



Baw Baw Family Day Care Family Information Guide





Welcome to Baw Baw Family Day Care.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Baw Baw Shire Council is committed to providing and actively promoting a safe environment for children. Council has zero tolerance towards child abuse, and is committed to protecting the physical, emotional, cultural and social wellbeing of all children.

Council has policies and systems to protect children, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously. Baw Baw Shire Council acknowledges that children's safety is a whole of community responsibility and is everyone's business.

Welcome to Baw Baw Family Day Care!

When choosing child care you should consider the quality of the child care service. The quality of child care services are rated under a system called the National Quality Framework.

Just like schools, quality child care is important because high quality early education sets young children up for life.

Baw Baw Family Day Care is assessed and rated as: Exceeding the National Quality Standard

Our vision

To be a flexible, responsive, nationally assessed and rated service that provides quality outcomes for children and supports parents in their childrearing role.

Family Day Care offers:

- Small groups- a maximum of four pre-school children including those children residing in the Educator's own home
- A high quality educational program that is tailored to your child's developmental needs
- Routines that are flexible and can meet the needs you of you and your child
- Siblings may be placed together
- Parents choose an Educator with similar values
- Convenient geographical locality
- Access to local kindergartens and schools
- Monitoring and support by our dedicated Coordination Unit staff
- Participation in the community maintains neighbourhood networks
- Reasonable and affordable fees -Child Care Subsidy available to eligible families
- Family Day Care is open to the general community. Requests for care are prioritised according to Australian Government levels of priority. The highest levels of priority are children at risk and children of parents who are working, or looking for work, studying or training.

About Baw Baw Family Day Care - home based education and care

Family day care is approved child care that truly focuses on each individual child's development, while providing high quality early learning in an educator's own home.

In small groups, children will enjoy a natural approach to play and discovery, and form genuine lasting bonds with their qualified and passionate early childhood educator. Educators will provide you with peace of mind knowing your child is happy in a nurturing, natural and flexible home learning environment.

Families are drawn to Family Day Care as it isn't just the right choice – it's the natural one.

Code of Ethics for Family Day Care at Baw Baw

The way we do things here

- We recognise that each child's development progresses at an individual rate and the Family Day Care program needs to be play-based and flexible.
- We are committed to developing a relationship with each child based on mutual respect, trust and an appreciation of the child as an individual.
- We plan and provide experiences and opportunities to assist the child's learning and development, based on individual abilities, interests and needs.
- We strive to ensure high levels of safety, health and good nutrition so that the individual child's well-being, growth and learning is promoted.
- We view each child in the context of the family, culture and community.
- We care for the child in partnership with parents and seek to foster strong links to home and family and support parents in their parenting role.
- We encourage families to have a voice in matters affecting their child care.
- We respect and value the views of children in care.
- We develop ways to share information with families about the child's health, development, learning and care experiences.
- We welcome diversity, equity and inclusion and reject discrimination and gender bias.
- We form significant professional partnerships based on co-operation, respect and open communication to ensure trust and provide exceptional outcomes for families.
- We comply with all Commonwealth, State, Council & service policies and apply practices and procedures consistently to all families.
- We support learning and will extend our knowledge and skills.

In applying this code, we are committed to providing excellent Family Day Care. This means:

- Providing accessible, affordable and responsive services
- Reporting to, engaging and consulting with service participants
- Reflecting on our practice and planning continuous improvement
- Maintaining the privacy & confidentiality of all participants
- Valuing all Educators, staff, families and children

Source: Baw Baw Family Day Care Policy and Procedures

Baw Baw Family Day Care Philosophy

The Baw Baw Region is a community of quality rural areas, residential villages and larger townships where urban development is continuing at a rapid pace. Baw Baw Family Day Care acknowledges the diversity of families within the Shire. We believe all children and their families have a right to quality child care which has strong links to home, family, culture and community and provides the best possible outcomes for each individual child.

Children in their early years thrive in a small group with a primary Educator who is aware of and responsive to the individual child's needs and cultural identity, thereby assisting each child to reach his/her potential.

