

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES HOME BASED CARE ATTENDANCE RECORD POLICY

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all educators within Windermere Family Day Care and In Home Care services are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding child attendance records for Windermere Early Childhood Education and Care Services. These rights and responsibilities reflect legislative requirements as outlined in the Education and Care Services National Law 2011 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all educators providing education and care services on behalf of Windermere's family day care and in home care programs.

DEFINITIONS

Home Based Care: is the term used to describe Windermere's family day care and in home care programs.

Family Day Care: is a commonwealth government funded program that provides education and care services in the homes of approved and registered educators.

In Home Care: is a commonwealth government funded program that provides education and care services in a family home by an approved and registered educator.

Child Care Benefit (CCB): means the amount received by the approved provider (Windermere) from the commonwealth government in respect of each child cared for by a home based educator.

Timesheet: the form the in home care educator provides for parents to sign and record the attendance details of the children in care.

Child Attendance Record: the form the family day care educator provides for parents to sign and record the attendance details of the children in care.

Educational Program Coordinator: means the person nominated by Windermere to provide individual support and guidance to home based educators.

POLICY STATEMENT

THAT ALL EDUCATORS PROVIDING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE SERVICES ON BEHALF OF WINDERMERE ENTER INTO AN EDUCATOR CONTRACT WITH WINDERMERE OUTLINING THEIR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO RECORDING AND SUBMITTING CHILD ATTENDANCE RECORDS.

Policy title: QA7.04 ECECS Home Based Care Attendance Record

Review date: June 2016

Prepared by: ECECS

Responsibility: Manager ECECS

Sign-off / date: June 2015

PROCEDURES – Care Arrangements

Educators who provide the education and care component of the family day care program have a number of important requirements regarding child attendance records. The requirements, as listed below, must be met to ensure that the programs remain legally compliant:

1. In order for Child Care Benefit (CCB) to be payable, there must be a direct commercial relationship between the family that is paying for the care and the service that is providing it. It is therefore the responsibility of the approved service provider (ie Windermere) to enter into care arrangements with families. Educators can not make their own care arrangements exclusive of Windermere.
2. All changes to booked care and all requests for care outside of booked care must be reported to Windermere. Family day care educators must update booking details and care arrangements in HubWorks and in home care educators must complete and submit the appropriate forms (such as booking or exit forms) to Windermere with their fortnightly timesheets.

PROCEDURES – Record Keeping

1. Educators are obligated under the family assistance law and the National Law to keep records relating to the attendance of children in care. Educators must ensure that parents or guardians record the arrival and departure times by signing each child in and out of care on each and every occasion.
2. Educators must complete one timesheet or child attendance record for each child in their care. Attendance is to be recorded on a daily basis. This will be monitored during home visits conducted by the Educational Program Coordinators. White-out correction tape cannot be used on timesheets or child attendance records. These are legal documents and mistakes must be corrected by noting the change and signing or initialling the change as documented. Timesheets and child attendance records with no parent or educator signatures or initials are deemed to be invalid. Payment will not be made to educators for invalid child attendance entries.
3. The attendance records must include the full name of the child. Windermere will provide timesheets for in home care educators and child attendance record sheets for family day care educators.

PROCEDURES – Compliance

1. Educators must only record attendance for the sessions where the child actually attended care. Families must not be asked to sign attendance records for days their child would not normally have attended (unless care was provided) or for days before their child starts care or after they cease attending care.
2. Absences must be reported where:
 - the child was expected to have been in care and
 - a family is expected to be charged a fee for that care.

In home care educators must ensure absences are recorded on the timesheet and family day care educators must ensure absences are recorded on the child attendance record and submitted through HubWorks. All educators must ensure the parent/guardian or authorised person provides a signature to verify each absence.

3. Each child is eligible to receive CCB for an initial 42 absence days per financial year without supporting documentation (this includes public holidays). Absences above this number must be accompanied by the appropriate documentation (ie medical certificate) for CCB to be paid. Educators must collect documentation from the family and submit it to Windermere with timesheets or child attendance records.
4. If a child ceases care without attending during their notice period, absences cannot be claimed for that time. Families will be required to pay the full fee and will not be entitled to CCB. In addition, absences cannot be claimed on the first and/or last day/s of care.
5. Educators are not to sign children in and out of care on behalf of the parent or put in the hours the child has attended in the attendance sections except when a child arrives into care or leaves care without a parent/guardian (generally occurs during drop-off and pick-up of children from preschool or school). The parent/guardian must counter initial the relevant section of the form the next time they see you.
6. When someone other than the parent/guardian is required to sign the child in or out of care, the educator must have written parental permission. This written permission must be kept on file
7. If an educator is found to provide false attendance records to Windermere, and as a result gained a financial advantage, this could be a crime and may result in a criminal prosecution for fraud.
8. A Child is considered to be in 24 hour care if he or she does not return to the care of their parents or guardians for any time during a 24 hour period. An educator must not provide a period of 24 hour care to a child unless the parent/guardian has sought approval from Windermere.
9. If an educator has a school aged child in their care on a day where they would otherwise be attending school, Educators must obtain a note from parents detailing the date and reason for care and provide a copy to Windermere.

PROCEDURES – Submitting Attendances

1. In home care educators must submit timesheets once per fortnight, in alignment with the dates provided upon registration. Timesheets must be submitted no later than 10am.
2. Family day care educators must submit attendances and all food and travel fees through HubWorks for processing on a fortnightly basis, in alignment with the dates provided upon registration. Copies of sign-in sheets must be submitted to the office on a monthly basis.
3. Windermere is responsible for submitting the attendance details of all children in care to the Child Care Management System (CCMS).

RELEVANT LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
 - Education and Care Services National Law 2011
 - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Family Assistance Law
- QIC Core Standards

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