

# EDUCATION AND CARE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

## Collaborative Partnership with Families

### Introduction

Cumberland City Council's Education and Care Services aim to communicate effectively and sensitively with all families about their children and the service and encourages families to participate and contribute in all aspects of its education and care services.

Family values and involvement is vital to ensure continuity of care for children and regular communication between educators and families is essential to maintaining high quality of care. By spending time with us it may answer many questions and give families a better understanding of the centre's/educator's routine and therefore, an insight into their child's day.

Individual children's needs are met when relevant information about important events at home, the child's health or particular interest of the child are communicated with educators.

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### General

The Education and Care Code of Conduct clarifies the standards of behaviour that are expected from educators, families and children.

The level of family involvement should be based on the family's individual needs and be suited to their requirements and desire to be involved.

Families make decisions for their child and Council's Education and Care Services are a support for these decisions.

Families and educator relationships are open and honest, therefore encouraging positive and comfortable communication for all.

Council welcomes family feedback, ideas and/or concerns. Family feedback and suggestions assist us in providing a quality service for the community.

Family responses will always be listened to and at all times will be treated with fairness and equity.

We welcome and encourage volunteer helpers such as family and friends. For more information, please refer to Council's [website](#).

All educators involved in handling family complaints will treat all information as confidential.

All concerns will be addressed, responded to and, where possible, solutions negotiated.

Education and Care Guiding Principles are developed to create harmonious partnership between educators and families. All parties are required to adhere to all guiding principles/policies.

To encourage family/educator involvement Council's Education and Care Services will:

- welcome all interested families to participate in a families-in-partnership event;
- post messages on the services' Kindyhub dashboard to gain feedback;
- welcome family feedback on guiding principle/policy reviews;
- encourage family involvement with excursions, children's programming (including comments and ideas) and functions should they wish to attend;
- provide regular social events for families and educators;
- keep families informed at all times about service activities and community activities;
- encourage families from other cultures to share aspects of their lifestyle including language so that educators can honour and respect their customs, converse more easily with the families and ensure familiarity for the child, link children's development and learning between home and service;
- consult regularly with families regarding concerns and ideas;
- consult with families regarding their behaviour guidance techniques and values so that continuity of care is provided;
- have approachable educators who will:
  - listen to all family concerns regardless of how small and respond to them appropriately and professionally without bias, whilst maintaining confidentiality; and
  - be supportive of the family unit and offer the appropriate referral if needed;
- encourage families to decide how they wish to orientate their child to the centre/ educator's home and settle them in. Educators will tailor the settling in period to suit the family's needs, under a mutual agreement;
- provide information for families about the child's day e.g. food eaten, sleeping, nappy changing;
- encourage families to visit the centre/educator's home whenever possible;
- provide balanced feedback to families of their child's day.

## **Providing feedback**

When a service receives comments/feedback on Kindyhub from families, Kindyhub emails the service displaying the full comments. Parents and carers are also able to email their comments/feedback directly to the service.

Families can access Council's guiding principles, policies and procedures on Council's website and we encourage families to review these and provide their input.

Should there be something you are concerned about or would like to see improved, it is requested that you follow the below feedback procedure:

- Organise a mutually convenient time to meet with the nominated supervisor of the service to discuss your concern; or
- Complete the Family Feedback Form and forward this to the nominated supervisor. The nominated supervisor will then organise a time to discuss this concern with you. If you are not comfortable discussing the issue with the nominated supervisor, please contact the centre's Education and Care Coordinator. If you are still not satisfied with the way the concern was handled you may call the Manager Education and Care on 8757 9796 or email [laura.sportelli@cumberland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:laura.sportelli@cumberland.nsw.gov.au).

After following the above procedure, if you are still not satisfied you may contact the Early Childhood Education Directorate on 1800 619 113 or [eecd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:eecd@det.nsw.edu.au).

The nominated supervisor will keep a written record of family feedback for following up on the Family Feedback Log Sheet.

At all times amicable communication between families and educators is desirable. Breakdown of the communication process may result in alternative care or exclusion from Council's Education and Care Services.

## **Social involvement**

Social activities are organised at the centres from time to time to give families and educators the opportunity to socially connect. Activities may include excursions, parent/ teacher nights, grandparent days, guest speakers and service celebration events such as birthday parties or open days.

## **Families in Partnership**

Centres host events for all interested parents and educators to attend. Council's Manager Education and Care and local councillors can be invited to meetings or events. Family involvement is valued and ideas and suggestions are welcomed via direct discussion with the nominated supervisor or via the Family Feedback Form. Each service will hold several events throughout the year depending on interest. These may include training sessions, social events and discussion groups.

Should you have any ideas or want to get involved with the service's upcoming events, please see the nominated supervisor.

