Standard

Service Management in Family Day Care

Please note this Standard is mandatory and DECD FDC staff (including DECD educators) are required to adhere to the content.

Summary

This standard outlines the requirements relating to the leadership and service management for operating a DECD family day care service.

Table 1 - Document details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication date</th>
<th>March 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>File number</td>
<td>DECD12/7278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks</td>
<td>Family Day Care Operations Policy Family Day Care - Fee and Charging procedure DECD Records Management Policy (DECD11/7735)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Replaces</td>
<td>FDC Policy – Management and Administration Policy FDC Policy – Complaints and Grievances for Educators FDC Fact sheet - Confidentiality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy officer (position)</td>
<td>Senior Policy Officer, Childcare Policy and Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy officer (phone)</td>
<td>8226 2546</td>
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<td>Policy sponsor (position)</td>
<td>Director, Early Childhood Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive director responsible (position and office)</td>
<td>Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development, Department for Education and Child Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applies to</td>
<td>All DECD Family Day Care staff and educators that are registered under one of the department’s Family Day Care schemes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key words</td>
<td>Family Day Care, Standard, Leadership, Management, Complaints, Confidentiality, Grievance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved by</td>
<td>Senior Executive Group</td>
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<td>March 2017</td>
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<td>Review date</td>
<td>March 2020</td>
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Table 2 - Revision record

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1. Title

Service Management in Family Day Care

2. Purpose

To outline the leadership and service management requirements that educators are required to comply with as a condition of their DECD FDC registration in accordance with the requirements of Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 [the Act] and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 [the Regulations].

3. Scope

All DECD FDC staff, educators registered under a DECD FDC scheme, educator assistants approved under a DECD FDC scheme.

4. Policy detail

This Standard is underpinned by the National Quality Standard (NQS). The NQS consists of seven quality areas, each containing standards and elements, against which education and care services are rated.

The seven quality areas covered by the National Quality Standard are:

- QA1 Educational program and practice
- QA2 Children’s health and safety
- QA3 Physical environment
- QA4 Staffing arrangements
- QA5 Relationships with children
- QA6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- QA7 Leadership and service management

This standard focuses on Quality Area 7; the effective leadership and management of the service contributes to quality environments for children’s learning and development.

4.1 Governance

The DECD FDC Governance framework describes the management and administrative practices that define authority, decision making and accountability.

The DECD FDC program is governed by:

a) Family Day Care Operating Policy and associated standards
b) The Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011
c) The Education and Care Services National Regulations
d) DECD policies, procedures and standards (where applicable) including the Screening and Suitability – Child Safety Policy
e) Child Care Service Handbook, for approved child care services operating under the Child Care Management System (CCMS).
The program operates under the following structural arrangements:

Decision making in DECD FDC is based on the following principles:
- the rights and best interests of the child are paramount
- children are successful, competent and capable learners
- the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity underlie the National Law
- that Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued
- that the role of parents and families is respected and supported
- that best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services
- procedural fairness will be afforded to all parties.
4.2 Code of Conduct

DECD FDC staff must abide by the Public Sector Code of Ethics.

DECD FDC educators must abide by the FDC code of conduct whilst carrying out the management of the family day care business. Refer Appendix 1 – FDC code of conduct.

4.3 Confidentiality

DECD FDC educators are required to ensure that information is collected and used for the purposes for which it was collected. All information is to be restricted to those who need to know.

Information is not to be disclosed to a third party other than is required by law.

The Information Sharing Guidelines for promoting safety and wellbeing (ISG) procedure must be followed.

Departmental records will be stored and disposed of in line with DECD Information Management Policy.

Educators need to consider that activities on social media websites should be considered public activities. Despite the availability of privacy functions on social media websites, the possibility exists for content to be shared beyond the intended recipients. Additionally, it should be noted that the terms and conditions of use for most social media sites state that all content becomes the property of the site on which it is posted. This makes the public nature of these websites unavoidable. Online content is also essentially permanent, please consider this when posting.

4.4 Record Keeping

Records are to be stored at a FDC educators premises in such a way that they are not accessible to children, family members and other persons.

Under the National Regulations FDC educators are required to keep prescribed documents including child assessments, incident, injury, trauma and illness records, medication records, enrolment records and records of visitors to the premises. If they are not stored on the premises, they must be made available to an authorised officer. Please refer to the Guide to National Law and National Regulations p115 for information on how long a record is to be kept.

Educators must provide the scheme with records, as outlined in Regulation 178(1), when they leave a service.

4.5 Continuous improvement

Each FDC scheme will develop and maintain a scheme Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The QIP will detail the development, implementation and evaluation of the scheme program. The QIP is the platform for improvement action based on analysis of practice and service delivery and will be continuously updated. FDC educators are invited to contribute to the development of the plan and the implementation of identified actions.