Educators plan to stimulate and challenge each child to reach their potential.

Each child's development and learning is unique and progresses at his or her own rate, as the child actively participates in a learning environment with others and the environment.

We recognise that each child's self esteem has a critical impact on their development. Positive outcomes for each child, regardless of age, gender, culture or ability must be provided. The development, abilities, emerging interests and needs of the individual child will be the basis for planning child care provision. The safety and wellbeing of the child will be first and foremost. The Child Safe Standards are being embedded in everyday practices as well as any policy updates.

We believe that the children's views on matters that affect them are to be valued and respected and we will consult with children.

Parents, Educators and staff will aim to work in partnership based on co-operation, respect and open communication to ensure care promotes the child's wellbeing and supports families.

This approach means all participants will be actively encouraged to have their views heard and to contribute to the management and operation of the Family Day Care Service.

We acknowledge that Parents, Educators and Staff have a range of backgrounds, skills, interests, strengths and life experience. Family Day Care Educators and Staff operate in a culture of support, solutions focus and continuous improvement.

Source: www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au,

Baw Baw Family Day Care Policy and Procedures, developed in conjunction and consultation with Educators, Families and Staff. Reviewed October 2020

The wellbeing of children and support for parents in childrearing is the focus of Family Day Care.

The Baw Baw Family Day Care Team

About our Educators

Baw Baw Family Day Care Educators are early childhood education and care professionals who engage in the principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and work within the requirements of the National Quality Framework.

In order to provide a safe educational environment for children, Family Day Care Educators are carefully selected and screened for suitability and must:

- Have or be working towards Minimum Certificate 3 qualification in Child Care
- Complete an annual Home Safety Check
- Have current First Aid including Asthma and Anaphylaxis Management training
- Have a current National Police check (all household members over 18 years)
- Have a current Working with Children Check. (all household members over 18 years)
- Be certified medically fit for childcare tasks
- Be committed to ongoing training & development
- Be responsible for meeting the National Quality Framework which include maintaining quality individualised learning programs, safe and hygienic learning environments, record keeping and qualifications
- Adhere to National Regulations and service policies at all times
- Be responsible for planning a quality child care program
- Participate in regular support and monitoring visits conducted by their approved service.
- Complete Child protection and Child Safe training annually

- Attend training, meetings and workshops periodically to maintain currency of skills and knowledge.
- Maintain current public liability insurance coverage
- Be over 18 years old

Our Educators are registered contractors who operate under the management of Baw Baw Family Day Care, an Australian government approved service provider. Baw Baw Family Day Care manages, resources and supports educators to provide high quality child care to families.

Family Day Care Coordinator

The Coordinator's role is to plan and co-ordinate the delivery of a high quality family day care service. The Family Day Care Coordinator has appropriate qualifications and experience in the management of a child care service.

Field Officers

The qualified and experienced Field Officers recruit, coach, support and resource educators and monitor the quality of care provision and safety standards. Field Officers also plan, organise and evaluate playgroups and have administrative tasks.

Administration Officer

This role provides customer service, processes children's timesheets and other records and administers parent fee subsidies from the Australian Government. The administration officer also prepares accountability data that is the basis for reports to the Australian Government.

Choosing your educator

What do I look for in an Educator?

Choosing the right educator can be difficult however we can help you along the way. Once you have returned your completed enrolment form you will be offered an initial meeting with an educator that has been matched to suit your requirements. During this meeting you should look for an educator that:

- offers valuable play and learning experiences for your child
- can meet your child's individual needs
- allows children time to explore and learn new activities
- supports all aspects of your child's development, including their social, emotional, physical and cognitive needs
- can form a positive partnership with you and your family.

Your decision will depend on your family's needs and the environment where you and your child feel most comfortable.

What is the main purpose of the initial meeting?

The initial meeting will give you and your prospective educator the opportunity to share expectations and family values with each other. You will be able to discuss your child's needs and whether your needs and your child's needs could be met through the placement.

