



Armidale Family Day Care

Family Information Handbook



Coordination Unit Hours:

Monday to Thursday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

Office Address:

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What is Armidale Family Day Care

Armidale Family Day Care is the only not for profit service located in Armidale and environs. Armidale Family Day Care offers a unique form of childcare where a trained and qualified Educator provides home-based, high-quality education and care in the Educator's home learning environment.

We approve, support, train and advise Educators who provide quality education and care services that are accessible, flexible and affordable. Care is available seven days per week for full-time, part-time, casual, emergency, before & after school as well as vacation care, subject to Educator vacancies. Children from 6 weeks to 13 years of age can access the service.

Local Educators provide consistent, personalised care for local families; as a family you will be able to build a positive working relationship with your Educator. All this makes for a nurturing, fun and educational experience for your child.

Philosophy

At Armidale Family Day Care, we acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work, learn and play. This includes the Anaiwan, Banbai, Dunghutti, Gumbayngirr, Kamilaroi, Ngarabal and Nogoorabul people. We extend this respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our community. We acknowledge our responsibility to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into our pedagogy.

We aim to provide high quality education and care to families and children within our communities in a nurturing home environment, developing respectful relationships that lead to a strong sense of belonging.

Our staff, educators and families reflect the diversity of Australian society, and we respect one another's values, beliefs and cultures.

We recognise the importance of learning within the natural environment and acknowledge our responsibility to show children how to contribute to a sustainable future.

We embrace continuous quality improvement through professional development, partnerships and critical reflection, to inform and build upon the education and care provided to children and the management practices we enact.

We respect children's rights as developing, capable individuals and strive to provide them with security and consistency through nurturing relationships and safe and challenging environments that facilitate learning and development.

We support children's being, belonging and becoming, promoting their agency while working in partnership with families and the community.

Vision Statement

Armidale Family Day Care embeds the principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework and My Time, Our Place. We aim to maintain a sense of community with Educators, Families, Staff and Management in which children feel loved, respected and encouraged to develop to their full potential, developing connections through trusting relationships and quality experiences in their care environment.

Management Structure

Armidale & District Family Day Care Ltd. is a not for profit, community-based corporation, managed by a voluntary Board of Directors which is comprised of sector representatives, early childhood professionals and community members. The Board is responsible for the operation of both Armidale Family Day Care and Armidale Out of School Care and is the Approved Provider of both services.

If you would like to find out more about participating in the management of Armidale Family Day Care, please contact the Coordination Unit.

Armidale Family Day Care's Early Childhood Educators

Armidale Family Day Care's Educators are self-employed people who are selected for their personal qualities and their interest in providing a healthy, safe and stimulating environment for children. All Armidale Family Day Care's Educators have:

- An approved certificate III level (or higher) qualification in Early Childhood Education and Care;
- Current First Aid, CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis qualifications;
- Working With Children Checks for both themselves and adult household members;
- National Criminal Record Checks;
- A minimum of \$10 million dollars Public Liability Insurance;
- A commitment to upholding the National Quality Standards and working within the National Regulations and Law and the National Quality Framework, as well as Armidale Family Day Care's service policies and procedures.

Armidale Family Day Care's Child Care Fees

Armidale Family Day Care sets a range of fees for services, upon which families may be entitled to claim Child Care Subsidy from the Australian Government to assist with the cost of care. Educator fees currently range from \$12.80 per hour to \$17.80 per booked core hour of care. The Commonwealth Government deems core hours to be between 8am to 6pm.

Armidale Family Day Care Educators, as self-employed people, are able to determine their own fees for service and conditions within this fee range. Fees outside of core hours may differ.

Educators Fee Schedules may include individual hourly rates for:

- Core Hours of Care (8 am – 6 pm);
- Out of Core Hours (6 pm – 8 am);
- Before and After School and Vacation Care;
- Weekend and Public Holiday Care;
- Casual Care; and
- Penalties for the late collection of children.

Educators will provide families with a copy of their fee schedule at the time of interview. Upon enrolment, the Educator will request the family to sign their acknowledgement of fee payment obligations.

Armidale Family Day Care Enrolment Fee

Armidale Family Day Care charges all families a once only Enrolment Fee of \$50.00. upon enrolment. The Enrolment Fee contributes to the administrative costs of enrolment and the ongoing support of Educators and the provision of education and care services within Armidale Family Day Care.

Enrolment Procedures

When families wish to enrol their child with Armidale Family Day Care, the Coordination Unit will assist with the online enrolment process. A link to online enrolment is available at:

<https://portal11.harmonykids.com.au/OnlineEnrolments/Register?id=74ba13ed-80d4-4792-8d0f-462a9f21b32a>

Hard copies of enrolment documents are available upon request.

All families will be provided with a copy of this Family Handbook upon enrolment.



Conditions of Care with Armidale Family Day Care

Hours of care

Families should negotiate the booked hours of care they require with their chosen Educator prior to the commencement of care, taking into consideration the individual Educator's minimum booked hours.

