



Summer Newsletter for Educators



December 2024

The year ahead: Upcoming staffing changes

As we approach the end of the year, we want to share some important staffing updates. Sadly, we will be saying goodbye to Lois as she retires from her position as Nominated Supervisor at Armidale Family Day Care. We wish her all the best as she embarks on the next exciting chapter in her life.



Lois's retirement has prompted a review of the Armidale and District Family Day Care structure. As you know, we also manage Armidale Out of School Hours Care, which has led to the creation of a new role: Children's Services Manager.

We're pleased to announce that Sharon Conroy has accepted this position and will oversee both services while continuing her role as Educational Leader, supporting

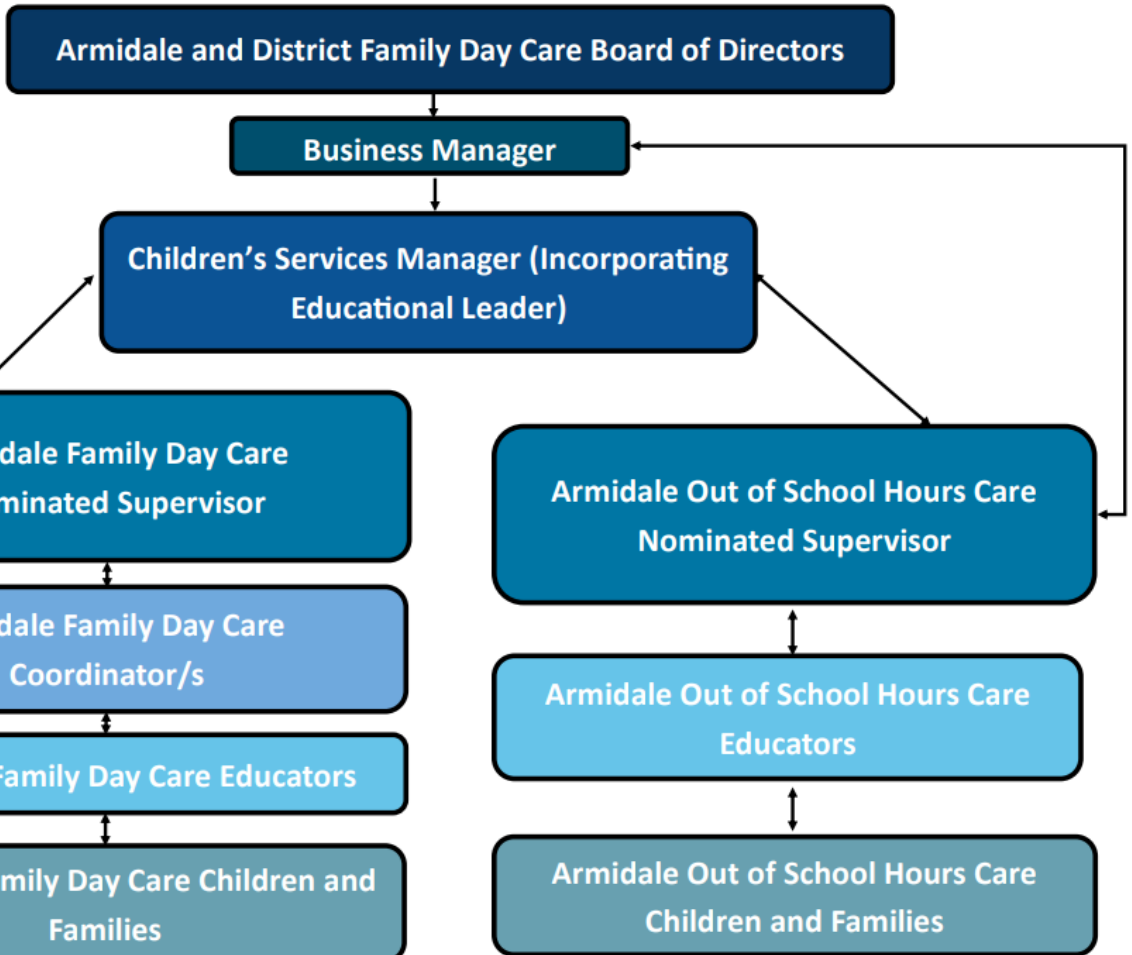
our educators. Sharon will also be working closely with Pat, who will continue in her role of Business Manager.

