



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES FAMILY HANDBOOK



Upper Hunter Shire Council operates a range of education and care services, towards its charter “to promote and to provide and plan for the needs of children”.

This booklet is designed to give you information about our services, how to access them, fees and assistance, and using care.

Contact details for all Upper Hunter Children’s Services, and links to useful resources, can be found on the back page of the booklet.

**Children from SOOSH and the Early Learning Centre learning about Aboriginal artefacts from TayMaraykan at a 2017 NAIDOC week celebration.**

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

We would like to show respect and acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land, of elders, past, present and future.

## Contents

Our Children’s Services . . . . .	2
Our Service Philosophies . . . . .	4
Our Staff & Educators . . . . .	6
Who Can Use Our Care?. . . . .	7
Placement & Enrolment . . . . .	8
Cost of Care. . . . .	9
Upper Hunter Children’s Services Fees and Charges - 2020-2021. . . . .	10
Help with the Cost of Care . . . . .	12
Payment. . . . .	13
National Quality Framework . . . . .	13
We Are A Child Safe Organisation . . . . .	15
Using Care . . . . .	17
What To Bring. . . . .	19
Food and Meal Suggestions . . . . .	21
Early Learning Centre Arrivals and Departures . . . . .	26
Late Collection . . . . .	27
Other Policies. . . . .	28

# OUR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## Upper Hunter Early Learning Centre (ELC)



The ELC is a Long Day Care centre-based facility catering for up to 57 children aged from 6 weeks to 5 years between the hours of 7:00am and 6:00pm, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks per year.

### Rainbows

#### (Nursery Program 0–2 years)

The focus of our babies program is to gently introduce babies to the care of others in a loving environment following the routines that you have established at home. We introduce babies to early stage social, physical and intellectual skills at their own pace. We do this through fun filled stimulus with lots of cuddles!

As children develop at their own pace, staff introduce more opportunities to develop each child's full range of skills in a fun and nurturing environment. Through play your child will develop early friendships and co-operation skills.

### Moonbeams

#### (Toddler Program 2-3 years)

Toddlers are naturally very curious. We create opportunities for them to learn through independent exploration of our planned learning environment. Our classroom provides for learning opportunities in construction, puzzles, role playing, art, and a book corner to encourage a love of reading.

All children will rest and enjoy meals as scheduled in the room routine and with assistance will gain confidence and experience in self help skills including feeding

him/her self, toileting, dressing and decision making.

### Starbrights

#### (Pre School Program 3-6 years)

The Starbrights room is our preschool room, where children have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills for them to succeed at school.

We develop problem solving skills, build on social skills, introduce literacy skills (talking, listening, reading and writing), and develop foundation numeracy skills. Your child will be encouraged to take responsibility for their belongings, to help care for their classroom, to ask for assistance when required, and to independently deal with conflict with their peers.

Primary staff members are allocated to work with specific groups of children and are responsible for developing programs that meet the individual and group needs of that group.



## Upper Hunter Family Day Care (FDC)

Established in 1979, Upper Hunter FDC (UHFDC) is a network of qualified and registered Educators who provide an education and care service from their own homes, for children aged birth to 12 years, across Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook Shires.



Family Day Care Educators are able to place up to a total of 7 children at any one time, including their own children 13 years and under, but never more than 4 who have not yet commenced formal schooling.

The FDC service is managed on a day-by-day basis by the Coordination Unit team. Staff administer the service in accordance with regulatory and quality framework requirements and obligations, and 'mentor and monitor' the registered FDC Educators in providing their services to a high quality. FDC staff also network and liaise throughout Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook shires for ongoing consultation and to provide links between educators, families, and local communities.

### **Overnight or 24 hour care**

In certain circumstances FDC Educators may be able to offer care outside of 'standard' hours, such as overnight, or for 24 hour (or more) periods of unbroken-care. Please contact the Coordination Unit for further information.

### **Care for school age children**

Care for school aged children can be provided before and/or after school, and during school holidays.

### **In Home Child Care**

In very specific eligible circumstances, where education and care needs can not be met by 'mainstream' services, UHFDC may be able to offer care provided in the family's own home. Please contact the Coordination unit for further information.



## OUR SERVICE PHILOSOPHIES

### Upper Hunter Early Learning Centre

At Upper Hunter Early Learning Centre we believe that children are confident, competent, capable and resourceful learners. Each child is unique and special and that individuality should be celebrated and praised. Children's beliefs, differences and opinions should be respected and encouraged enabling them to develop to their full potential. Each child should be treated equally, with respect and understanding regardless of gender, background and beliefs.

All staff aim to provide an environment that is warm, friendly, welcoming, supportive and stimulating, where children can feel safe, nurtured and special. Staff aim to provide an environment that encourages respect, kindness and caring towards each other and their environment.

We believe that the early years are the most important and that early childhood education plays a significant role in the learning and development of children. Children learn best through play and exploration and thus our

program reflects this. The program is based on the children's interests and strengths and input from the children and their families.

Staff aim to provide a variety of stimulating and fun experiences to encourage choice, ownership and a sense of belonging. Our aim is to provide an environment that is inclusive of all children and consists of inviting play spaces that stimulates and provides the opportunity to experience a variety of play activities that encourages the development of the whole child.

Parents and carers are a child's most important teachers and their involvement is encouraged as an important part of our program. We believe in developing positive, respectful, open and collaborative relationships with families. These relationships will be built upon respect for the family regardless of backgrounds and beliefs. We recognise that each family has the right to participate according to their own interest needs and opportunities. We aim to support families in their parenting roles and share information that will benefit their child's development with them.

As colleagues we value each staff member's opinions, ideas and experiences and work collaboratively by sharing our knowledge and expertise. We work together as a team and

maintain professionalism and confidentiality. We acknowledge that learning is life-long and are committed to professional development.

We believe in building partnerships with the community and aim to reflect the changing needs and diversity of our local community.

## Upper Hunter Family Day Care

- To promote and support partnerships between the Coordination Unit, Educators, Families their children and the wider community.
- We acknowledge that Upper Hunter Family Day Care has a continuing and developing partnership with all participants to create a holistic environment that supports quality care for children and families.
- We believe relationships should be built on respect, trust, professionalism and open communication, encompassing these ideals we will continually strive to develop and strengthen relationships with all participants.
- Is to provide support to Educators in providing quality care within a welcoming, safe, nurturing and stimulating home environment, thus enabling all children to develop a sense of belonging.
- We aim to support and encourage Educators in providing an environment that fosters independence and self reliance, resulting in children with confident self identities that enables them to reach their full potential.
- To encourage and support Educators in their endeavour to provide a play based learning program with a foundation for exploration and discovery through a wide range of materials and experiences.
- To support Educators in providing a variety of age appropriate experiences assisting children to succeed and develop at their own rate, ensuring all areas of development including the communicating child, the healthy, physically active child, the thinking, problem solving and

investigating child, the spiritual and moral child, the social child, the feeling child and the creative child, are incorporated.

- We as a scheme acknowledge that all participants including, staff, Educators, families and their children come from a variety of diverse and unique backgrounds and cultures that we will respect, support and embrace, valuing the differences and contributions of each individual.
- We aim to provide opportunities for staff and Educators to continually reflect on their practices, philosophies and settings in order to make the necessary changes that result in quality care.
- We will support Educators by offering continual ongoing professional development opportunities which leads to an awareness of current trends and practices.

## OUR STAFF & EDUCATORS

Upper Hunter Children's Services are staffed by a professional team with a wide range of expertise and experience, ranging through Certificate III, Diploma, Early Childhood Teacher, and Management qualifications.