Once a family has entered into an agreement with an Educator, normal fees for booked hours of care are payable regardless of whether they are used or not.

Families wishing to change their care hours should negotiate these changes with their Educator, providing two weeks written notice

Compliant Written Agreements and Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Enrolments

A Compliant Written Agreement is the agreement between you and AFDC. It must be completed electronically by our team and include details of your care sessions and fees. Enrolling children under Family Assistance Law is a requirement for AFDC to undertake for all children who attend care, regardless of their families' eligibility for Child Care Subsidy.

Following enrolment, families will be requested to log into their My Gov account and accept the enrolment which AFDC has submitted. The Commonwealth can only pay CCS to families after they have confirmed their child/ren's enrolment details.

Arrivals and Departures from Care

Families must be aware that, when on the Educators premises, their children are their responsibility prior to being signed into care and after being signed out of care.

Late Collection/ Delivery of Children

Families must always contact their Educator if they are unable to deliver their child into care or collect them on time.

Armidale Family Day Care Educators levy high penalties on late collection of children; these additional fees do not attract Child Care Subsidy.

Educators may also charge penalties for late delivery of children in recognition of the disruption may cause to their programming and planning.

Access to and Collection of Children

Educators will only allow access to and release children into the care of an authorised contact who has been nominated by the family.

Families must provide the Coordination Unit with details of all authorisations, including full name, address, phone number and email address.

Completion of Attendance Records

Completion of attendance records and approval of weekly session reports is a legally binding requirement under Family Assistance Law. Armidale Family Day Care uses electronic attendance records and session reports.

Families and authorised contacts will be provided with PINs upon enrolment.

Families must sign children into and out of care each day.

Families are required to approve weekly session reports at the closure of their last day of care each week.

Parenting and Consent Orders

Parenting and/or Consent orders can only be acted upon where a copy has been provided to the Coordination Unit. A copy of the Order/s provided to AFDC will also be given to the Educator for their records.

Medical Management

All Families will be provided with a copy of AFDC's Medical Conditions Policy upon enrolment.

Families whose children have a diagnosed health care need, allergy, or relevant medical condition such as asthma, diabetes or risk of anaphylaxis must provide Armidale Family Day Care with a Medical Action Plan, prepared by a medical practitioner, detailing treatment, medication and strategies to minimise risks, prior to commencing care. Armidale Family Day Care will then assist families in the development of a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan.

Payment of Fees

Family's fees are payable to AFDC, through redPay direct debit, following the processing of fortnightly session reports. All families will be provided with Payment advices through AFDC's software programme, *Harmony*, when processing of session reports is complete.

Families should ensure that adequate funds are available in their designated account for the payment of fees. A .70 cent transaction fee is levied by redPAY on all transactions. Penalty fees apply where redPAY transactions are declined.

Payment of all fees is mandatory. Failure to pay fees within fourteen days may result in the cancellation of childcare, followed by legal action for the recovery of all outstanding debts, the costs of which will be added to the principal amount owing.

Parent Statement of Entitlement

Families will be provided with a fortnightly Statement of Entitlement through Armidale Family Day Care's *Harmony* software package.

Absences from Care

Normal fees are payable for all absences from booked care. Calculated fees are payable for absences from casual care where less than 24 hours' notice has been given.

Each child with Child Care Subsidy eligibility is entitled to 42 absences per year, across all approved services that they may be using. These absences can be taken for

any reason and do not require supporting documentation. Public Holidays are classified as Absence days.

Families may be able to get additional absences once they have used their allowable absence days, in certain circumstances, including if a child or member of their immediate household is ill. A medical certificate is required as evidence for obtaining additional absences.

Child Care Subsidy cannot be claimed for absences which occur on a child's first booked day of care nor for an absence from which a child does not return.

Public Holidays

Normal fees are payable for absences due to gazetted Public Holidays in the area in which care is being provided, if the child would normally have attended care on the day were it not to have been a Public Holiday. If care is required on a gazetted Public Holiday, the individual Educator's *Public Holiday* hourly fee will be payable.



Closure of an Educator's Service

If Educators choose to close their service, they must provide families with two weeks' written notice.

Should the Educator become unwell or have a family emergency, they will provide families with as much notice as possible and will notify AFDC's 24-hour emergency contact. Our team will endeavour to provide families with alternative care whenever possible.

Families are not required to pay fees to Educators when the Educator's service is closed due to Educator illness or leave periods.

Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy is a means tested payment that assists eligible families with the costs of childcare. Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to providers in most cases, to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. It will reduce the fees that a family pays a childcare provider for the care of their child.

Three main factors will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy. These are:

- Family income — the combined adjusted taxable income of parents/guardians
- Activity test — the participation activity level of the parents/guardians, and
- Hourly rate caps — that apply to the type of child care service and age of the child.

