Alice Springs Family Day Care



Family Handbook

Alice Springs Family Day Care is a member of

Family Day Care Australia

Updated: JULY 2026

Welcome to Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc.

We warmly welcome you to Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. We are delighted to partner with you in providing children with safe, nurturing, and engaging learning environments where they can grow, develop, and thrive.

Our role is to support our Educators, children, and families by ensuring our service operates in accordance with the National Quality Framework and all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. This includes monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory obligations, processing Child Care Subsidy (CCS) payments, and ensuring our Educators and their education and care environments continue to provide high-quality education and care.

We believe that strong, respectful relationships between Educators, families, children, and our coordination team are the foundation of positive outcomes for children. Through ongoing guidance, mentoring, professional development, and collaboration, we support our Educators to deliver inclusive, responsive, and high-quality early childhood education and care that reflects each child's strengths, interests, culture, and individual learning journey.

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., we are committed to continuous improvement and excellence in our collaborative responsibility to early years education and care. We value open communication and welcome your feedback, questions, and suggestions. By working together, we can continue to strengthen our service and provide the highest quality care and learning experiences for all children and families in our community.

CONTACT US

You can contact Alice Springs Family Day Care in the following ways:

ALICE SPRINGS FAMILY DAY CARE (OFFICE)

Suite 1A Helm House
40-42 Bath Street
Alice Springs NT 0870

Office Phone: 08 8952 3406
Email: manager@asfdc.org.au
Website: www.asfdc.org.au

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. acknowledges that we walk, learn and play on the lands of the Arrernte people and recognise our place within the diverse and culturally rich community of Alice Springs. We respect the cultures, histories, knowledge and experiences that contribute to the strength of our Central Australian community.

We believe early childhood education and care is fundamental to children's wellbeing, learning and lifelong development. Our service is committed to providing high-quality, nurturing and responsive care where children feel safe, secure, valued and supported to learn, grow and thrive. Families can feel confident knowing their children are cared for by knowledgeable, caring and dedicated Educators who understand the importance of early years development.

We recognise families as their child's first and most important teachers. We value the knowledge, culture, experiences and perspectives that each family brings and work in genuine partnership with families, children, Educators and the wider community. We listen to children's voices and respect their individual strengths, interests, identities and ways of learning.

We believe children are capable, confident and active learners. Through play, relationships and meaningful experiences, our Educators create small, responsive and nurturing environments where children can explore their own autonomy, environments, relationships and build strong foundations for lifelong learning.

We are committed to supporting children's physical, emotional and social wellbeing to assist them in developing a strong sense of belonging, connection and identity. We value the unique cultures and communities of the children and families we serve and seek opportunities to embed local knowledge, culture and community connections within children's learning.

What is Family Day Care?

Family Day Care is a home-based early childhood education and care service where qualified and approved Educators provide high-quality education and care in their own homes for children from 6 weeks to 13 years of age.

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., our Educators operate their own Family Day Care businesses while being supported by our Coordination Unit. We provide ongoing guidance, mentoring, professional development, and monitoring to help Educators meet the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, and to deliver quality outcomes for children and families.

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is an approved service operating under the National Quality Framework (NQF). We are committed to meeting the National Quality Standard (NQS) and continuously improving the quality of our education and care through strong partnerships with Educators, children, and families.

Eligible families may be able to receive financial assistance through the Australian Government's Child Care Subsidy (CCS), helping to make quality early childhood education and care more affordable. Information about eligibility and how to apply is available through Services Australia.

Family Day Care offers children a welcoming, nurturing, and flexible learning environment where they can develop confidence, independence, and a sense of belonging in a small group setting. Our Educators provide experiences that support each child's individual learning, development, wellbeing, and cultural identity.

We believe that positive relationships and open communication are key to providing the best outcomes for children. We encourage families to build strong partnerships with their child's Educator and our Coordination Unit by sharing information, asking questions, and providing feedback. Our team is always available to offer support and work collaboratively with families to ensure every child has a positive and enriching Family Day Care experience.

Child Protection Statement

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., the safety, wellbeing, and protection of children are our highest priorities. We are committed to creating environments where children feel safe, respected, valued, and supported.

