

ASSESSMENT, APPROVAL & REASSESSMENT OF RESIDENCE

QUALITY AREA 4

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PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for assessment, approval and reassessment of Educator homes contracted to deliver a Family Day Care service for Whittlesea Family Day Care, including:

- Educators provide a healthy and safe indoor and outdoor environment for all children
- children have access to the Educator's family's primary living areas.
- Educators meet the requirements of the Home Assessment/ Home Safety Checklist prior to becoming registered and understand their legal obligations to maintain this level of safety at all times whilst providing a FDC service.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following service policies:

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Code of Conduct
- Monitoring, Support and Supervision of Educators
- Participation of Volunteers and Students
- Selection and registration of educators



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Whittlesea Family Day Care is committed to:

- ensuring that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected at all times while also promoting their learning and development
- fulfilling a duty of care to all children attending the service
- providing accountable and effective service management practices
- maintaining obligations for services to meet safety standards when delivering a Family Day Care program.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, educators, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Whittlesea Family Day Care, including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Educators	Parents/guardians
Each Educator will undergo an initial Home Assessment and an annual Home Safety Check conducted by two members of the Coordination Unit. In addition to the annual checks additional checks will also be carried out in the situation where an Educator has taken a leave of absence, has completed a home renovation, or changed residence (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)	√		√	
Educators who fail to meet the required standard for the home assessment/ Safety Check will be given a notice to comply from the Coordination Unit. The amount of time given to comply with this notice will depend on the level of risk and whether the area can be safely locked off. In some instances, the Educator may be suspended from providing care until the breach of safety is rectified.	√		√	
Educators who have areas of their home, whether indoors or outdoors, that are unregistered for the care of FDC children, must ensure that these areas remain inaccessible to FDC children at all times whilst they are in care. Failure to comply with this requirement will constitute a breach of the FDC Educator Agreement	R		R	
The Coordination Unit may monitor targeted aspects of the Home Safety Check at any home support visit	√			
The Coordination Unit will conduct home visits to support educators in all areas of service provision and compliance (<i>refer to the Child Safe Environment Policy</i>)	√	√	√	
The Coordination Unit have right of access to the Educators homes (<i>refer to Right of Access Policy</i>)	√	√	√	
Educators are expected to continuously review their indoor and outdoor home environment for safety with the Daily Hazard Checklist. It is the Educator's responsibility to at all times during work hours maintain recommended safety standards as set out in the Home Safety Checklist			√	
To allow adequate time for consultation with the FDC Coordination Unit, the Educator must provide at least 14 days written notice (or as soon as possible in the case of emergency situations) of the intention to continue to operate their FDC service whilst carrying out renovation/repair works at the registered FDC premises (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)			√	

Keeping animals in FDC can be a valuable educational experience for children. It is the responsibility of the Educator to ensure that all animal safety requirements are met as outlined in the Home Safety Check. Children must be protected from any infection and injury associated with animals (*refer to Attachment 3*)

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BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Home safety checks in family day care settings are essential for ensuring the well-being of children. These assessments focus on identifying potential hazards, such as toxic substances, sharp objects, or unsafe furniture, helping to create a safe environment for exploration and learning, along with ensuring the Educator meets their obligations to operate.

Child welfare is the top priority. Regular safety evaluations help maintain a secure space, minimizing the risk of accidents and injuries.

Compliance with regulatory standards is another key aspect. Family day care providers must adhere to National Law and Regulations, and home safety checks are integral to the approval and reassessment process, ensuring that providers meet necessary safety requirements.

Quality assurance is also critical. By consistently evaluating safety measures, providers can maintain high standards of care, fostering an environment that supports children's development.

Trust and accountability play significant roles in this context. Families need assurance that their children are safe, and regular safety checks build confidence in the care provider's commitment to safety and quality.

Reassessments help identify areas for enhancement, enabling providers to adapt practices and ensure ongoing safety for children in their care.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Standards
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Child Health and Safety

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Home support Visit: Whittlesea FDC defines 'Home Support Visits' as a visit conducted by the Coordination Unit to an Educator's home, in area where care is primarily provided. The purpose of these visits is to monitor the Educator's practices and program, to provide support to the Educator, to observe children in care, to discuss issues that arise and to ensure records, especially legislative requirements, are being maintained accurately.

Responsible Person: The Family Day Care Coordination Unit is available to Educators during operational times. The name of the responsible person is displayed and available for families accessing the Family Day Care service.



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- The Commission for Children and Young People (2018), *A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation*: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/New-CSS/A-guide-for-creating-a-Child-Safe-Organisation-190422.pdf>
- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being, Becoming: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Victoria Police – National Police Record Check: www.police.vic.gov.au
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice and Regulation – provides details of how to obtain a WWC Check: www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Code of Conduct
- Occupational Health & Safety
- Participation of Volunteers and Students
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Right of Access
- Supervision of Children



EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly check educators records to ensure WWC Clearance and qualifications are current and complete
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172 \(2\)](#)).