The meeting is a two-way process and both parties need to be comfortable with the proposed care arrangements. Both parents and educators have the right to decide whether the care arrangement will work for them and are not obliged to accept any placement.

What should we discuss at the initial meeting?

An initial meeting should be pre-planned for a time that is convenient to both parties so that adequate discussion can occur.

General family information, contact numbers, the child's needs and routines including general medical information and specific health details should be discussed openly.

Behaviour guidance strategies used at home and in care should be discussed. Information about the child's development and current interests should be shared.

Elements of care important to your family should be identified and discussed. The Educator will take this time to show you the care environment.

Ask questions that occur to you so that all the information needed to make a decision is obtained.

Below is a guide to help with your initial contact with your prospective educator. It has lots of hints and tips on some of the questions you may like to ask. You can also use it to record the educator's details and any information gathered during your initial meeting.

- Share your general family information/contact details
- Ask about the care group and how your child would be included in the care group
- Share your child's medical information (including general health, any allergy / sensitivity, asthma, any medication)
- If your child has any allergy, sensitivity or medical condition do you have an Action Plan already
- Share information about your child's development & interests
- Ask about the educator's routines, what does a typical day look like
- Ask about what experiences and opportunities are available to your child both indoors and out. Make sure you can view care environment.
- Talk about any trips, outings, playgroups & excursions the educator might take your child on. Discuss travel safety and car restraints
- Talk about behaviour guidance strategies used at home & what the educator uses in care
- Share information about your child's sleep/rest patterns and needs
- Discuss nappies/toileting
- Discuss the provision of nutritious food & drinks, food allergies, dietary needs, your child's likes /dislikes
- Talk about the use of TV, videos, DVD's and electronic media
- Discuss Safety practices such as first aid training, police checks, Working with Children Checks, pets and SunSmart policies
- How will Information be exchange/ communication occur
- How do you give feedback about your child's care or talk about concerns or complaints
- If the care is for respite your days and times may need to change to accommodate working parents. Discuss with the educator how respite care days might be reviewed?
- Talk about holidays and absences.
- Discuss fees, how invoices will be issued and when/how invoices are expected to be paid

What happens next?

Once you have attended your initial meeting with your prospective educator please notify the Coordination Unit of your decision to either proceed or not to proceed within two working days of the meeting by telephoning 5625 0216 or via email at family.daycare@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au.

The coordination unit can then discuss your next steps and answer any further questions.

Contact with staff

When your child first starts care, a visit from one of our field officers will be made within the first month. Staff will contact you about your child's progress in care using a follow up feedback form that you will receive via your educator.

You will receive a regular Family Day Care newsletter that will update you and support your child care arrangements.

If at any time during the placement you have any questions or concerns in relation to the development and/or well-being of your child, contact your educator or the Family Day Care Office so matters can be discussed and addressed at the earliest opportunity. Staff would be happy to have telephone contact with you, or a meeting can be scheduled if face to face contact is preferred.

Working in partnerships

It is important for your child's wellbeing that the home and care environments are in harmony.

Good communication will assist the development of a partnership between you and your Educator.

Parents need information from their educator about their child's experiences in care, their daily routines and about their child's achievements and learning.

Educators need information from you about your child's current interests and development, likes and dislikes, health, favourite stories/songs, special times and the way your child's behaviour is managed at home. Two way communication between families and Educators is important so that planning to meet your child's needs can occur.

If you have any issues communicating with your child's educator please call the coordination unit staff, they will be happy to assist.



Settling in

How can I help my child settle into care?

When your child first commences care, you both may experience strong and unexpected emotions such as crying, sadness, confusion and doubt. You may feel anxiety, guilt and/or relief to have assistance with care or the opportunity to return to the workforce. These reactions are very normal.

Sometimes you may feel more overwhelmed at the separation than the child and may feel upset that the child adjusts quickly. This is also very normal.

Settling into care is based on individual needs and preferences and is best planned between you and your Educator. If you feel that either you or your child are finding settling into care difficult please let your educator know so that together you can plan to meet your own needs as well as your child's needs and make the experience a positive one.