## **Communication with families**

### **Communicating with families in relevant ways to help keep them informed**

These may include:

1. The display of educators' photos including name and position title.
2. Distribution of personal and centre information by email or Kindyhub (centre based) or hard copy information placed in children's bags/pigeon holes/lockers. Information for Family Day Care (FDC) families will also be placed in children's bags.
3. The distribution of an updated Parent Information Handbook upon enrolment.
4. Fact sheets on a variety of relevant issues available to families.
5. Distribution of relevant brochures via email and/or Kindyhub e.g. health, safety, education, parenting, nutrition, immunisation.

Photo displays of services' events, children's activities.

6. Publications in the family library (service based).
7. Written information distributed in hard copy, via email and Kindyhub.
8. Information about the service philosophy, policy and guiding principles.
9. Verbal communication.
10. Paint Cumberland REaD (Poppy the Possum).

### **Opportunities for information about other appropriate community services**

These may include:

1. Kindyhub posts or placed in children's bags
2. Council's website
3. Cumberland [Community Information Directory](#)
4. Relevant websites - links on Council website
5. Facebook page [www.facebook.com/cumberlandcitycouncilsydney](https://www.facebook.com/cumberlandcitycouncilsydney)

### **Opportunities for the sharing of information about individual children and children's programs**

These may include:

1. Displaying the children's programs on Kindyhub, in folders or on noticeboards/in frames in the rooms and FDC educators' homes.
2. Encouraging parents to regularly approach an educator about their child's progress and development.
3. Regular informal verbal updates from an educator to families on children's individual progress and development.
4. Journals/Kindyhub, program in each room/FDC educator's home which provide overall summaries on each day's activities in the rooms/FDC educators' homes.
5. Inviting families to offer their suggestions/ideas/concerns about the service/testimonials.
6. Offering families of continuing children at the commencement of each year an opportunity to provide information about what they are working on at home, what they would like the centre to work on with their children and suggestions for what they would like included in the children's program.
7. Family stories can be communicated at any time throughout the year verbally or via email.
8. Families are able to view their child's documentation on Kindyhub as they wish.

9. Offering families an opportunity to give feedback on the child's journal.
10. Inviting families to make appointments to have family/educator interviews about their child's progress and development (centre based).
11. Special family meetings which may be arranged to discuss a child's progress and development.

### **Communicating with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) families**

For CALD families:

1. Encourage families to seek an English speaking/reading friend to help complete any documentation.
2. Arrange an interpreter to assist e.g.; another family/educator from the centre/service or contact Council for assistance.
3. Where CALD relatives or friends are dropping off children, arrange with family to phone centre/service early in the day with any special information or maintain a communication book.
4. Where CALD relatives or friends are picking up children, provide written information for families as needed.
5. Call on educators who speak other languages to assist families and children.
6. Provide translated material where possible.

For hearing impaired families:

1. Provide a signing interpreter; e.g. from North Rocks Deaf and Blind School.
2. Use TTY relay phone system to communicate with families at home.
3. Provide extra written information as required.
4. SMS texting and emailing information.
5. Educators and children can learn Auslan sign.

For sight impaired families:

1. Arrange for an educator to greet the person when the child is being dropped off or picked up and assist in organising the child's belongings and signing the child in and out.
2. Arrange for an educator to also assist the person with anything else required at this time; e.g. collecting any new information or handouts and answering any questions regarding the menu, charts, etc.

### **Attachments**

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### Related Legislation and Online Resources

- [Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\)](#): Sections [172](#) & [175](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#): Sections [73](#), [75](#), [76](#), [80](#), [86](#), [99](#), [102](#), [111](#), [157](#), [168](#), [171](#), [172](#), [173](#), & [185](#)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), [National Quality Standards](#): [Quality Area 6](#) and 7.2.3

### Related Documents and Council Policies

- Council's [Volunteer Program](#)
- [Education and Care Code of Conduct Handbook](#)

### Authorisation & Version Control

Guiding Principle owner	<i>Manager Children, Youth and Families</i>
Authorised by	<i>Education and Care Leadership Team</i>
ECM no.	<i>8664472</i>
Implementation date	<i>March 2022</i>



Please list below any ideas or suggestions you may have about the service (it may be something you like or something you would like to see improved).

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dashed lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

**Name:** .....

**Home address:** .....

**Telephone contact:** .....

**Service used:** .....

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**f** Cumberland City Council Sydney **@** [cumberlandcitycouncil](https://www.cumberlandcitycouncil.nsw.gov.au)

## FAMILY FEEDBACK LOG SHEET

Parent/ guardian name	Child's name	Educator's name (incident reported to)	Date	Compliment or complaint	How was feedback provided?	Was follow up required?	Follow up / solution	Was nominated supervisor notified?
					<input type="checkbox"/> Written <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
					<input type="checkbox"/> Written <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
					<input type="checkbox"/> Written <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
					<input type="checkbox"/> Written <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
					<input type="checkbox"/> Written <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

### Cumberland City Council

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