All Educators working with Early Learning Centre and Family Day Care hold, or are enrolled and actively working towards, minimum Certificate III qualifications in children's services.

The Early Learning Centre further ensures at least 50% or more of primary contact staff hold or are actively working towards Diploma qualifications.

2 Early Childhood qualified Teachers are also engaged by Early Learning Centre to support delivery of the Preschool and transition to school program.

All staff, Educators, Family Day Care Educators, and Family Day Care adult household residents have Working with Children Check clearances.

All staff working with Upper Hunter Children's Services, and all Family Day Care Educators, hold current first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis emergency management, and CPR certification.

Family Day Care Educators maintain Public Liability insurance coverage, and have regular Workplace safety Risk Assessments on their home environments.

A Working With Children Check is a requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct.

The result of a Working With Children Check is either a clearance to work with children for five years, or a bar against working with children. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked.

Council supports a strong emphasis on continuing to enhance staff skills and knowledge, with encouragement and provisions to attend professional development and ongoing learning opportunities. Upper Hunter Children's Services also support the placement of Traineeships, and student work-placements.

## WHO CAN USE OUR CARE?

Upper Hunter Children's Services work under "Family Assistance" legislation and allocate child care places to families with the greatest need.

**The categories of priority for child care are as follows:**

**Priority 1:** A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

**Priority 2:** A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act

**Priority 3:** Any other child

**Within each category mentioned above the following children may be given priority:**

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres strait islander families
- Children in families which include a disabled person
- Children in families which include an individual whose taxable income per cent under Clause 7 of Schedule 2 to the Family Assistance Act is 100%

**Inclusive Practices and Service Capacity**

- Children in families with a non-English speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents

**Priority may also be given to:**

- Children who are already attending care and require additional / different days, and
- Siblings of children who are already attending care

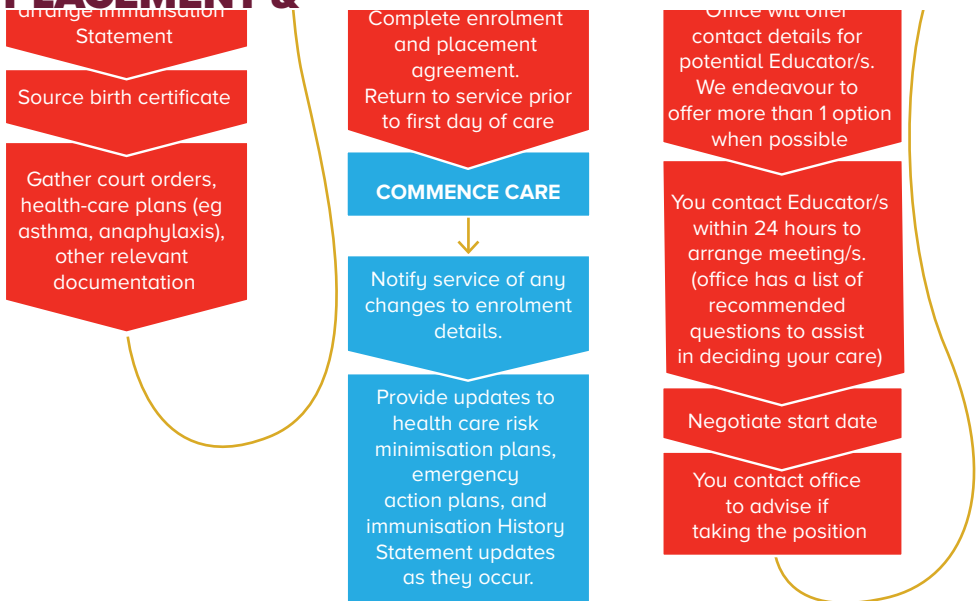


Parents of a child of a lower priority category may be required to forfeit or change their care arrangements to place a child of higher priority, with 14 days notice (Family Assistance legislation).

## ENROLMENT

Children are regarded as 'school-age', and able to enrol in SOOSH programs, from 1 January in the year they are enrolled to attend school (Education and Care Services regulations). Children who have NOT yet commenced their formal schooling however can be required to relinquish or change their booking to place a child who has already attended school.

## PLACEMENT &



All children must be enrolled by their parent/legal guardians

All enrolment information is essential. Accurate information about children's education and care needs is also necessary.

Your placement offer will only be held until the enrolment

completion date requested by the service

Late return of documentation may result in the placement no longer being available

If you do not accept an offer of placement, your 'position' on the wait-list will be maintained

All family and child details and information is maintained under Privacy and Confidentiality Principles

In enrolling with an UH Children's Service, you are agreeing to observe and comply with the policies of your chosen service

# COST OF CARE

Council determines fees and charge for all Children's Services annually. Proposed Fees and Charges are released for public comment in May each year.

## Family Day Care Educators

Council sets a 'fee range' for Family Day Care Educator services, however Family Day Care Educators determine their own individual charges within these ranges. Please refer to your Educator 'Complying Written Arrangement' for their individual fees and charges.

## Fee Estimates

You can obtain an estimate of what your child care fees will be by contacting your service. Your up-front fee obligations will depend on how many days of care you are using, and if you are claiming any government assistance with the cost of care (please refer to the section 'Help with the cost of care').

## Complying Written Arrangements

All families enrolling to use Upper Hunter Children's Services must complete a written placement agreement (Family Assistance legislation). This agreement sets out contractual arrangements for the provision of the care service, and payment of fees. It will be updated whenever your care circumstances change, and with any fee amendments (such as at the beginning of each financial year).

## Absence/Public Holidays

Fees are charged at the normal rate for an absence from any type of care booking or contract, including a child being absent due to being on holidays, being away due to illness, attending court-ordered access visits, or parents having a flexi-day or rostered day off.

Early Learning Centre does not charge fees for care bookings that occur on a Gazetted Public Holiday.

Family Day Care Educators *may* charge fees at the usual rate for Gazetted Public Holidays, if a child would normally attend on that day. If a Family Day Care Educator provides a service on a Public Holiday and your child attends care, then Public Holiday fee rates set by the Educator will apply.

## Cancelling or changing care

- 7 calendar days notice is required to change care bookings with Early Learning Centre.
- 14 days calendar notice is required to cancel your care contract with Early Learning Centre.
- Family Day Care Educators determine their own notification requirements for altering or cancelling care bookings – please refer to your Educator's 'Complying Written Arrangement'.

## Service Shut-down periods

The Early Learning Centre traditionally has a service closure period between Christmas and New Year. Fees are not charged on any occasion the service is not available.

## Family Day Care Educator unavailable

If your Family Day Care Educator is not available to provide care, child care fees can not be charged (except on gazetted public holidays).

## Family Day Care Alternate Care if Educator is unavailable

If your regular Educator is unable to care for your child due to illness, leave etc the Coordination Unit will try to provide alternative care for you. We have an on-call telephone number for after hour's placements.