Strategies to help settle your child:

- Believe that you have chosen high quality, approved, safe and monitored care for your child. This should be a positive experience for you both
- Practice leaving your child with a friend or relative

- Try to cease any practices that cannot reasonably be continued by the Educator, such as rocking the child to sleep in your arms or carrying the child on the hip for extended periods.
- Plan, label and organise your child's bag, bottles and belongings, including sun- hat, 30+ sunscreen, hairbrush, wipes, tissues and any security/comfort item.
- For children aged from 20 months, having a clear photograph of a parent in a soft plastic wallet or frame may help the child adjust to separation.
- Leave an item of clothing such as a cardigan or something special that the child identifies with you
- Be assured you are welcome to stay and settle the child
- gradual introduction to care may suit
- Tell your child that you are going to leave and will come back at a specific time.
- Collecting your child on time is very important.



Settling in

What do I need to send?

- Please provide practical and appropriate clothes and safe, well-fitting and flexible shoes to allow active physical play.
- You will need to provide at least one change of clothes, extra underwear, pants and socks, a sun hat (broad brimmed or legionnaires), sunscreen
- (30+ broad spectrum, water resistant) and a jacket and hat in cold weather.
- Please send a drink bottle or spill-proof cup for water.
- A security toy or blanket could be included.
- Babies and toddlers will need nappies, bibs and wipes, comforter and/or pacifier.
- It is recommended that all clothing be labelled.

What about Sun Protection?

Every child must be protected from over exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation. Sun protection practices, based on recommendations from the SunSmart Early Childhood Program, Cancer Council Victoria, are implemented in Family Day Care from mid-August to the end of April each year. When outside, children will need to wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears. Clothing with sleeves is recommended. Parents are asked to supply SPF broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.

What about food and drink?

Family Day Care is an Australian Government Child Care Service and your child's health and wellbeing must be promoted. Please discuss the provision of meals with your educator. Most parents using Family Day Care supply a lunch box containing their child's meals for the day.

Provision of food and drink by either parent or educator must meet required standards and be appropriate and sufficient to meet children's needs whilst in care.

Discuss any special requirements in relation to cultural or religious aspects of eating, drinking and food handling with your educator. Your individual requirements will be taken into account and respected.

Please make your educator aware of any food allergies and intolerances/sensitivities that your child may have so they can adhere to any allergy plans and/or necessary food practices

Family Day Care follows recommended nutrition guidelines.

Nutrition guidelines

The food children eat affects their growth and development. Eating habits formed in early childhood continue throughout life. Food and drink provided in Family Day Care by either educators or parents should be well balanced, nutritious and safe and meet the individual needs of the children.

Foods with little/no nutritional value are "sometimes foods" and should be eaten only occasionally. Also be mindful of foods that may be a choking hazard e.g. Hard lollies, popcorn, nuts etc. It is recommended that these foods are not included in everyday lunches and snacks in Family Day Care. We recommend milk and water as the preferred drinks and cool boiled water should also be offered to babies.

Settling in

Nutrition guidelines cont.

Mothers will be supported to continue breastfeeding as long as possible. Solid food should be introduced gradually by 6 months of age. Your educator will be able to help you introduce a variety of textures and finger food as appropriate.

Food variety and nutrition

Each day children should be offered food from each of the five basic food groups:

1. Bread, cereals, rice and pasta
2. Vegetables and legumes
3. Milk, yoghurt and cheese
4. Fruit
5. Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, legumes

All Australians are encouraged to eat two fruits and five vegetables each day. A variety of fruit and vegetables should be offered daily.

If food provided by parents is inadequate or inappropriate, the Educator may provide and charge for additional food.

Any food prepared, stored or served to the children in Family Day Care must be handled and stored appropriately to ensure it is safe from contamination and bacteria, parasites and viruses that cause food borne illness. Food needs to be transported to care safely. Freezer bricks and insulated containers are a good option.