All Educators, Educator Assistants, and Educator Support Officers have a legal and ethical responsibility to protect children and young people from harm. Our team members are required to complete appropriate child protection and mandatory reporting training and understand their obligations to respond to concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.

In accordance with the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT), mandatory reporters have a duty to report suspected child harm, abuse, or neglect to the relevant authorities. Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. has policies, procedures, and practices in place to guide our team in meeting these obligations and ensuring all concerns are managed appropriately and confidentially.

We are committed to working in partnership with children, families, Educators, and the wider community to promote child safety and uphold every child's right to feel secure, included, and protected.

WHAT TYPE OF EDUCATION AND CARE CAN WE PROVIDE?

Full Time Booking:	For the children to use the same hours & days each week.
Part time / Shift Bookings:	Some Educators may ask for a minimum booking each day or minimum booking of days per week.
Casual / Occasional Care:	On occasions casual bookings may arise and families can access these bookings with no permanent commitment.
Weekend / Evening / Overnight Care:	Some Educators may offer this service. Please talk to your Educator and Alice Springs Family Day Care for more information.
Before and/or After School	For children who are in care before school & after school hrs.
Vacation Care:	Is for school age children who use care during school holidays and pupil free days. Children can only be classed as school age if their status has been changed with Family Assistance Office from “Non School Age” to “School Age”

Our Family Day Care Educators

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., we are committed to working with Educators who are passionate, dedicated, and committed to providing high-quality early childhood education and care. Our Educators bring a range of skills, knowledge, and experience to create safe, nurturing, and engaging learning environments where every child is supported to learn, grow, and thrive.

Each Educator has been carefully assessed to ensure they meet the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations. They are committed to providing inclusive, child-centred education and care that recognises and respects each child's individual strengths, interests, culture, and stage of development.

Through thoughtful observation, planning, and reflection, our Educators support children's learning and development in line with approved learning frameworks. They work in partnership with families to ensure each child's learning journey is meaningful, responsive, and tailored to their individual needs.

Our Educators are supported by Alice Springs Family Day Care's Coordination Unit through regular home visits, mentoring, professional development, and ongoing guidance. Our Educator Support Officers work collaboratively with Educators to promote continuous improvement and ensure every child experiences a safe, secure, stimulating, and caring environment where they feel valued and have a strong sense of belonging.

Family Support

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., we recognise that families are children's first and most important teachers. We value strong partnerships with families and are committed to working together to support each child's learning, development, and wellbeing.

Our Coordination Unit team are available to provide guidance, information, and support to families throughout their Family Day Care journey. Whether you have questions about your child's development, your Educator, or any aspect of our service, we encourage you to contact our friendly and experienced team. We are here to listen, provide assistance, and work collaboratively with you to achieve the best possible outcomes for your child.

We believe that open, honest, and respectful communication is the foundation of positive relationships. We welcome your feedback, ideas, and conversations, and encourage you to share any questions or concerns with your child's Educator or our Coordination Unit.

We also invite families to connect with us through the Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. Facebook page, where we regularly share parenting resources, child development

information, community events, service updates, and ideas to support children's learning and wellbeing at home.

Feedback and Complaints

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. we are committed to working collaboratively with families and welcome all questions, concerns and feedback to continue providing high-quality care for children.
All communications are valued and will be treated with respect and confidentiality to ensure the best outcomes for children, families and educators.

All feedback and complaints are managed in accordance with our Dealing with Complaints Policy and Procedure, relevant legislation, and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

Our policies and procedures are available on our website at www.asfdc.org.au, or you can request a copy from our Coordination Unit at any time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Fees and Payments

Family Day Care Educators are self-employed independent contractors who operate their own small businesses. This means that each Educator is responsible for setting their own fees. To support consistency across the service, Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. provides an annual fee guide, and each Educator's fee schedule is reviewed to ensure it meets service requirements.

Upon confirmation of placement, a $500 enrolment deposit will need to be paid prior to your child’s first day. $70 of this is a non-refundable administrative fee. The remaining $430 will be refunded upon end of care, providing that your account is closed with a $0 balance.

Your child's fees are calculated by your Educator and may include the hourly care fee, any applicable loadings, and the Alice Springs Family Day Care scheme levy. If your family is eligible for the Australian Government's Child Care Subsidy (CCS), your subsidy will be applied, and you will be responsible for paying the remaining gap fee.