# UPPER HUNTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES - 2020-2021

<b>Record / Information Administration</b>		
Administration fee per hour (calculated in 15 minute increments)	(No charge under 15 minutes)	\$63.00
<b>Early Learning Centre</b>		
Daily Fees Nursery (Rainbows)	No enrolment fee or charges on public	\$111.50
Daily Fees Pre Kindy (Moonbeams)	Holidays	\$107.50
Daily Fees Preschool (Starbrights)		\$95.00
<b>Family Day Care</b>		
Parent administration levy	Per child per hour	\$1.75
<b>Family Day Care Educator Remuneration</b>		
Care security payment	Refundable	Up to 2 weeks full fees
Standard core hours (any care between 8am-6pm Mon to Fri)	Minimum to maximum p/child p/hour	\$8.00 to \$16.50
Casual care	Minimum to maximum p/child p/hour	\$8.00 to \$22.25
Out of core hours (before 8am / after 6pm Mon to Fri)	Minimum to maximum p/child p/hour	\$8.00 to \$25.25
Weekend	Minimum to maximum p/child p/hour	\$8.00 to \$25.25
Public holiday	Minimum to maximum p/child p/hour	\$8.00 to \$33.00
Meals	Minimum to maximum per meal	\$1.25 - \$10.25
Travel	Minimum to maximum per trip OR max per applicable ATO rates/KM	\$1.30 to \$5.25
Laundry	Minimum to maximum per rinse/wash	\$1.30 to \$5.50
Nappies / wipes	Minimum to maximum per change	\$0.30 to \$1.30
Early arrival / late collection penalty	Per 15 minutes or part thereof p/child	\$5.75 to \$21.00

Late payment penalty	Maximum per child per day	\$5.75 to \$21.00
In Home Child Care family application fee	Per family	\$157.50
In Home Child Care (Educator hourly rate)	Standard Hours	\$27.50 to \$32.50
	Non-standard Hours	\$32.50 to \$38.00
	Overnight Care	\$79.00
	Weekend Care/Public holiday	\$37.75 to 43.15
	Additional children p/child p/hour	\$5.30

# HELP WITH THE COST OF CARE

## Child Care Assistance Entitlements

All Upper Hunter Children's Services are approved to administer Child Care Subsidy (CCS) assistance entitlements, to assist you with the cost of care. The CCS is a subsidy that provides an up front fee reduction based on an income and activity test.

## Absences

Government entitlements to assist with the cost of care apply for up to 42 absences per child (across all services used) in any financial year. There may be certain circumstances where government fee assistance can be claimed for additional absences beyond the 42 limit – please contact your service for further information.

## 14 Week Rule

Enrolments will be ceased after 14 weeks of continuous absences in which Child Care Subsidy will be recovered. Please advise the service if there is the intention for planned continuous absences for a period, or a circumstance presents itself in which your child cannot attend for an extended period of time.

A Family Day Care Educator's leave counts towards this 14 Week Rule.

This condition is set by the government when applying for Child Care Subsidy.

Information on Child Care Subsidy and its conditions can be found at [www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy)

## Fortnightly Statements

A Child Care Subsidy 'Statement of Entitlement' will be sent to you fortnightly. This itemises the care you have used, the CCS entitlements that have been calculated, and the fees you have paid.

Please always check your Statement carefully, and let your service know if you feel any of the information is incorrect.

## Immunisation

Child care fee assistance can only be claimed if your child's immunisations are up to date, or you have an approved exemption, and you have provided a copy of the Immunisation History Statement.

Please refer to the 'Child Care Information for Families', 'Helping you with the cost of care', and 'Child Care Entry and Immunisation' handouts for more information.

## Child Care Subsidy System

The Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) is a national online child care system utilised by all Child Care Subsidy approved services. The system records child, enrolment and attendance information. This data is reported via the internet to allow calculation and payment of CCS fee reductions on behalf of children in the service.

Full fees will apply if your child does not start care on the agreed date or stops attending during the cancellation notice period. Under Family Assistance Law, CCS can not be claimed for absences before a child commences care, or after a child has stopped care.

Parents/guardians of children in child care are able to access online statements on the Centrelink website. Families need to call the Department of Human Services (DHS) on 13 61 50 or visit online at [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au) to register to use this service.

## PAYMENT

### Early Learning Centre

You will be emailed an invoice weekly for your child care fees. This account is for the previous week of care.

The full balance of your account is paid weekly on Thursdays.

Please always check your invoice carefully and contact the office immediately if you believe there may be an error, so we can investigate suspend your direct debit if necessary.

### Family Day Care

Fees for Family Day Care are paid directly to your Educator. Commonly, Educators require fees to be paid a week in advance, or on your last day of care each week. Direct Deposit EFT tends to be the preferred method of payment, however some Educators apply various forms of Direct Debit arrangements.

The Council Parent Administration Levy is applied to your fees and collected by Educators on behalf of Council.

Educators determine their own fees terms and conditions, so please discuss payment arrangements with your Educator, and refer to the obligations of your 'Complying Written Agreement'.

Care may be refused or terminated without notice if fees fall in arrears or are outstanding with any Upper Hunter Children's Services service.

Council, and Family Day Care Educators, may take recovery action against bad debts – associated legal fees are added to the family account.

## NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

All services operate within the National Quality Framework (NQF) and are approved under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulation. The National Quality Framework (NQF) was the result of an agreement between all Australian governments to work together to provide better educational and developmental outcomes for children. The NQF applies to most long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschools/ kindergartens in Australia.

### The NQF includes:

- The Children (Education and care Services) National Law and Regulations
- The National Quality Standards (NQS)
- An assessment and quality rating process
- National learning Frameworks (Early Years Learning Framework, and My Time Our Place

Research shows quality education and care early in life leads to better health, education and employment outcomes later in life. The early years are critical for establishing self-esteem, resilience, healthy growth and capacity to learn. Quality education and care shapes every child's future and lays the foundation for development and learning.

### The major benefits for parents and children include:

- Improved educator to child ratios, ensuring children have greater individual care and attention for children
- Educators with increased skills and qualifications
- Better support for children's learning and development through approved learning frameworks
- Consistent, transparent information on educators, providers and services in the national registers

## National Law and Regulations

The National Quality Framework (NQF) operates under an applied law system, comprising the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations support the NQF and provide detail on a range of operational requirements for an education and care service.

These laws and regulations inform the content of Upper Hunter Children's Services policies and daily operating procedures.

## National Quality Standard (NQS)

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a key aspect of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and sets a high, national benchmark for early childhood education and care, and outside school hours care services in Australia.

It gives services and families a better understanding of a quality service, helping families to make informed decisions about the services providing education and care to their child. The NQS brings together the 7 key quality areas that are important to outcomes for children:

- Educational program and practice – supported by approved learning frameworks
- Children's health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing relationships
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Governance and leadership

## Quality Rating and Assessment

Under the national quality rating and assessment process, Upper Hunter Children's Services each prepare a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that outlines the quality of service practices as assessed against the

National Quality Standards and the National Regulations. The QIP identifies areas of strength, and any areas that may be further enhanced or developed.

Each service QIP is available at the service.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities assesses the service, and provides a rating from one of four rating levels:

1. Exceeding NQS
2. Meeting NQS
3. Working towards NQS
4. Significant Improvement Required

Assessment and rating is designed to be a collaborative process between the service and regulatory authority, with opportunities for services to discuss how they are meeting the National Quality Standard and enhancing outcomes for children

- Under particular criteria, services receiving an 'exceeding' rating assessment may possibly apply to be considered for an 'excellent' rating.

The Service Rating for Early Learning Centre and SOOSH are displayed at each service. Family Day Care rating is available at the Scone Council building.

## Approved Learning Frameworks

Under the National Law and National Regulations, approved services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework that recognise children learn from birth. The national learning frameworks are:

EYLF - Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia ('Early Years Learning Framework')

MTOP - My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia ('Framework for School Age Care')

The (EYLF) consists of principles, practices and outcomes that support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five

years of age, as well as their transition to school.

The My Time Our Place (MTO) builds on the EYLF and extends the principles, practices and outcomes to accommodate the contexts and age range of the children and young people who attend school age settings. It ensures children in school age care have opportunities to engage in leisure and play-based experiences which contribute to their ongoing development.