Your Educator or Coordination Unit staff will be able to help with suggestions for meals or snacks upon request. Telephone the Family Day Care Office on 5625 0216 and tips sheets from the Victorian Government can be posted out.

What if I am still breast or bottle feeding?

Mothers are supported to continue to breastfeed for as long as possible. Educators are happy for you to supply expressed breastmilk to give to your child whilst in care. You should also feel free to breastfeed before leaving your child and/or to return to feed during the day if you choose. Please ensure breastmilk is transported and stored in a safe and hygienic manner.

Bottles and bottle feeding

If you are still breast or bottle feeding your child please provide breastmilk, appropriate infant formula or, if suitable, milk and clean bottles/teats. You should supply the number of sterilised bottles and amount of formula/milk to meet your baby's needs including clear directions for your educator. Cool boiled water must be used to make up the formula until the baby is 12 months of age. Formula must be made according to the manufacturer's directions, using the scoop provided. No sugar or flavourings should be added to your child's bottles. Bottles must be clearly identifiable.

As children are very vulnerable to the effects of food poisoning, a fresh bottle must be used for every feed and should not be used after 24 hours of being made.

If you require any support to continue to breastfeed while your child is in care, please speak to your educator or call the coordination unit and staff will be able to help.

Settling in

Personal Hygiene in Family Day Care

Everyone needs to keep clean to kill germs and avoid getting sick. Good personal hygiene also boosts confidence by dealing with problems like bad breath or body odour. Your child will come into contact with lots of other people in child care so it's extremely important you and your service work together to promote good hygiene practices. This lowers the risk of infections being spread and helps your child practice good hygiene at home and when you are out and about.

For children, the basics of good personal hygiene are:

- Washing hands
- covering their mouth when they cough
- having regular baths or showers
- brushing and flossing teeth

Bathing in Family Day Care

Your educator is not responsible for bathing family day care children. It is your responsibility to ensure your child is delivered to child care clean and bathed. However, there may be times that your child may need to be bathed during care. Exceptional circumstances such as parent illness/hospitalisation, child illness (vomiting/diarrhea), toileting "accidents", extended overnight care or extreme heat wave conditions may mean bathing is appropriate. Child safety while bathing must be paramount. In the case of school aged children, safety and privacy are important considerations.

Bathing/showering procedures must be discussed and agreed upon with the parent.



Behaviour guidance in Family Day Care

Mistaken behaviour is a natural occurrence: the results of attempts by inexperienced, developmentally young children to interact with a complicated, increasingly impersonal world. When mistaken behaviour occurs, adults significantly affect what children learn from the experience." (Gartrell, 1998 cited Porter, L 2004)

The aim of behaviour guidance is to enable children to develop responsible behaviour, self-regulation and thoughtful and considerate behaviour. Children need to learn social competence and coping mechanisms: how to respect themselves and express feelings, and how to interact positively with other people and world around them.

The most effective tools are a guiding/ leadership approach and a caring relationship with sensitive, child centred communication. Behaviour needs to be seen as an expression of feelings. When a child acts thoughtlessly, the Educator needs to consider how and why the behaviour occurred and adjust planning to enable more considerate behaviour and to meet children's emotional needs. This will promote more cooperative, thoughtful behaviour.

Safety

The safety and wellbeing of all children placed in Family Day Care is of paramount importance. Annual and ongoing safety checks are conducted at the homes of registered Educators. All environments are to meet service safety requirements based on the national regulations. Educators are responsible for maintaining a safe and hygienic environment at all times.

For behavioural disruptions, Educators shall use positive child behaviour guidance strategies, which maintain children's self-esteem, dignity and rights and which take into account the child's developmental level of understanding and ability.

Parents are essential partners in the child's care and education. Behaviour guidance strategies used at home should be discussed to ensure consistency and positive support for the child and family. It is the educators' responsibility to communicate openly and sensitively with the families and to work in partnership with them to find appropriate solutions and strategies for supporting children, both at home and at the service.

If you would like more detailed information on the strategies used in our service, please speak to your educator or call the coordination unit for a copy of our behaviour guidance strategies.

