

ARMIDALE & DISTRICT FAMILY DAY CARE

Placement Procedure

Related documentation Policy/policies:	Enrolment & Orientation Policy Inclusion Policy
Regulation/s/ Standards:	National Regulations 124, 160, 178, 179 NQS QA 6
Related procedures:	Relief Care Procedure
References:	Australian Government Department of Education Child Care Providers Handbook 2018 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics 2016
Date effective	July 2019
Date for review	July 2021
Purpose	To provide clear guidelines for a) the enrolment of families and placement of children in care and b) consideration of applications to exceed the ratio in exceptional circumstances.
Responsibility/applies	Directors, Management and Educators

Key information:

To apply principles of social justice, access and equity to the process of placing children with Educators.

To endeavor to place children into a care environment that meets their physical and developmental needs and the needs of their families.

To assist Educators to operate their services at desired capacity, within regulatory requirements.

Procedures:

- All applications for care from families must be made through Armidale & District Family Day Care;
- Families will be provided with referrals to available Educators, taking into account the following factors:
 - The nature of the care required and it's location

- The date upon which the care is required to commence.

If care is not immediately available, families may be placed on AFDC's Waiting List and the Waiting List will be reviewed regularly to ensure that:

- Families are assisted to gain access to the care they require, and
- Educator vacancies are filled as soon as possible.

Family rights and responsibilities:

- Families are advised to interview all Educators to whom they are referred;
- Families are expected to contact referred Educators within one week of referral;
- Families must notify the Coordination Unit of their choice of Educator and complete the enrolment process prior to commencing care as per the Enrolment and Orientation Policy.
- Families must notify Educators of their decision to accept or reject an offer of care;
- Families must settle any existing debts with AFDC and their Educator prior to being offered a new placement.

Educator's rights and responsibilities:

- Educators have the right to accept or decline a referral from a family without being required to provide justification;
- Educators must refer all families approaching them directly for care to the Coordination Unit;
- Educators must not accept children into their care from families who have not completed AFDC's enrolment process.

Priority of Access guidelines:

The Australian Government has removed Priority Access guidelines.

The Department of Education's Child Care Provider Handbook 2018 states:

"There are no requirements for filling vacancies. Providers can set their own rules for deciding who receives a place. Providers are asked to (but are not legally obliged to) prioritise children who are:

- *at risk of serious abuse or neglect or*
- *a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment"*

See "Do vacancies need to be prioritised?" <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook/managing-child-care-places>

Approval to exceed the ratio

From time to time, families may face exceptional circumstances and require additional care. In these circumstances, if their Educator agrees but would need to exceed the ratio in order to provide that care, families can request an approval from AFDC (preferably by email) for the Educator to do so.

AFDC received confirmation from the NSW Directorate in November 2018 that we could provide written approvals to exceed the ratio under Regulation 124 (6) (c):

“the family day care residence or approved family day care venue is in a rural or remote area and no alternative education and care service is available”.

AFDC staff will endeavor to take a fair and consistent approach to approving (or denying) requests, reflecting on:

- *Consistency for the enrolled child (there is a preference to keep the child with the existing Educator where possible)*
- *The special circumstances for the family*
- *The length of time the care is required or the amount of time there is an “overlap” of children in care (both situations will be considered on a case by case basis)*
- *Whether there are vacancies with other Educators and*
- *If the existing Educator is willing to accept an additional child in care*

Requests will be considered by two staff members when they involve an extended period of time or an overlap in care, and if a request is denied the Educator and family will be provided with the reasons for that denial.