A professional development plan is required to be maintained by each educator and DECD FDC staff member. The plan is to outline professional development and learning goals, which is to be based on their reflection on practice.

4.6 Maintaining and Exceeding Standards
DECD FDC staff and educators are required to maintain or exceed the requirements of the National Law and Regulations in the delivery of the service. The National Law and Regulations set the National Quality Standards and the regulatory framework for family day care.

DECD FDC staff will work in partnership with FDC educators to build a work plan that responds to areas for improvement to either meet or exceed the standards.

4.7 Concerns and Complaints

The principles that guide the management of concerns and complaints are:

- the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is our first priority
- families, educators, staff and members of the community have the right to raise concerns and complaints about DECD FDC services and are supported to do so
- families, educators, members of the community and staff have the right to be treated with respect and dignity
- wherever possible, concerns and complaints should be addressed with the person concerned
- complaints will be considered in a confidential, timely and impartial manner and in accordance with due process and principles of natural justice
- the rights and responsibilities of all parties should be considered
- complaints are monitored and their management evaluated so as to inform and drive FDC and DECD system and performance improvement.

Note: Educators and families may, at any time, forward a concern or complaint directly to the Education Standards Board or the Ombudsman. Refer Feedback and complaints about child care services.
4.7.1 DECD FDC educator raising a concern or complaint

Where an educator has a complaint or concern, the following process will apply

The educator raising the concern, or making the complaint, is to:

- contact their local scheme office
- indicate how and when they would like to communicate the concern or complaint (ie via telephone or in person, or a mutually convenient time)
- arrange for a support person to be present at the discussion, if helpful (noting that the role of the support person is to provide advice and support during the process and not to answer questions on behalf of any of the parties or be actively involved in the discussion)
request an interpreter if required to assist with communicating the concern or complaint.

The role of the Family Day Care Staff is to:

- listen to and determine nature of the concern or complaint
- document what is said
- identify actions to resolve the concern or complaint
- inform the complainant what will or has been done
- acknowledge receipt of a written complaint as soon as reasonably possible (within 5 days)
- provide support to the person if necessary while the complaint is being considered
- make enquiries, consider and determine the most appropriate way to resolve the issue fairly and promptly
- consider relevant legislation, DECD/FDC policy and guidelines and procedures
- inform the person if there is a delay in the process
- ensure the complaint and the outcome is documented
- ensure the outcome of the process is communicated to the person verbally and, if appropriate, in writing including the right to refer the matter to the DECD Family Day Care Corporate Office team.

The role of the DECD FDC Corporate Office staff is to:

- acknowledge receipt of a written complaint as soon as reasonably possible (within 5 days)
- clarify and record the nature of the complaint, including what expectations the person has in relation to outcomes
- refer, where appropriate, any complaint that has not been raised at the Family Day Care service level back to the Family Day Care service
- make enquiries, consider and determine the most appropriate way to resolve the issue fairly and promptly
- inform the complainant if there is a delay in the process
- ensure the complaint and the outcome is documented
- ensure the outcome of the process is communicated to the person verbally and, if appropriate, in writing.

4.7.2 Family raising a concern or complaint

The Family information booklet must be provided to every family when commencing at a DECD FDC service. This outlines the process and the contact details to raise a concern or complaint. The booklets are specific to each region:

- Family Information Booklet – Central
- Family Information Booklet – North
- Family Information Booklet – South

A family may also submit a concern or complaint to the DECD Education Complaint Unit:

DECD, Manager, Education Complaint Unit
Level 10 / 31 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Ph: 1800 677 435
Email: decd.educationcomplaint@sa.gov.au
The Education Complaint Unit is governed by the DECD Consumer Complaints Management and Resolution policy.

4.7.3 Raising a concern or complaint where confidentiality is requested

Whilst every effort will be made to keep the complainant identity confidential, there is a need to discuss with the complainant that any request to keep their identity confidential, may impact on the ability to achieve the remedy they are seeking. While every effort will be made to comply with a request to keep the complainant's identity confidential, due to the specific nature of their concerns, this information may result in a complainant's identity becoming known, by association, in the course of any investigation and through Freedom of Information requirements.

The DECD Family Day Care Scheme Manager will determine upon receipt of an anonymous concern or complaint the extent of the investigation required, noting that anonymity may limit the scope of an investigation as well as issues in relation to natural justice for those who have a complaint made about them.