All educators receive initial and ongoing training in appropriate behaviour management techniques

Contact with pets

All pets, especially dogs, must be separate from the children at all times. The exception is when holding, grooming or feeding a pet as part of the program e.g. feeding a baby lamb, holding the baby rabbit. If your educator has pets and plans to have them as part of the program written permission will be obtained from you when your child enters care or whenever the Educator's situation changes throughout the year.

Excursions and regular outings

It is an indicator of quality care that in family day care homes there is a balance between staying home and going out.

Your educator may have several regular outings during a week, that are part of their educational program. Such regular outings may include going to play group, visiting the local park, attending music and movement groups, going to the library or taking other children to and from school or kindergarten. These regular outings will be discussed during your initial meeting with your educator. Written permission for regular outings is obtained when your child enters care or whenever your Educator's situation changes throughout the year.

Supervision

Children are supervised by the registered and approved Educator at all times. Children are never left with any person who is not registered with Family Day Care, except in the rare situation of a life and death emergency. On the rare occasion this may happen you will be notified by the coordination unit and a staff member will be sent to assist immediately.

Supervision at delivery and collection times is important. When you and your educator are talking, responsibility for care can become confused. It is important to remember your child is always under your supervision when you are present. As accidents can occur, all conversations between you and your educator should take place inside the home where your child can be safely supervised.

Excursions (Non-regular outings) are special one-off outings that are in the interests of your child and are discussed with you prior to going on that excursion. Excursions may include visiting the local police or fire station, going on a bush walk, visiting a farm, seeing a children's theatre production or attending a special children's event. Specific written authorisation is always obtained before every excursion.

Transport and car restraints

Parents and Educators need to discuss regular outings/excursions, transport arrangements and car restraints. By law, children must always be properly restrained when travelling in a car and our educators have training and experience in how to travel safely with children. Family Day Care children are never left unattended in a vehicle and they are always closely supervised when out and about.

Pick-up and drop-off

Who can collect my child from care?

Only persons authorised by you in writing may collect your child from care. In an emergency, a parent with lawful authority may give authorisation over the telephone to the Educator. Proof of identification is required on collection. The authorised person must be at least 16 years of age

All children under 12 years of age must be delivered to and collected from care by a responsible adult. In certain circumstances, exemptions to this policy may be considered. If approved, arrangements will need written parental authorisation.

What happens if I cannot collect my child from care?

If you are unable to collect your child from care at the agreed time, please call your educator to discuss if they can extend your hours or if you should arrange someone else to collect your child.

Child protection and wellbeing

Family Day Care supports the United Nation Convention on the rights of the child, including the right to be protected from neglect, exploitation or abuse and the right to have protection and assistance from the State.

Your educator undertakes training in child protection each year and has also undergone training in Child Safe Standards.

Child abuse is an act that endangers a child or young person's physical or emotional health or development and is a common problem in any community.

Children have a right to be protected and their well-being must remain paramount. Educators will supervise children carefully, use appropriate guidance techniques and be aware of early signs of abuse.

In the event your child/children have been left without notification past the agreed collection time, your Educator will attempt to contact both parents on all provided numbers.

If parent/s cannot be located, after one hour the Educator will contact the Family Day Care Coordinator and attempt to contact an emergency person listed on the Child Enrolment form. After two hours past agreed collection time, if unable to gain assistance from any emergency contacts listed, the appropriate government agency will be notified.

The above mentioned government agency may agree that your child/children may remain with your Educator whilst your whereabouts are investigated. If your Educator cannot provide this care, the appropriate government agency will organise alternative care. At all times your child's welfare will be most important.

Educators, staff or families who form a reasonable belief that abuse is occurring need to take action and refer the matter to the Coordination Unit and or Child Protection. Baw Baw Shire Council adhere to the Child Safe Standards and they are embedded in everyday practices as well as any policy updates.

Your child's welfare is always of utmost importance.