## Early Learning Centre Transition to School Statements

Staff in the Starbrights room deliver a Preschool and Transition to School program, and prepare written statements with you and your child summarising your child's learning, interests, dispositions, and information about what supports your child's learning, to be shared with your chosen school.



SOOSH and ELC utilise the 'Storypark' app to document and communicate with you about your child's time and learning while at the Early Learning Centre.

## Educators maintain individual records of your child's learning

These may include written observations, photos and examples of work. These records are used as a basis for curriculum planning to ensure that each program is appropriate for each child's level of development and provide opportunities to extend each child's learning.

# WE ARE A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION

## Policies and practices

We establish commitment to creating child-safe organisations through:

- Robust recruitment and screening processes
- Upholding service philosophies
- Applying codes of conduct
- Actively advocating principles of quality standards
- Creating policies that establish expectations for interactions and supporting children
- Reporting concerns for child wellbeing
- Addressing, investigating and (where necessary) reporting allegations or complaints

## Having the 'right' people

Selection criteria, interview and reference checking processes, and job descriptions determine suitability of people to be involved in the care of children.

Working with Children Checks are obtained and verified for all staff and Educators, including Family Day Care adult household members.

Family Day Care Educators and adult household members also supply National Criminal History police checks.

## Staff qualifications and training

All Educators have an awareness of and are familiar with child protection laws and their obligations under these (Regulation 84).

Any person who is the 'Responsible person' for the service, and all staff/Educators who have completed an approved Certificate III, hold child protection qualifications.

Staff and Educators also receive updates of information and ongoing professional learning.



## Protective Behaviours

Protective behaviours focus on building personal safety skills through empowerment, communication, self-esteem, resilience, social skills and other life skills in our children. It encourages our children to

- Learn about body safety, including feelings, private body parts, safe and unsafe touch, personal boundaries, respect and consent
- Assert their right to feel safe
- Listen to what their body tells them
- Take action to seek assistance from other people.

To report concerns  
CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE:  
**132 111**

## Mandatory Reporters

All Upper Hunter Children's Services staff are classed as 'Mandatory Reporters' under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. This is a legal obligation.

Educators and staff are required by law to report to Family and Community Services (Child Protection Helpline) if they have concerns that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

## Child Protection Concerns

There are different reasons for concern to be raised over children's welfare and wellbeing:

- When there is continued failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care and adequate supervision.
- When someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust (including exposure to pornography).

Often children or young people are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity.

Sexual abuse is a crime.

- Non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or young person caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person.

Physical abuse includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation.

Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints.

Hitting a child or young person around the head or neck and/or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punishing a child or young person (in a non-trivial way) is a crime.

- Serious psychological harm can occur where the behaviour of a parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of a child or young person, resulting in serious emotional disturbance or psychological trauma.

Although it is possible for 'one-off' incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or carer behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child or young person.

This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.

(Family and Community Services: [www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/what-is-child-abuse](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/what-is-child-abuse))

# USING CARE

## Parent and family involvement

All Upper Hunter Children's Services operate an OPEN DOOR POLICY, where parents and families are welcome in the services at ANYTIME. Parent participation sends strong positive messages to your child that you support them and are part of the child care environment.

There are many levels of parent participation and we appreciate that time is of a premium for all parents. We are willing to accommodate any form of involvement you may desire to assist you and your child, which ultimately benefits the whole service.

Educators sincerely wish for you and your child to be happy and feel welcomed at our services. A three way relationship between parents, Educators and the child exists in our settings. Communication is a vital ingredient to the success of this partnership.

### Parent involvement could include:

- Participate in Excursions
- Assist in Fund Raising
- Attend Special activities and functions
- Volunteer time
- Suggestions for programming
- Feedback of Service
- Attend Parent/Teacher Nights
- Donating unwanted items
- Offering input and comment to inform policy review

Siblings are always welcome when children are being dropped off or picked up, however, Educators cannot assume responsibility for them.

### Early Learning Centre Lockers / Communication pockets

Each child has their own locker on the day that they attend, which provides them with a piece of their own personal space.



Each child also has their own pocket with their name on it, located on the wall in each room. All your child's receipts, account notices, newsletters, artwork will be placed on their peg. Please check and clear your pocket daily.

## **Input, feedback and addressing concerns**

Our Children's Services value your feedback as it helps us to understand what you and the community expect from our services.

If you are pleased with your service, let us know! It gives us an opportunity to recognise the efforts of our staff and Educators.

If you would like to share input to the service or program, please feel welcome to discuss your request. It helps us provide a responsive service.

If you are not satisfied with something, please tell us. It helps us work with you to reach a positive outcome and improve the service.

Matters can often be resolved quickly with open and respectful communication, so in the first instance, try and discuss your concern with the person directly involved.

If a suitable outcome is not reached, you can raise your matter with the service Coordinator, or if still not satisfied, with the Children and Youth Services Coordinator.

In more serious situations or if you are not feeling a positive resolution is being achieved, you can contact the Manager of Community Services, Director of Environmental and Community Services, the General Manager of Council, or the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate (our regulatory authority). Please see the back page for contact details and numbers.

## **Settling in**

Leaving your child in care for the first time can be a daunting prospect. Be assured that your Educator will work with you to make this transition as positive as possible for both you and your child. Talk to your Educator prior to starting your child about things you can both do that will assist your child to feel safe and happy. One suggestion is to bring photos of family and pets that are familiar to the child or call during the first few days of care to see how your child is going.

Once your child has started care, always allow a little time at the beginning or end of the day to talk to your Educator about your child's day. This keeps the communication lines open and it will be easier for you both to maintain a good relationship based on cooperation and mutual respect.



# WHAT TO BRING

## Clothing

- That is suitable for the weather and will allow for variations in temperature throughout the day
- That protects their necks, chest, arms and shoulders to protect them from the sun (singlet tops are unsuitable)
- Casual, practical PLAY CLOTHES suitable for messy activities, that will not restrict children's movements or reduce their safety (e.g.. slippery shoes, long skirts) during play.
- That allows for growing independence in dressing and toileting (avoid buckles, belts, overalls)
- Is easy to launder and able to withstand wear and tear
- Sturdy, enclosed SHOES suitable for climbing and active play (no thongs, clogs, heeled shoes)
- HAT that shades the head, face, neck and ears
- At least 1-2 full sets of SPARE CLOTHING – especially underwear
- AVOID jewellery, dangling earrings,

## Food

- In containers children can open/manage themselves
- Adequate morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea
- Healthy and nutritious
- Water in a reusable plastic bottle

## Bottles

- Sterilised, with teats
- Water pre-boiled and cooled
- Dated
- Enough for the day (NOTE: unused portions of heated bottles must be discarded - they can not be reheated and used again)
- Formula - ready to be prepared (pre-

measured with amount of water to be mixed with the formula indicated)

- Dummies,
- Breast milk already in bottles

## Nappies

- A supply for each day they are in care (around 6-8 for infants)
- Nappy rash cream
- Wipes

## Bedding

- Sheets (cot-sized), blanket, pillow (pillows are not permitted in cots)
- Sleep/rest time comforters/security items

## Label everything

Please label everything including: Bottles, Lunch boxes, small containers, drink bottles, yogurt, nappies, clothes, shoes, hat, underclothes, socks, etc.

## Forgot to pack a hat?

Children who do not have hats will play in shade protected areas and may be provided with a spare hat depending on availability.

## Medication

Please advise staff and complete a written authority if you would like any creams, lotions, medications or preparations administered or applied to your child while in care.