4.7.4 Unresolved concerns or complaints

If a concern or complaint remains unresolved an educator may:

- submit a concern or complaint, in writing, outlining actions that have been taken to resolve the complaint to date and an outline of what a reasonable solution would be. This request is to be forwarded to:
  
  DECD  
  Manager, Education Complaint Unit  
  31 Flinders Street  
  ADELAIDE SA 5000  
  Ph: 1800 677 435  
  Email: decd.educationcomplaint@sa.gov.au

  The Education Complaint Unit is governed by the DECD Consumer Complaints Management and Resolution policy.

- submit a concern or complaint to the Education Standards Board of South Australia, refer website or phone (08) 8226 0077

- contact the State Ombudsman, www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au

4.7.5 Behaviour when notifying or discussing a concern / complaint

Any written or verbal complaints that contain personal abuse, inflammatory statements, and comments of a threatening nature or intended to intimidate will not be addressed and the complainant will be advised accordingly.
5. Roles and responsibilities

Table 4 - Roles and responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Authority/responsibility for</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Complaint Unit</td>
<td>Information, advice and support about the complaints resolution process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| DECD FDC Scheme Managers (Nominated supervisor) | Developing and maintaining a Quality Improvement Plan for each FDC scheme  
Respond to concerns and complaints in an efficient and timely manner |
| DECD FDC Team Leader                      | Respond to concerns and complaints in an efficient and timely manner                        |
| DECD FDC staff                            | Engage in continuous improvement  
Respond to concerns and complaints in an efficient and timely manner |
| DECD Family Day Care educators            | Raising concerns with the person involved as soon as possible after the issue has arisen  
Engage in continuous improvement  
Cooperate fully with DECD staff, in line with Registration Conditions |
| DECD FDC Corporate Office staff           | Governance practices that meet departmental accountability standards  
Respond to concerns and complaints in an efficient and timely manner |
| Authorised Officer                        | An officer authorised by the Education Standards Board of SA                                 |

6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The effectiveness of this standard will be monitored by DECD Early Childhood Services, in consultation with DECD FDC scheme managers. Feedback and queries related to this standard can be forwarded to the Policy Officer, Childcare Policy and Programs [DECD.FDCFeedback@sa.gov.au](mailto:DECD.FDCFeedback@sa.gov.au).

This standard will be reviewed every three years by DECD Early Childhood Services, or earlier if required.
7. Definitions and abbreviations

Table 5 - Definitions and abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complainant</td>
<td>Person who raises a concern or complaint</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complaint</td>
<td>An expression of grievance or dissatisfaction where a person is seeking redress or justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>An issue of interest (because of its importance and effect) which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation.</td>
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<td>DECD Corporate Office</td>
<td>Staff working in the building at 31 Flinders Street and local DECD offices, includes DECD FDC staff</td>
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<td>DECD</td>
<td>Department for Education and Child Development</td>
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<td>Dispute</td>
<td>A complaint that has remained unresolved</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>DECD Education Complaint Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESB</td>
<td>Education Standards Board of SA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>DECD FDC registered educator or educator assistant</td>
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<td>FDC</td>
<td>Family Day Care</td>
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<td>National Law</td>
<td>Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011</td>
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<td>Natural justice</td>
<td>without bias and the right to a fair hearing</td>
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<td>Older child</td>
<td>School aged child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regulations</td>
<td>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</td>
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<td>Regulatory Authority or RA</td>
<td>Refer to Education Standards Board of SA (ESB)</td>
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<td>Service/scheme</td>
<td>Name used to describe the Family Day Care service that is managed by a FDC Scheme Manager</td>
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<td>Young child</td>
<td>Child preschool age or under</td>
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8. Supporting documents

- [DECD Family Day Care Operations Policy](#)
- [Standard – Children’s Learning in Family Day Care](#)
- [Standard – Children’s Health and Safety in Family Day Care](#)
- [Standard – Physical Environment in Family Day Care](#)
- [Standard – Educators, Families and Community in Family Day Care](#)
- [Family Day Care – Fee and Charging procedure](#)
9. References


Appendix

1. Family Day Care Code of Conduct
CODE OF CONDUCT

These are the values that are important to us and our work reflects these values:

**Respect** – is about how we treat other people
We respect and have regard for the dignity of others

**Accountability** – is about our responsibility for our own actions
Our decisions and actions have regard for the well-being of people and the environment, both now and for the future

**Leadership** – is about how we inspire others
We recognise individual and collective strengths
We promote the importance of quality care and learning

**Integrity** – is about the intent and meaning of our actions
We give our best and act honestly, openly and fairly in our work

**Excellence** – is about our learning
Our practices and actions demonstrate the importance of continual learning and the development of children, ourselves and the family day care program

**Co-operation** – is about working together
We work with others; sharing perspectives, skills and knowledge

Children and young people are at the centre of everything we do

(DECD Family Day Care, 2016)