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Home Assessment and Annual Home Safety Checks
- Attachment 2: Home Renovations and Repairs
- Attachment 2: Animal in the Home

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Whittlesea Family Day Care on 30 October 2024

REVIEW DATE: 30 October 2025



ATTACHMENT 1: HOME ASSESSMENT AND ANNUAL HOME SAFETY CHECKS

Practices

Indoor areas

- The City of Whittlesea FDC requires the care and education of children to primarily be conducted in the Educator's family living areas of the home. Exceptions to this stipulation may be considered in consultation with the Coordination Unit.
- Garages can be considered an additional play space and need to comply with the safety standards before use.
- A separate area is required for children's sleep/rest and play.
- Any household duty which compromises an Educator's supervision and/or duty of care will not be undertaken whilst FDC children are in care.
- Educators must ensure that they have adequate indoor areas for children to sleep or rest, and adequate areas for children who do not sleep or rest, for quiet play.

Outdoor areas

- All Educators must ensure that they can provide the children in their care with an adequate, enclosed and safe outdoor play area.
- Adequate shade must be provided for children when playing outdoors.
- Premises and grounds must be kept free of vermin, animal excretions, rubbish and any hazardous materials.
- Large trampolines are considered to be extremely dangerous as they have potential to cause severe injury to children. Kidsafe describes them as 'gymnasium equipment', not playground equipment, and recommends that at least two people are needed to supervise them adequately (one on each side). The Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre states 'they are not recommended for children under the age of six'. In response to this information, The City of Whittlesea FDC prohibits the use of these large trampolines during service provision.

Therefore these trampolines in the homes of Educators during the hours of operation of FDC must be made inaccessible by either:

- Turning the trampoline onto its side and tie it securely to a fence
- Providing fencing to prohibit access
- Trampolines with enclosed sides (netting) are required to be made inaccessible by locking (padlock) the zipper entry point
- Exceptions to this include the use of mini trampolines. These can be used under direct supervision and placed on soft fall material such as grass, tan bark or rubber matting.

ATTACHMENT 2: HOME RENOVATIONS AND REPAIRS

Practices

In relation to home renovations and repairs a written notice must cover the following:

- The nature of the renovation/repair works.
- The expected commencement and completion date of the renovation/repair works.
- A detailed explanation of the proposed arrangements for the provision of childcare during the period of the renovation/repair works.

At least 14 days prior to the renovations or repairs commencing Educators are to:

- Discuss the proposed renovations/repairs to the FDC environment with all families using care. Families have the right of choice to stay with the Educator for the duration of the renovation works or relocate to another Educator until the renovation works have been completed. Parents/guardians can also choose to terminate care with the educator and relocate to another Educator or terminate care with the service. (In the instance of the family relocating to another Educator either temporarily or permanently less than 14 days notice will be accepted).

Renovations/repairs may take place while children are in care, providing the following are met:

- The care environment meets the standard as stipulated by the Whittlesea FDC Coordination Unit and the Legislative Requirements
- There is safe access to the premises for families and children.
- Quality care can still be delivered in the areas which children have access.
- Renovations meet appropriate building and safety regulations.
- Trades people sign in and out in the visitors log each day.
- The safety of the children can be guaranteed while trades people have access to the property.
- Educators communicate regularly with FDC Coordination Unit regarding updates as the renovation works progress through to completion.
- Families or children do not access the renovated areas of the property until the appropriate Home Safety Checks has been reconducted .
- Indoor and outdoor areas are to have a fixed non-climbable barrier of no less than 1 metre high to prevent children's access to unregistered renovated areas.

The Coordination Unit:

- Will consider the written response and approval will be granted for the Educator to continue to provide FDC services whilst renovation or repair works are taking place, providing the home safety requirements for FDC are met.
- If at any time during the renovation works, any families, or the Coordination Unit are concerned about the safety of the environment, the Coordination Unit reserves the right to discuss this with the Educator with the view of withdrawing children from care until safety requirements can be met.

ATTACHMENT 2: ANIMAL IN THE HOME

Practices

- All pet animals are to be kept clean and healthy, regularly wormed and immunised.
- Educators must ensure food areas and children's play and sleep areas are free from animals and animal hair.
- Educators must ensure that any dog is made inaccessible to children by a 'run' or other enclosure.
- Any protective fencing separating animals and children must prevent penetration by small fingers.
- Dog enclosures must have a height of 1.5 metres for large dogs, and 1 metre for small/medium dogs.
- Any animal contact (other than a dog) by children shall be a carefully planned and closely supervised experience, which has been approved by all parents/guardians of children in care.
- Garden areas, including sandpits must always be kept free from animal excrement.
- All animal food, water bowls and litter trays must be kept inaccessible to children.
- Birdcages are to be kept at a reasonable distance from food preparation areas.
- Cages are to be cleaned on a regular basis and not whilst FDC children are in care.
- Educators will advise the FDC Coordination Unit of the acquisition of any pet animal at their home.
- All animals must be added to the Educators Indoor/Outdoor Risk Assessment.