With Lois's departure, Gemma Jones will step into the Nominated Supervisor role at Armidale Family Day Care.

These changes also open up opportunities, as we are now seeking a Coordinator for Armidale Family Day Care and a Nominated Supervisor for Out of School Hours Care.

To help bring clarity to these changes, we have included an updated organisational chart. We understand that change can bring uncertainty, so please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns. If you know anyone who might be suitable for the open positions, please share the opportunity with them.

Thank you all for your continued support.



Refer an Educator!

As yet, we haven't had anyone take us up on this fantastic offer, but don't worry there is still time! We have decided to extend this offer until March 2025. Help us to recruit more wonderful Educators at AFDC. Refer an Educator and earn \$500! Get \$250 when they register and another \$250 after 6 months. Help us grow our team and watch your reward grow!



Did you know ABC Kids offers a wide range of Bluey resources for early education, including the **Bluey Series 3 Early Education Tool Kit**?

Packed with teaching and learning ideas from each episode, these resources are linked to various areas of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Check them out at <https://www.abc.net.au/abckids/early-education/bluey-early-education-resources> for fresh, engaging content to support your educational practices!



As we continue reflecting on the Child Safe Standards, we recently gathered your feedback on our revised Child Safe Code of Conduct.

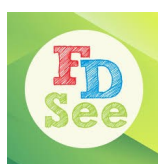
After considering all feedback, the updated Code will soon be provided to everyone, who will be asked to read and sign their commitment to complying with this important code.

The next step is to review our policies in this area, and we will soon seek your feedback on these as well, as we work together to embed these standards throughout AFDC.

A huge thank you to everyone for displaying the 10 Child Safe Standards poster in your service, publicly committing to these standards, and helping to reach families and the community.

School Leavers

If you have any children leaving your service to start their school journey, please let us know so we can provide them with a small AFDC leaving gift to celebrate this exciting milestone!



Over the last few months, Lois, Gemma, and Sharon have been reflecting on the Re-registration process and the changes made to FDSee earlier this year. We are blown away by the improvements made by all Educators during recent re-registration visits. The process is now much quicker, with fewer actions required from Educators. This is a true testament to your hard work, dedication, and commitment to high standards. Thank you all so much - we couldn't appreciate you more!

Thank you all for the valuable feedback you've provided as we've reflected on various practices. Recently, we've been reviewing the daily safety checklist and sleep monitoring charts, as we noticed several issues across many services. Your input through polls, emails, phone calls, and face-to-face conversations has made this process much smoother. We're now exploring ways to offer more tailored, meaningful options for each service. Stay tuned as we continue working on this and will share a range of options soon.



Policy Committee



For 2025, we're excited to form an Educator Policy Committee, made up of Educators who are interested in reviewing and providing input on draft policies as they come up for review. It's a great opportunity to get involved and have a say in our policies. You can collaborate with your group or review independently - the process is flexible. If you're interested in joining the committee, please let us know! Don't worry if this isn't for you; we'll still share policies and request feedback from all Educators regularly, with the option to participate as you wish.

EVACUATION ROUTE

Thank you all for promptly submitting your evacuation and lockdown rehearsals. We appreciate your proactive approach in documenting and returning them. Your efforts in ensuring safety are greatly appreciated!

Professional Development

Safe Sleep Training

We recently learned that Red Nose Australia have increased Safe Sleep training fees, from \$38 to \$98, and have now made the certificates valid for 1 year maximum. We realise these changes may pose a challenge for some Educators. While we recognise the value of this training, we want to ensure it remains accessible for everyone.

Starting in January, we will require Safe Sleep training to be completed annually. To make this more convenient and cost-effective for you, we're developing our own Armidale Family Day Care Safe Sleep training. This 30-minute presentation, followed by a brief quiz, will cover all the essential Red Nose guidelines. Once completed, you'll receive a certificate.

This training is designed to fit into your busy schedule, providing the same key information, but in a more tailored, manageable way, and at no cost to you.



More information coming soon in early 2025!