Privacy/census

It is the right of all parties in family day care to have confidentiality and privacy maintained. Personal information to meet duty of care /accountability requirements may be disclosed to staff, your child Educators and Commonwealth and State Governments as required.

Information must be current and can be updated through your educator or by contacting the Coordination Unit. Requests for access to and correction of information should be made to Council's Privacy Officer on 5624 2411

Managing illness and other conditions

What happens if my child is sick?

Children who are unwell, unable to participate in the day's activities and/or impact the ability of the Educator to safely supervise other children, must not come into care. Children with vomiting or diarrhea, conjunctivitis, undiagnosed rash, infectious illness or untreated head lice will not be accepted into care. If your child becomes ill during care you will be notified immediately, and your child will be reassured and comforted in a quiet area while waiting for you to collect them.

What about medication?

If your child needs to have any medication the following must be adhered to:

- Written authorisation for any medication must be provided by the parent/guardian with lawful authority.
- Medication must be specific for that child, in the original bottle and within the use-by date.
- Medication must be handed to the Educator and not left in the child's bag.

NOTE: Panadol cannot to be administered to any child under 6 months of age. Panadol cannot be administered for stomach ache, after a knock to the head, for mild fever, gastroenteritis or as a sedative. Aspirin/Dispirin cannot be given to children unless ordered by a doctor's prescription.

What if my child develops asthma, a medical condition, allergy or sensitivity?

Your child's Educator and the Family Day Care Coordinator need to be made aware of any health condition and of the management plan for that condition.

Where your child has a health condition requiring preventative measures, monitoring and/or medication or treatment, a written Medical Management and Risk Minimisation plan (MMRM) based on medical advice must be provided to the Coordination Unit. A copy of the Plan will be provided to the Educator/s. This Plan should always be current & reviewed annually and/or as needed.

What if my child's Educator is sick or unavailable?

Educators who are sick should not provide care and should contact you and the Coordination Unit as soon as possible. If your educator is unavailable for care there will be no charge.

If alternative care is needed, coordination staff will make every effort to transfer your child to a suitable placement, subject to availability. Please consider your alternative plans in case of Educator illness.

Absences from care

What if my child is sick or not attending care?

Please notify your Educator at the earliest opportunity before your usual arrival time if your child will be absent from care for any reason.

Usual fees will still apply for absences, including holidays and public holidays.

Child Care Subsidy will be paid for up to 42 absences for each child per financial year across all approved childcare.

You will receive a record of the number of

absences used every fortnight on a statement. Please check this statement and contact the Office if your record differs from ours.

Child Care Subsidy is not limited to 42 days for approved absences in cases of illness of child, parent or sibling with a medical certificate, or absences with supporting documentation such as: RDO's, rotating shift work, pupil free days at school, court-ordered shared custody.

Timesheets, attendance records and hours of care

How are my child's hours of care recorded?

Attendance records must show ACTUAL times of arrival and departure. Timesheets must be authorised to verify accuracy. Educators will be happy to show you the process of signing and verifying these documents on your child's first day of care. Family Day Care is accountable for the expenditure of Australian Government funds. The Coordination Unit is responsible for the storage and maintenance of documents, including children's timesheets and attendance records.

These records must be stored until children are aged 25 years and must be accessible for Departmental scrutiny on request. Parents are required to authorise these records to verify the accuracy of details.

What if my booked hours of care need to change?

On your initial enrolment your care arrangements, the days and hours of care you would like to book, will be organised jointly between you, your educator and the family day care coordination unit. Any changes to these arrangements should be negotiated with your Educator. The coordination unit will need to approve any changes agreed upon to ensure you are not using more than your approved child care subsidy hours as any hours over the limit approved by the Family Assistance Office will not attract Child Care Subsidy.

Two weeks' notice is needed for any substantial change to your agreed care arrangements.

Where booked hours form a pattern over time that does not match your actual hours, you will need to talk to your educator, as the booked hours must be changed to match the actual hours used.

Fees and receipts

Family Day Care fees are reviewed each year in consultation with all service participants. The fee schedule addresses the sensitive balance between affordability for parents and adequate remuneration for quality care provision.