To make payments simple and convenient for families, Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. collects gap fees on behalf of Educators through our Central Payments system.

Families will receive a weekly invoice from Redbourne outlining the fees charged, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) applied (where applicable), and the remaining gap fee payable.

Fees are paid in arrears, and families are expected to ensure payments are made by the due date. Open and timely communication regarding payment arrangements or any difficulties meeting payment obligations is essential.

Please be aware that where accounts remain overdue or outstanding fees are not addressed, care may be suspended or withheld until the outstanding balance has been paid or an acceptable payment arrangement has been established.

A scheme levy is charged for each child enrolled with Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. This levy supports the operation of the Coordination Unit and the ongoing services provided to Educators and families, including mentoring, compliance monitoring, professional support, and administrative services. The scheme levy is included on your weekly Redbourne invoice in addition to your child's education and care fees.

The amounts are indicated in the table below:

Family Day Care Scheme Levy:	- $11.00 per *under school age* child per day. - $3.30 per day *school age* child per day.

Centralised Payment of Fees and Charges (2026–2027 Financial Year)

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. operates a Centralised Payments system to provide a secure, transparent, and efficient process for collecting fees and ensuring Educators receive their payments on time.

Payment Methods

Families can pay their gap fees using the following payment methods:

- BPAY
- Pay Now
- Direct Debit (bank account)

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. covers the administration costs associated with these payment methods when payments are made from a bank account.

Please note that additional processing fees may apply if you choose to pay using a credit card or debit card that is enabled for online payments.

If You Are Experiencing Financial Difficulties

We understand that circumstances can change. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your child care fees, we encourage you to contact the Coordination Unit Manager as

soon as possible. Our team will work with you respectfully and confidentially to discuss your individual circumstances and explore any available support or payment options.

Payment Requirements

In accordance with Australian Government Child Care Subsidy requirements, Educators are not permitted to accept cash payments directly from families. All gap fees must be paid through the Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. Centralised Payments system using an approved electronic payment method.

In limited circumstances, exceptions to the electronic payment requirement may apply, including where paying electronically could place an individual or their child at risk of family or domestic violence. Requests for an alternative payment arrangement will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with relevant legislation and service policies.