## Sunscreen

Please supply your child's own sunscreen if they have a sensitivity or allergy to that which is provided.

## Birthday?

Birthdays are an important celebration. If you would like to supply individual cupcakes or treats to share with the children, please discuss with your Educator/s prior to the event.

## Please keep for home:

- Personal items or toys – staff can not take responsibility for them
- “Sometimes foods” - Lollies, chips, chocolate, nuts, roll ups, cordial, fizzy drink, chocolate Yogo, chocolate covered muesli bars, chewing gum, etc. These foods will be placed back in the child's lunch box to take home.
- Sweetened drinks (e.g.. fruit juice, cordial, soft drink or flavoured milk)

## Nut and egg free zone

To protect children who have IDENTIFIED ALLERGIES OR LIFE-THREATENING ANAPHYLAXIS, YOU MAY BE ASKED TO AVOID BRINGING CERTAIN FOODS.

## Danger!

Please check your child's bag and what you are carrying to ensure that any items which could be hazardous or poisonous to children e.g sharps, medications, potentially poisonous solutions, are removed.

Please hand all medication to staff for safe storage.



# Lunchbox Checklist for Food Brought from home for 2 to 5 year olds

## A Guide for Families

Use this checklist to help provide nutritious food each day your child is in care for eight hours or more. This usually includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. The recommended number of serves from each food group, while in care, is provided below.

Wholegrain cereal foods and breads	Fruit	Salad vegetables or Legumes	Dairy foods or high calcium alternatives	Lean meats, chicken, fish, eggs or alternatives
				
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 serves	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 serve	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 serves	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 serve	<input type="checkbox"/> ¾ serve
<p><b>Each of the following is 1 serve:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 slice of bread</li> <li>¾ cup breakfast cereal</li> <li>½ cup cooked rice</li> <li>½ cup cooked pasta</li> </ul>	<p><b>Each of the following is 1 serve:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 cup of chopped fruit</li> <li>2 small pieces of fruit</li> <li>1 medium size piece of fruit</li> <li>30g dried fruit (occasionally)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Each of the following is 1 serve:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>½ cup cooked or raw vegetables</li> <li>1 cup salad</li> </ul>	<p><b>Each of the following is 1 serve:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>250ml milk</li> <li>40g cheese</li> <li>2 slices cheese</li> <li>¾ cup yoghurt</li> <li>250ml calcium fortified soy milk</li> </ul>	<p><b>Each of the following is ¾ of a serve:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50g cooked red meat</li> <li>60g cooked chicken</li> <li>75g fish</li> <li>1 cup cooked legumes</li> <li>2 medium eggs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 wholegrain crispbreads</li> <li>• ½ bread roll</li> <li>• ½ pita pocket bread</li> <li>• ½ fruit muffin</li> <li>• 2 thick rice cakes</li> <li>• 3 corn thins</li> <li>• 1 slice fruit loaf</li> <li>• 5 water crackers</li> <li>• 2 pikelets</li> <li>• 1 small fruit scone</li> <li>• 10 rice crackers</li> <li>• ½ cup cooked pasta spirals</li> </ul> <p><i>*Choose wholegrain or high cereal fibre varieties.</i></p>	<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 medium banana</li> <li>• 1 medium bunch of grapes</li> <li>• 2 mandarins</li> <li>• 2 kiwi fruit</li> <li>• 1 medium orange</li> <li>• 1½ tablespoons sultanas</li> <li>• 1 medium pear</li> <li>• 2 small apricots</li> <li>• 2 small plums</li> <li>• 4 dried apricot halves</li> <li>• 6 large strawberries</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ corn cob</li> <li>• ½ cup green beans</li> <li>• ½ medium potato</li> <li>• 1 cup cucumber sticks</li> <li>• 1 cup halved cherry tomatoes</li> <li>• 1 cup carrot sticks</li> <li>• ½ cup broccoli florets</li> <li>• ½ cup 4 bean mix</li> <li>• ¼ cup hommus</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 250ml plain milk</li> <li>• 200g fruit yoghurt</li> <li>• ¾ cup custard</li> <li>• 1 cheese triangle/wedge</li> <li>• 2 slices of cheese</li> </ul> <p><i>* Choose mostly reduced fat milk and dairy products for children over 2 years of age.</i></p>	<p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ¾ cup baked beans</li> <li>• 50g lean ham</li> <li>• ¼ chicken breast in strips</li> <li>• 2 small meatballs</li> <li>• 2 medium boiled eggs</li> <li>• 1 chicken drumstick</li> <li>• 1 small 75g tin tuna or salmon</li> <li>• 1 slice of cold roast meat</li> <li>• 130g tofu</li> </ul>

# Lunchbox Food Ideas for Food Brought from Home for 2 to 5 year olds

## A Guide for Families

The following sample lunchbox menus provide the recommended number of serves from each of the food groups.

<b>Morning Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• 1 banana</li> </ul>	<b>Morning Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• 2 wheatmeal biscuits with margarine</li> </ul>	<b>Morning Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• Small apple</li> </ul>	<b>Morning Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• Cheese triangle/cubes</li> </ul>	<b>Morning Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• ½ fruit muffin with margarine</li> </ul>
<b>Lunch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ wholemeal pita bread with ham and salad</li> <li>• ½ cup raw green beans or cucumber chunks</li> <li>• ¼ cup hummus dip</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>	<b>Lunch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roast beef and salad sandwich</li> <li>• 1 small mandarin and kiwi fruit</li> <li>• Cheese stick</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>	<b>Lunch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuna, avocado and lettuce in a wholemeal dinner roll</li> <li>• Small tub yoghurt</li> <li>• ½ cup cherry tomatoes</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>	<b>Lunch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken leg</li> <li>• Dinner roll and margarine</li> <li>• 1½ tablespoons sultanas</li> <li>• Corn cob</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>	<b>Lunch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup pasta salad, ham and boiled egg</li> <li>• 2 broccoli florets</li> <li>• Bunch of grapes</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>
<b>Afternoon Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• 2 pikelets</li> </ul>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carrot sticks</li> <li>• ¼ cup hummus dip</li> </ul>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 fruit scone</li> <li>• Vegetable sticks with tomato salsa dip</li> </ul>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celery, capsicum and cucumber sticks with cream cheese</li> </ul>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• Celery sticks with cream cheese spread</li> </ul>



**Note:** While variety can make lunchtime interesting, sending a sandwich each day is OK. Variety can come from bread types, sandwich fillings and other foods in the lunchbox. Just make sure the choices are healthy and the bread is wholemeal, high fibre or has added iron.

### Please don't send these foods:

- Sticky snacks like some health food bars, muesli bars, lollies and fruit straps as these may cause tooth decay.
- Foods high in fat and sugar like sweet, cream-filled and chocolate-coated biscuits, chocolate and chocolate or yoghurt coated health food bars.
- Foods high in fat and salt like chips and savoury snack biscuits.

# Nutrition Checklist for Planning Sandwich Menus

Use this checklist to plan each two-week menu cycle that provides sandwiches as the main meal on all or most days of the week.

The numbers of serves recommended are the minimum required to meet the nutritional needs of children in care when one main meal and morning and afternoon tea are provided.

## Main Meals

### AMOUNT AND TYPE OF FILLINGS

■ Each day, at least **1** sandwich filling is lean red meat. For example: beef or lamb.

