to matters including children, families, Educators and the Coordination Unit.

Grievances and complaints resulting from home visits

There may be occasions when Coordination Unit staff and Educators need assistance in resolving a grievance, complaint or to resolve a conflict, which may result from a home visit.

In the event that there is a grievance/complaint arising from a home visit, Educators are required to, where possible, speak directly to the Child Development Officer or Coordination staff member who conducted the visit. If this is not possible, Educators are to contact the FDC Centre Director to discuss their concerns on 8757 9272.

In the event that the grievance/complaint relates to a visit conducted by the Centre Director, the Educator is asked to contact the Senior Coordinator, Education and Care on 8757 9770.

The grievance/complaint will be investigated and Educators will be advised (where appropriate) of the outcome and any follow up required.

Statutory legislation and considerations

- [Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\)](#)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), [Education and Care Services National Regulations: Chapter 4](#)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), [2018 National Quality Standards](#): Quality Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7

Further reading

- [National Quality Framework](#)
- Cumberland City Council Education and Care Guiding Principle: (CCFDC) Managing Non-Compliance

Implementation date: **March 2019**

Next review date: **June 2019**