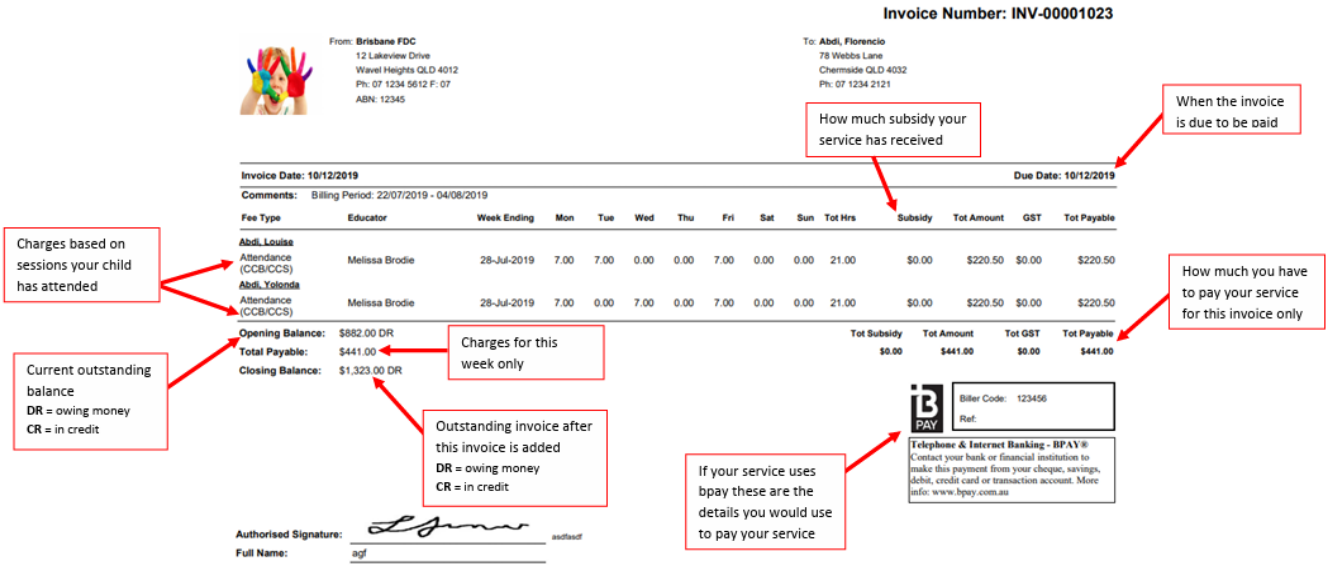
Exceptional Circumstances

In limited circumstances, an alternative to electronic payment may be considered where a family reasonably believes that using an electronic funds transfer to pay gap fees could place them or their child at risk of family or domestic violence.

If you are experiencing these circumstances, we encourage you to contact the Scheme Manager in confidence to discuss your situation. Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. will consider each request on an individual basis, taking into account legislative requirements, the safety and wellbeing of those involved, and the service's capacity to provide appropriate arrangements.

HarmonyWeb

Invoices – A Parent's Quick Guide



Statements of Entitlement

Every fortnight, Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. will provide families with a Statement of Entitlement. This statement outlines:

- the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) paid on your behalf
- the hours of care used during the fortnight
- the fees charged and payments received.

If you have any questions about your account, invoices, or payment options, please contact the Alice Springs Family Day Care Coordination Unit. Our team is happy to assist you.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) – Absences

Under the Australian Government's Child Care Subsidy (CCS) arrangements, eligible families can receive CCS (including Additional Child Care Subsidy, where applicable) for up to 42 allowable absence days per child, per financial year, provided the family continues to be charged for the booked session of care.

You do not need to provide a reason or supporting documentation for your child's first 42 allowable absence days each financial year.

Once all 42 allowable absence days have been used, CCS can only be paid for additional absences if they meet the Australian Government's criteria for an additional allowable absence. In these circumstances, families will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation before CCS can be claimed for those absence days.

For more information about allowable absences and Child Care Subsidy, please refer to the Australian Government's guidance on Absences from Child Care or speak with the Alice Springs Family Day Care Coordination Unit.

What Happens on a Public Holiday?

If your child has a regular booked session of care that falls on a public holiday, fees may still apply even if care is not attended. This is because your child's place with their Educator has been reserved for that day.

Families may request care on a public holiday if their child has a booked session on that day. Please discuss this with your child's Educator in advance to confirm availability and arrangements.

If care is provided on a public holiday, a higher fee may apply. Details of any additional charges can be found in your Educator's Fee Schedule or by speaking directly with your Educator.

Attendance Records and Electronic Sign-In/Sign-Out

Families are required to record their child's attendance each day they attend Family Day Care by signing their child in and out using their own electronic PIN at the Educator's residence.

Each person authorised to drop off or collect a child must use their own individual electronic PIN. It is important that the actual arrival time and the actual collection time are recorded accurately each day.

At the end of each week, families will be required to electronically confirm and submit their child's attendance record. Families are responsible for ensuring all attendance information is complete and accurate.

Accurate attendance records are a legal requirement under the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) system. Educators are not permitted to submit attendance records that have not been completed correctly.

Where applicable, Educators are responsible for recording children's attendance when collecting from or dropping off at school or preschool, including the relevant arrival and departure times.

Immunisation Requirements for Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

To be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), children must meet the Australian Government's immunisation requirements.

A child may meet these requirements by:

- being up to date with their vaccinations according to the National Immunisation Program Schedule;
- being on an approved catch-up vaccination schedule; or
- having an approved exemption that meets the CCS immunisation requirements.

Families are responsible for ensuring their child's immunisation details are kept up to date with the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

If a child does not meet the CCS immunisation requirements and does not have an approved exemption, the family may not be eligible to receive CCS and will be responsible for paying the full cost of care fees.

Termination of Care

If you decide to end your child's enrolment with your Family Day Care Educator, you will be required to provide written notice by completing a Termination of Care Form. Your Educator's required notice period and any specific procedures will be outlined in their Family Handbook.

Providing written notice ensures that the correct processes are followed and allows time for planning and supporting a smooth transition for your child.

If the required notice is not provided in writing, families may be required to pay the applicable fees in lieu of notice, as outlined in the Educator's fee and termination policies.