Further information on accessing Child Care Subsidy is available on Services Australia's website:

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/centrelink-online-account-help-update-your-activity-test-for-child-care-subsidy>

Immunisation

Upon enrolment, families must provide an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) History Statement (that shows a child is up to date or cannot be immunised for medical reasons) OR an AIR Immunisation History Form (that shows a child is on a recognised catch-up schedule), when enrolling a child in childcare.

Families can request a copy of their child's AIR Immunisation History Statement at any time by:

- using their Medicare online account through myGov <https://my.gov.au/>
- using the Medicare Express Plus App:
www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/express-plus-mobile-apps
- calling the AIR General Enquiries Line on 1800 653 809 Further information is available from NSW Health; www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation.

Child Protection

AFDC Coordination Unit team members and Educators are mandatory reporters with an obligation to ensure the safety, welfare and well-being of children in care. Each holds current Mandatory Child Protection training and awareness.

Complaints & Grievances

Armidale Family Day Care's Complaints Handling Policy is child focused as are our processes to respond to complaints and concerns. We aim to ensure that children, Educators, management, coordination unit staff families and the community can be confident that complaints and grievances are taken seriously and addressed fairly and promptly.

A copy of AFDC's Complaints Handling Policy is available to all families from the Coordination Unit upon request or may be downloaded from our website.

If a family has a complaint or concern, they should generally discuss it in the first instance with their Educator;

If the matter is not resolved at this level, they should bring the matter to the attention of our Nominated Supervisor or Business Manager. The complainant will be requested to complete a *Complaint Notification Form*, the matter will be dealt

with in accordance with the timeframes laid out in the Complaints Handling Policy , recorded in AFDC's Complaints Log and reported to the Board of Directors.

Should the above steps be unsuccessful or inappropriate, the matter will be referred to AFDC's Board of Directors for consideration.

Neither Directors nor the Coordination Unit Staff are able to make decisions which override pre-existing legislation.

Reporting of Serious Incidents

Upon receipt of a complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred or that the National Law has been breached, the approved provider and/or Nominated Supervisor of AFDC will communicate with the complainant immediately, report to the regulatory authority within 24 hours and take immediate action to remedy the issue or concern

Confidentiality & Privacy

AFDC aims to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals. All records and information about children, families, Educators, staff and management are securely stored. These are only accessed by or disclosed to those individuals who need the information to fulfil their responsibilities at the service, or in line with pre-existing legislation.

The service's Confidentiality and Privacy policies are available from our website, at Educator's homes and upon request from the Coordination Unit.

Administration of Medication

Educators are not permitted to administer any medication to children without written authorisation from families on every occasion that medication is required. An exception to administering medication without an authorisation is in the case of an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency.

All medications to be administered must have child's name and recommended dosage labelled clearly.

Children's Illnesses and Injuries

AFDC provide families with a copy of the *Medical Conditions Policy* upon enrolment. Families' adherence to this policy is important to protect the health of both Educators and children.

Sick children must be excluded from child care. If a child is ill, or has contracted a contagious disease, the child will not be accepted into care. If a child becomes ill whilst in care, the parent or guardian will be contacted immediately .

If a child is suffering from an infectious disease, they must be excluded from care for the periods prescribed by the NSW Department of Health. Refer:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/childhood.aspx>

Families may need to obtain a medical certificate stating that their child is permitted to return to care.

An exception to administering medication without an authorisation is in the case of an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency.

In case of an incident or injury to a child, the Educator will make every effort to contact the parent/guardian and/or authorised contact immediately and will seek the support of the Coordination Unit. In the case of a serious incident or injury, the Educator will seek urgent medical attention prior to contacting the family and Coordination Unit. Medical costs incurred are the responsibility of the child's family.

Educators will complete Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record forms on the occasion of any incident. Parents/guardians will be asked to sign these forms, copies of which will be provided to the Coordination Unit.

All accidents, injuries and incidents that require medical attention will be reported to the NSW Early Childhood Education Directorate by the Coordination Unit.

Nutrition

Armidale Family Day Care encourages all families to provide children with food and drinks that are nutritious, adequate in quantity, varied and able to be offered at frequent intervals, appropriate to the needs of the individual child.

Drinking water will be available at all times and Educators will encourage children to drink water regularly.

Programming

Educators will plan and programme activities and learning opportunities for all children in care. These programmes will be based on the interests of the individual child, the group of children and the Educator's daily evaluations and reflections. Programmes will follow an approved learning framework, such as the Early Years Learning Framework, or My Time, Our Place-Framework for School Age Care.



Armidale Family Day Care encourage families to contribute to the programming by providing their Educator with information about their child's interests.

Service Policies and Procedures

Armidale Family Day Care's service policies and procedures are based upon the requirements of the National Regulations and Law, the National Quality Standards, Early Years Learning Framework and My Time, Our Place and are all accessible on Armidale Family Day Care's website.

Armidale & District Family Day Care was established in 1983 and is the only locally operated, community-based service in Armidale.

Thank you for considering us as your preferred early childhood education and care service.