■ All other sandwich fillings are a good source of iron or protein. For example: chicken, fish, baked beans, eggs or cheese

■ At least 45g of protein filling is provided for each child

**Number of sandwich fillings**

■ No more than 3 filling choices are offered each day

*\* Limiting the number of fillings encourages children to try different fillings and will help to ensure they get enough protein and iron.*

### AMOUNT AND TYPE OF BREAD

■ Bread with added iron is used where available, preferably wholemeal

■ 2 serves of bread is provided per child

### SOURCE OF VITAMIN C

■ A raw vegetable or fruit high in vitamin C is served with sandwiches at main meals



*\* These can be included in sandwich fillings or served separately.*

## Vegetables and Fruit

■ The menu includes at least **2** serves of vegetables daily

*It is recommended that a salad/vegetable platter is served with sandwiches to help meet this requirement*

■ The menu includes at least **1** serve of fruit daily

*\*A variety of vegetables and fruit throughout the menu is important.*

## Dairy Foods

■ The menu includes a total of **1** serve of dairy foods daily

*Serving milk at both morning and afternoon tea may be an easy and reliable way to meet this requirement.*



*\*Cream, sour cream and butter are not substitutes for milk, yoghurt and cheese.*

## Morning and Afternoon Tea (Midmeals)

■ Midmeals are planned on the menu as part of the total day's intake

■ Milk, cheese, yoghurt or custard is included if necessary to meet the recommended daily serve

■ Vegetables and fruit are included if necessary to meet the recommended daily number of serves

## IRON CONTAINING FOODS

■ At least 2 iron containing foods are included on the menu, in addition to the main meal sandwiches

**Iron containing foods include:** Wholemeal bread, bread with added iron, or wholegrain crispbreads/biscuits

• Red meat, meat and fish pastes, sardines, hommus, baked beans • Iron fortified breakfast cereal e.g. Weetbix™, Puffed Wheat™, Mini Wheats™ • Milo™, dried fruit



# SERVE SIZES



**A standard serve of vegetables is about 75g (100-350kJ) or:**

- 1/2 cup cooked green or orange vegetables (for example, broccoli, spinach, carrots or pumpkin)
- 1/2 cup cooked, dried or canned beans, peas or lentils
- 1 cup green leafy or raw salad vegetables
- 1/2 cup sweet corn
- 1/2 medium potato or other starchy vegetables (sweet potato, taro or cassava)
- 1 medium tomato

## Vegetables and legumes/beans

*\*preferably with no added salt*



**A standard serve of fruit is about 150g (850kJ) or:**

- 1 medium apple, banana, orange or pear
- 2 small apricots, kiwi fruits or plums
- 1 cup dried or canned fruit (with no added sugar)
- Or only occasionally:
- 125ml (1/2 cup) fruit juice (with no added sugar)
- 30g dried fruit, for example, 4 dried apricot halves, 1 1/2 tablespoons of sultanas)

## Fruit



**A standard serve (500kJ) is:**

- 1 slice (40g) bread
- 1/2 medium (40g) roll or flat bread
- 1/2 cup (75-120g) cooked rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, bulgur or quinoa
- 1/2 cup (120g) cooked porridge
- 1/2 cup (30g) wheat cereal flakes
- 1/2 cup (30g) muesli
- 3 (35g) crispbreads
- 1 (60g) crumpet
- 1 small (35g) English muffin or scone

## Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties



**A standard serve (500-600kJ) is:**

- 65g cooked lean meats such as beef, lamb, veal, pork, goat or kangaroo (about 90-100g raw\*)
- 80g cooked lean poultry such as chicken or turkey (100g raw)
- 100g cooked fish fillet (about 115g raw weight) or one small can of fish
- 2 large (120g) eggs
- 1 cup (150g) cooked or canned legumes/beans such as lentils, chick peas or split peas (preferably with no added salt)
- 170g tofu
- 30g nuts, seeds, peanut or almond butter or tahini or other nut or seed paste (no added salt)

## Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans



**A standard serve (500-600kJ) is:**

- 1 cup (250ml) fresh, UHT long life, reconstituted powdered milk or buttermilk
- 1/2 cup (120ml) evaporated milk
- 2 slices (40g) or 4 x 3.2cm cube (40g) of hard cheese, such as cheddar
- 1/2 cup (120g) ricotta cheese
- 3/4 cup (200g) yoghurt
- 1 cup (250ml) soy, rice or other cereal drink with at least 100mg of added calcium per 100ml

## Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat

- To meet additional energy needs, extra serves from the Five Food Groups or unsaturated spreads and oils, or discretionary choices may be needed by children who are not overweight but are taller, more active or older in their age band.

- An allowance for unsaturated spreads and oils for cooking, or nuts and seeds can be included in the following quantities: 4–5g per day for children 2–3 years of age, 7–10g per day for children 3–12 years of age, 11–15g per day for children 12–13 years of age and 14–20g per day for adolescents 14–18 years of age.

- For meal ideas and advice on how to apply the serve sizes go to:

[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION GO TO [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)



## WHICH FOODS SHOULD I EAT AND HOW MUCH?

### HOW MUCH IS A SERVE?

It's helpful to get to know the recommended serving sizes and serves per day so that your child eats and drinks the right amount of the nutritious foods they need for health – as shown in the tables above. We've given you the serve size in grams too, so you can weigh foods to get an idea of what a serve looks like.

The 'serve size' is a set amount that doesn't change. It is used along with the 'serves per day' to work out the total amount of food required from each of the Five Food Groups. 'Portion size' is the amount your child actually eats and this will depend on what their energy needs are. Some children's portion sizes are smaller than the 'serve size' and some are larger. Children may eat smaller amounts more often if they choose.

### HOW MANY SERVES A DAY?

Children rarely eat exactly the same way each day and it is common to have a little more on some days than others. However, on average, the total of their portion sizes should end up being similar to the number of serves they need each day.

If your child eats portions that are smaller than the 'serve size' they will need to eat from the Food Groups more often. If your child's portion size is larger than the 'serve size', then they will need to eat from the Food Groups less often.

The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* provide up-to-date advice about the amount and kinds of foods and drinks that we need regularly, for health and well-being.

By providing your child with the recommended amounts from the Five Food Groups and limiting the foods that are high in saturated fat, added sugars and added salt, they will get enough of the nutrients essential for good health, growth and development. They may have a reduced risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some cancers. Your child may also feel better, look better, enjoy life more and live longer!

The amount of food your child will need from the Five Food Groups depends on their age, gender, height, weight and physical activity levels. For example, a 3-year-old boy requires 1 serve of fruit a day, but an 11-year-old boy needs 2 serves of fruit a day. A 9-year-old girl needs 4 serves of grain (cereal) foods a day, and a 14-year-old girl needs 7 serves a day. Children who are taller, more physically active or in the higher end of their age band (and not overweight or obese) may be able to have additional serves of the Five Food Groups or unsaturated spreads and oils or discretionary choices.

For further information go to [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au).

# EARLY LEARNING CENTRE ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

## Arrivals

- Wash hands to help reduce the spread of infection
- Complete the attendance record – this is a LEGAL requirement
- Record the ACTUAL time of arrival, and sign / initial / enter pin
- Remove any potentially harmful items from your child's bag and hand to your Educator/s (medication, plastic bags, sharps, etc)
- Place child's belongings in their assigned place
- Place lunches/drinks in refrigerator
- Early Learning Centre - Place nappies in nappy change area
- Let your Educator/s know of any information relevant to the child's care for the day
- Advise Educator/s if someone else will be collecting their child (and complete written authorisation if necessary)
- Apply sunscreen to your child
- ALWAYS say goodbye – although it may initially result in tears, letting your child know you are leaving establishes trust in the routine of settling in to care, and your Educator/s can reassure them you will be returning

Children can only be released to responsible adults who have been authorised for collection IN WRITING by the child's parent/s. Educator/s will ask for photo ID if not familiar with the person collecting your child.