How am I invoiced for my child care fees?

The Coordination Unit will process and submit your child's attendances to the Australian Government each fortnight and any Child care subsidy and service fees will be deducted from the total fee due before sending your final account to your educator. Your educator will then issue you with an invoice either via text or email. The fees payable are for the previous fortnight of care.

Financial hardship

What happens if I have trouble paying my Invoice?

Please discuss any issues relating to fee payment with your educator at the earliest opportunity as quite often educators can help before fee debt becomes a problem.

If you are experiencing significant financial stress due to exceptional circumstances that are impacting on your ability to pay fees, you can ring the Coordinator on 56 250 216 to discuss any options of assistance that may be available. This will help ensure continuity of care for your child and ensure that you are provided with support when you need it most. The coordination unit is not directly involved in any application for financial assistance however they can assist you to contact the relevant government service.

Please seek help and advice as soon as possible as the financial problems that may arise from time to time should not affect your Educator's right to payment for the service they have provided.

How do I pay my child care fees?

You pay your Educator via direct bank transfer on receipt of your invoice. It is very important that fees are paid on time. The time given to pay your invoice is discussed at your initial meeting with your educator. Your Educator needs to know the care provided is valued and respected. Fees are very reasonable, and no Educator should ever have to ask repeatedly for payment. Once your educator receives payment of your invoice you will be issued with a receipt as specified by the Australian Government. You will receive this receipt via email.

Debt recovery

Educators are obliged to inform the Coordination Unit if timely fee payment is not received. Care may be ceased within two weeks and outstanding debts will be rigorously pursued by the Educator with support from the coordination unit.

Compliments and complaints

Please tell us how Family Day Care is for you and your child.

Contact with coordination unit staff is encouraged and welcomed. Your views about Family Day Care and improvement opportunities are actively sought so we can improve the quality of our service. When planning and reviewing service provision and policies you will be consulted, and your views will be taken into account. Policies are available on request via email at: **family.daycare@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au**.

Dealing with problems

Often talking with your educator as soon as a problem emerges will help you resolve your concerns quickly and effectively, consider the following points before you have the conversation:

- Clearly identify your concerns and know how you would like to resolve them – adopt a problem solving approach to the conversation.
- Be very clear about where you stand on the issue and think about what you would be willing to compromise on and what, in your opinion, is non-negotiable in the development of a solution.
- Be sure to choose an appropriate time and location to explain your concerns. It may not be constructive to hold the discussion in front of your child or other parents.
- Adopt a tactful non-accusatory manner and be sure to cover positives as well as negatives. This will help to reassure your educator that the concern isn't personal.
- Take time to listen to your educators' point of view and make sure you clarify facts and feelings until you arrive at a common understanding of the problem. Try to finish the conversation with an understanding about how the situation will be progressed

Educators and staff appreciate compliments and praise, but it is also okay to complain.

Tell us about any concerns so we can improve our services. Complaints may be made to your Educator, any staff member, or to Management.

Having regular informal chats with your educator will help you build a positive, open relationship which should make it easier for you to avoid issues before they arise and address any concerns which do come up.

If you have spoken to your educator but still feel the issue has not been resolved, then please contact the coordination unit. Your concerns will always be listened to and dealt with without disadvantaging your child in any way. Educators and/or staff will have the opportunity to respond and often with a little guidance and mediation all parties are usually able to resolve the complaint together. If this cannot happen, avenues external to the service such as mediation or the Department of Education and Training are also available.

We hope our information booklet has shown you some of the benefits of choosing our quality service were your child will form genuine lasting relationships with others and you will have the peace of mind knowing our passionate early childhood educators are providing your child with a tailored quality educational program in a happy and nurturing environment.

We look forward to working with you and your family.

Family Day Care – A place where we can all Play, Learn and Grow together

Contact us

Baw Baw Family Day Care

Baw Baw Shire Council

144 Normanby St Warragul 3820

Email: family.daycare@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

Telephone: 5625 0216

9am – 5pm Monday to Friday