Save the Date!
On **Thursday, 13th February 2025**, we will be hosting a face-to-face professional development session, led by Sam Shipman, at the office in the **evening**. We have a few workshop options available with Sam for you to choose from:

- Managing Behaviour
- Conversations with Families
- Capacity Building with Families
- High Expectations of Children with Disability

Let us know your preferred workshop, and we will confirm which session will be held. We look forward to seeing you there!

Exciting Professional Development Support for 2025

We're excited to announce that Pat has successfully secured a Professional Development Grant for most of our Educators for 2025! This can be used to assist in the costs of various Professional Development opportunities, including First Aid and Child Protection training. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

Additionally, don't forget that each Educator is entitled to \$50 per year for Professional Development, provided by Armidale Family Day Care. We also offer flexitime for PD that may take place in work hours. We're thrilled to offer this support and help you continue growing professionally!



Over the past few months, Gemma has completed professional development on cultural responsiveness, including participating in a series of webinars by the Ethnic Community Services Co-operative and attending the "Walking the Talk" Early Childhood Education Conference at UNE.

Keynote speakers included Rhonda Livingstone from ACECQA and Dr. Sharman Stone, while breakout sessions focused on Culturally Responsive Programs and Building Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families. These insights will support our focus on our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as we move into the new year.



This week PEAK Training offered a PD in your Pocket webinar around the use of Artificial Intelligence in family day care.

This was presented by Dr Jo Bird, of the University of New England, and featured one of our wonderful Educators, Donna.

We learnt about the benefits and risks of using AI in family day care, including how to keep children safe, and Donna shared her story of how AI has made a positive impact within her service.



This was inspiring to us and many Educators who were watching, with lots of comments about how they could relate to Donna's story.

Thank you both for this informative and engaging professional development opportunity!



Over the past six months, the Coordination Team has participated in ACECQA's Quality Support Program, including fortnightly online meetings and two in-person visits with Support Facilitator Jess. These sessions have helped us improve practices, reflect on ways to better support Educators, and prepare for Assessment and Rating (A&R). With the program concluding, A&R can happen anytime, and we are confident in the improvements made and ready for the process.



End of Year Reminders

Office Closure:

- * The Coordination Unit office will be closed from Thursday, December 19, 2024, and will reopen on Monday, January 6, 2025. Emergency support will be available via the service mobile during this time.



Session Reports:

- * The last reporting period of 2024 ends on Sunday, December 22, 2024.
- * The CCS system

closes on Tuesday, December 24, 2024.

- * Please ensure all session reports are signed by families on the last day of care each week.
- * Submit reports through Harmony as families sign off on attendance—don't wait until Monday morning.
- * Double-check Harmony weekly to ensure all sessions are



submitted.

Educator Holidays:

- * Please notify us and your families of any educator holidays as soon as possible to avoid any confusion over the festive period.

CCS Payments:

- * Child Care Subsidy funds may be delayed due to inter-departmental communication. Payments are expected in accounts by Thursday, January 4, 2025.
- * If delayed payments will impact

your family, we can advance funding, which will be deducted once the funds arrive. Please notify us in advance if you require this support.
Thank you for your cooperation and support to ensure a smooth process over the festive season!



New Enrolments

When meeting with families for new enrolments, if you and the family agree to commence care, please remind them to contact the office as soon as possible.

There is essential paperwork we need to complete, such as confirming medical conditions and ensuring all necessary details are in place for a safe start. This will ensure we are fully prepared for the proposed care date.



New families also need to know what your fees are before they commence care. Please have all new families sign a copy of your fee schedule upon enrolment, acknowledging that they are aware of what they will be charged.

Thank you for your assistance in this process!



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End of Year Get Together and Farewell for Sandra Gordon and Lois Walkowiak

Date: Saturday 7th December 2024

Time: 6 for 6:30pm

Where: The Grand Hotel, 251 Rusden Street, Armidale



Fire Equipment Requirements at AFDC:

- Fire extinguishers and fire blankets must be checked by a certified fire safety service provider every 6 months, even if they are new.
- Smoke detectors need to be inspected annually.
- As there is no tagging system for smoke detectors, we will require a receipt as evidence of the most recent inspection date.

Lois has recently contacted several fire safety service providers and found that Armidale Fire and Safety offers very competitive rates for anyone interested. Please ensure all checks are up to date for safety compliance.