Access to a child by a parent cannot be denied unless prohibited by Court Order - a copy of these MUST be supplied.

Educator/s will contact Police if an unauthorised person attempts to collect a child, or if ANY person displays threatening or intimidating behaviour.

Educators cannot adopt responsibility for children before the service opens.

Doors will only be opened at the approved service opening time.

Staff can only take responsibility for children who have been signed into care by an AUTHORISED person.

PLEASE advise Educators if there is any likelihood of unauthorised persons attempting to collect children (e.g.. possible breach of Court or Consent Orders).

Please let your Educator/s know if you will be LATE to collect your child.

## On Departure

- Complete the attendance record – this is a LEGAL requirement.
- Record the ACTUAL time of collection, and sign / initial / enter pin.
- Collect all child's belongings
- Communicate with your Educator/s about your child's day, and let them know you are collecting your child.
- Early Learning Centre – check your communication pocket for notices etc
- Wash hands to help reduce the spread of infection.

## Attendance records are a legal requirement

They must accurately record the ACTUAL time of arrival, and the ACTUAL time of departure from care.

They document responsibility for the care of children.

They are essential to validate any claims for fee assistance (CCS).

## LATE COLLECTION

If a child is not collected upon service closing time, Educator/s will attempt to contact parents and/or authorised contacts to arrange alternative collection.

If unable to have the child collected, Educators have a duty of care to contact the Police and/or Child Protection services.

### Late Collection Fee

A Late Collection penalty fee can be applied when children are not collected by the service closing time.

Penalty charges do not attract fee assistance (CCS).

Please refer to the Fees and Charges schedule for information on current late collection fees.

## Family Day Care

A Late Collection penalty can be applied if your child is not collected by the agreed CONTRACTED finish time. Your Family Day Care Educator may alternately choose to apply additional standard or casual charges to any period of care occurring after your agreed contracted finish time.

Please refer to your 'Complying Written Arrangements'.

If you know you will not be able to collect your child by service closing time, please advise your Educator/s and make arrangements with an authorised person to collect your child.



## OTHER POLICIES

Upper Hunter Children's Services has a number of policies covering a range of items.

Policies are available for reference at all times at each service, and in every Family Day Care Educator home.

Staff, Educators and management review policies in response to industry changes, and items that may arise. We seek your input so that our policies can be well-informed, practical, and consider various stakeholder perspectives. Please feel welcome to raise suggestion or comment.

In completing an enrolment with Upper Hunter Children's Services, you are agreeing to abide by our policies.

A summary of some service policies is provided below. For more detail, please refer to the policy manual at your service or Family Day Care Educator home.

### Incident, Injury, trauma and illness

Educators and staff make every effort to promote children's health, safety and wellbeing. Steps are taken to manage injuries and illness.

Your enrolment includes an agreement to allow your service to seek urgent medical, dental, or hospital treatment, or transport by an ambulance.

Educators with current approved first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis management qualifications are present at all times. Each service has a fully-stocked first aid kit available at all times.

Educators will assess any incidents, injury, trauma or illness and take action. If in doubt, they will contact emergency services. If a child requires immediate medical attention, all reasonable steps will be taken to secure that attention and to notify you or an authorised emergency contact as soon as is practicable.

Details of all incidents, injury, trauma and illness are documented.

Certain 'serious incidents' are additionally reported to our regulatory authority.

### Infection control

Upper Hunter Children's Services implement measures to control the spread of infection through:

- Understanding how infections are spread
- Effective hand hygiene
- Exclusion of ill children, educators and staff
- Immunisation
- Appropriate use of gloves
- Cough and sneeze etiquette
- Effective environmental cleaning
- Hygienic nappy changing and toileting
- Safely dealing with body fluids
- Sound food preparation, storage and handling



## Illness (and exclusion)

Excluding unwell children, educators and staff from the care environment is one means of helping manage the spread of infection.

If your child becomes unwell while in care, they will need to be collected as soon as possible.

Please advise staff if your child is away due to illness.

If your child is unwell with a suspected infectious illness or unclear symptoms, you will be asked to see a medical practitioner and obtain medical clearance before returning to care.

We notify families if there is any confirmed case of an infectious illness in the service, and provide information for you.

Certain illnesses are also notified to the Public Health Unit.

Children, Educators and staff with a confirmed infectious illness are excluded for the period recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council (see over page). These are minimum exclusion periods only – children may need to stay home longer until they are well enough to return to care.

Fees are charged for days when your child is absent due to illness. Child Care Subsidy entitlements still apply.

### Please keep your child home if they have:

**Diarrhoea / vomiting** – exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion or vomiting for at least 24 hours (if the cause is unknown, and for Norovirus, possible exclusion for 48 hours)

**Conjunctivitis** - exclude until discharge from the eyes has stopped (unless a doctor has diagnosed in writing non-infectious conjunctivitis)

**Cold Sores** – exclude if the child is too young to maintain hygiene practices, until sores are dry.

**Unusual spots, rashes or blisters** - these will be treated as infectious until written clearance is provided by a Doctor

**Any infectious condition** - refer to the minimum exclusion periods

**Commenced treatment with a medication** – exclude for 24 -48 hours to ensure they are recovering and not having any side effects from the medication

**Are too ill to participate in normal activities** without possible detriment to their wellbeing or safety, or if they require extra care and attention that may compromise the adequate supervision, care and safety of the other children

## Recommended minimum exclusion periods

Condition	Exclusion of case	Exclusion of contacts <sup>a</sup>
Campylobacter infection	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
Candidiasis (thrush)	Not excluded	Not excluded
Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection	Not excluded	Not excluded
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from the eyes has stopped, unless a doctor has diagnosed non-infectious conjunctivitis	Not excluded
Cryptosporidium	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
“Diarrhoea (No organism identified)”	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
Fungal infections of the skin or nails (e.g. ringworm, tinea)	Exclude until the day after starting appropriate antifungal treatment	Not excluded
Giardiasis	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
Glandular fever (mononucleosis, Epstein Barr virus [EBV] infection)	Not excluded	Not excluded
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until the person has received appropriate antibiotic treatment for at least 4 days	Not excluded. Contact a public health unit for specialist advice
Head lice (pediculosis)	Not excluded if effective treatment begins before the next day at the education and care service. The child does not need to be sent home immediately if head lice are detected	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received and until at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice	Not excluded. Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about vaccinating or treating children in the same room or group
Hepatitis B	Not excluded	Not excluded
Hepatitis C	Not excluded	Not excluded

Source: [nhmrc.gov.au](http://nhmrc.gov.au)

Condition	Exclusion of case	Exclusion of contacts <sup>a</sup>
Herpes simplex (cold sores, fever blisters)	Not excluded if the person can maintain hygiene practices to minimise the risk of transmission. If the person cannot comply with these practices (e.g. because they are too young), they should be excluded until the sores are dry. Sores should be covered with a dressing, where possible	Not excluded
Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)	Not excluded. If the person is severely immune compromised, they will be vulnerable to other people's illnesses	Not excluded
Human parvovirus B19 (fifth disease, erythema infectiosum, slapped cheek syndrome)	Not excluded	Not excluded
Hydatid disease	Not excluded	Not excluded
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has started. Any sores on exposed skin should be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until person is well	Not excluded
Listeriosis	Not excluded	Not excluded
Measles	Exclude for 4 days after the onset of the rash	"Immunised and immune contacts are not excluded For non-immunised contacts, contact a public health unit for specialist advice. All immunocompromised children should be excluded until 14 days after the appearance of the rash in the last case"
Meningitis (viral)	Exclude until person is well	Not excluded
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed	Not excluded. Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about antibiotics and/or vaccination for people who were in the same room as the case
Molluscum contagiosum	Not excluded	Not excluded
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
Norovirus	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion or vomiting for 48 hours	Not excluded



Condition	Exclusion of case	Exclusion of contacts <sup>a</sup>
Pertussis (whooping cough)	Exclude until 5 days after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment, or for 21 days from the onset of coughing	Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about excluding non-vaccinated and incompletely vaccinated contacts, or antibiotics
Pneumococcal disease	Exclude until person is well	Not excluded
Roseola	Not excluded	Not excluded
Ross River virus	Not excluded	Not excluded
Rotavirus infection	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion or vomiting for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of the rash	Not excluded
Salmonellosis	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
Scabies	Exclude until the day after starting appropriate treatment	Not excluded
Shigellosis	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
Streptococcal sore throat (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and feels well	Not excluded
Toxoplasmosis	Not excluded	Not excluded
Tuberculosis (TB)	Exclude until medical certificate is produced from the appropriate health authority	Not excluded. Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about screening, antibiotics or specialist TB clinics
Varicella (chickenpox)	Exclude until all blisters have dried—this is usually at least 5 days after the rash first appeared in non-immunised children, and less in immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise, not excluded
Viral gastroenteritis (viral diarrhoea)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours <sup>b</sup>	Not excluded
Worms	Exclude if loose bowel motions are occurring. Exclusion is not necessary if treatment	Not excluded

a The definition of 'contacts' will vary according to the disease—refer to the specific fact sheet for more information.

b If the cause is unknown, possible exclusion for 48 hours until cause is identified. However, educators and other staff who have a food handling role should always be excluded until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.

Adapted from SA Health Communicable Disease Control Branch: [www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/branches/branch-communicable.htm](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/branches/branch-communicable.htm).

Note that exclusion advice is consistent with Series of National Guidelines (SoNGs) where available.

SOURCE: Staying Healthy. Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services | 5th Edition |

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## Medication

Upper Hunter Children's Services ensure that any medications or treatments to support children's health care are managed and administered safely.

Medications (including prescription medications and over-the-counter preparations) can only be administered to children while in care on written instruction and authorisation from the parent, or other authorised person.

ALL medication must be given to staff for safe storage.

Educators check that ALL medication is in the original packaging, with a current expiry date and correctly labelled with the child's name, dose and frequency to be given, and instructions for storing and use.

Medications will only be administered in accordance with their associated directions for use.

School-aged children are able to self-administer medication under supervision IF you give permission, and if it is safe to do so.

A record is kept of all medications administered

## Nutrition

Upper Hunter Children's Services promote healthy eating, and any food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.

We support dietary guidelines as recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), and ask that you send food that is nutritious and sufficient for your child's daily needs.

We welcome you to share information about your food preferences to support the social, cultural, health and educational needs of children.

When food is provided, a weekly menu is displayed (Regulation 80).

## Medical / Health Care conditions

Educators and staff plan to safely support the health care needs of children with diagnosed medical conditions.

We complete a health care risk minimisation plan with you to ensure any impact of the condition is understood, plans are identified for supporting your child's inclusion, and enable arrangements for any necessary staff training.

You are given a copy of the policy if your child has an identified health care need, allergy, or medical condition (including asthma, anaphylaxis, diabetes, epilepsy).

Medical and emergency management plans are obtained from your treating Doctor/ medical practitioner to support these plans.

Each service has a strategy for ensuring children's identified health care needs are communicated to educators and staff.

## Safe food handling

Care is taken to handle, prepare and store food hygienically in our care settings (Regulation 77).

Educators complete a unit 'promote and provide healthy food and drinks' within their Certificate III qualification.

It is important to ensure adequate bottles are provided for your infant/child each day, as unfinished bottles are discarded and can not be reheated.

## Supporting positive behaviour

Upper Hunter Children's Services endeavour to support children in learning to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others, and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Educators engage with children in warm and responsive ways to build trusting relationships. Children are supported to feel secure, confident and included.

Appropriate expectations for behaviour

are determined according to children's development, skills and abilities.

Environments and routines are established that allow children to develop autonomy and a sense of ownership of their setting.

Children are supported in developing social and emotional skills, and learning to 'self-regulate' their behaviour and emotional responses.

Staff and Educators participate in ongoing professional learning in evidence-based and contemporary practices.

Educators may not use any form of discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances. This includes any form of corporal punishment, or discipline that may threaten, frighten, or humiliate a child (Law 66)

Child behaviour that is inconsiderate of the rights of others, or jeopardises the health, safety or wellbeing of others (children and educators), may be recorded as an incident report.

A child's family may be contacted to collect them if they are physically harming others (children or staff) excessively or with force.

Educators communicate and collaborate with the child's family/guardian in regard to any challenging or difficult behaviour situations, to assess and determine plans or 'agreements' (with older children) for the most appropriate strategies of support and response for unacceptable behaviour within the specific context.

Services may also collaborate with professional third-party support organisations to support the ongoing inclusion of children where possible in the care setting.

## Sun Protection -

Our services promote sun-safety, and encourage children to protect their skin.

Outdoor activities are held in shaded areas when possible.

Play is generally arranged to minimise the time spent outside during peak UV exposure times.

Children are encouraged to wear protective hats and clothing.

### Early Learning Centre and SOOSH supply sunscreen.

Staff/educators model sun protection practices.

## Excursions / outings, and visiting events

Additional activities may be undertaken from time to time, or on a regular basis, to enhance the program, involve children in new experiences, and support connections with the community.

A risk assessment is carried out prior to any excursion (Regulation 100), or visiting performer or event.

Authorisation must be given in writing by yourself, or someone you authorise to give permission, prior to your child participating in any excursion (Regulation 102).

If using their own vehicle to transport children, Family Day Care Educators supply a copy of their license and vehicle registration to the Coordination Unit office. Appropriate child restraints are used as required by law, and the installation of these is checked at least annually.



72 Main Street, Scone  
Monday - Friday, 7.00am - 6.00pm  
P: 6540 1345  
E: [elc@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](mailto:elc@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.facebook.com/earlylearningcentre](http://www.facebook.com/earlylearningcentre)



135 Liverpool Street, Scone  
Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm  
P: 6540 1151  
E: [uhfdc@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](mailto:uhfdc@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.facebook.com/upperhunterfamilydaycare](http://www.facebook.com/upperhunterfamilydaycare)



114 Waverley Street, Scone  
Before School Care, 6.30am - 8.30am  
After School Care, 3.00pm - 6.00pm  
Vacation Care, 8.00am - 6.00pm  
P: 6540 1177 or 6540 1140 (office)  
E: [soosh@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](mailto:soosh@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.facebook.com/sconeoutofschoolhours](http://www.facebook.com/sconeoutofschoolhours)

## Upper Hunter Shire Council Contacts

### Children's Services Coordinator

Jodie Royston  
P: 6540 1166  
E: [rroyston@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rroyston@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)

### Manager Community Services

Kerri Cone  
P: 6540 1141  
E: [kccone@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kccone@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)

### Director Environmental & Community Services

Mat Pringle  
P: 6540 1139  
E: [mpringle@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mpringle@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)

### General Manager

Steve McDonald  
P: 6540 1126  
E: [council@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)

### Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate

(Regulatory Authority)  
P: 1800 619 113  
E: [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)