Please be aware that Child Care Subsidy (CCS) may not be payable for a child's final day of care if the child is absent. In this circumstance, the family will be responsible for the full fee for that day.

Any outstanding fees must be finalised before a family can commence care with another Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. Educator. If you are experiencing difficulty finalising your account, please contact the Coordination Unit to discuss your circumstances and available options.

What Is Provided and What Do I Need to Provide?

Each Family Day Care Educator has their own resources, routines, and arrangements to support children's learning, development, health, and wellbeing. Families are encouraged to refer to their child's Educator Handbook for specific information about what is provided by the Educator and what families are required to supply.

Generally, families will be asked to provide the following items for their child:

- Multiple changes of suitable clothing appropriate for the weather and activities
- A suitable sun-safe hat
- A nutritious lunchbox containing enough food and snacks for the child's booked hours of care
- A suitable water bottle
- An adequate supply of nappies, pull-ups, wipes, and any other personal care items required
- A suitable bag for storing personal belongings

Meals

Families are responsible for providing sufficient nutritious food and drinks for their child's time in care, unless alternative arrangements have been discussed and agreed upon with the Educator.

For children attending a full day of care, families are required to provide enough food for all meals and snacks throughout the day, including morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea, along with a clearly labelled water bottle.

We encourage families to provide a variety of nutritious foods that support children's growth, development, wellbeing and active participation in daily experiences. Foods and drinks high in added sugar, salt and saturated fat should be limited in line with healthy eating recommendations.

If a child does not have sufficient suitable food for the day, the Educator may contact the family to discuss the situation and arrange for additional food to be provided.

Where an Educator needs to provide additional food, any associated costs may be the responsibility of the family.

Families are asked to discuss any allergies, medical or dietary requirements, and cultural or religious food preferences with their Educator to ensure these needs are appropriately and safely accommodated.

For babies, families are required to supply prepared formula, expressed breastmilk or other milk as needed, together with clear feeding instructions. Educators will work in partnership with families to maintain each child's individual feeding routines and requirements.

Sharing information about your child's mealtime routines, food preferences and any foods they dislike helps Educators provide positive mealtime experiences that encourage independence, wellbeing and a sense of belonging.

For further information about healthy eating in early childhood, families may visit StartingBlocks.gov.au or the Raising Children Network for practical nutrition advice and healthy lunchbox ideas.

What Happens If I Go on Holidays or My Child Is Sick?

We understand that children may be absent from care due to illness, family holidays, or other circumstances. Your child's place with their Educator remains reserved during these times, and fees will continue to apply in accordance with your Educator's approved fee schedule and policies.

Families are required to follow their Educator's notice requirements for planned absences, including holidays or extended breaks. Please refer to your Educator Handbook for information about required notice periods, fees, and any specific arrangements. Attendance records must still be completed for all absences.

Educator Absences and Relief Care

If your child's Educator is unavailable and an approved replacement or relief Educator is not available, fees will not be charged for the days care cannot be provided.

Where a suitable relief Educator is available, families may be offered the option of using alternative care. Families have the right to choose whether or not to accept relief care, and no fees will apply if a family chooses not to utilise an available alternative care arrangement.

Alternative and relief care options are dependent on Educator availability and available vacancies. Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. will work with families to support continuity of care wherever possible.

Can I Meet the Educator and Find Out More About the Service Before Enrolling My Child?

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. (ASFDC), we understand that choosing the right education and care environment for your child is an important decision. We are committed to supporting families throughout this process to help establish a positive and successful care arrangement.

When families enquire about a place, the Coordination Unit team will discuss their individual needs and circumstances and provide information about the service and available Educators who may be suitable, subject to availability.

Before meeting with a potential Educator, families are required to attend an enrolment interview at the Coordination Unit office. This provides an opportunity for the Manager to discuss the service's operations, policies, procedures, enrolment requirements and expectations, while gaining a better understanding of the family's needs and preferences.

Following this meeting, families will be supported to visit and meet with a potential Educator in their home-based learning environment. The Manager will also participate in this meeting to assist in assessing the suitability of the proposed care arrangement and ensure that the needs and expectations of the family, child and Educator are appropriately considered.

These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss your child's individual needs, routines, interests and development, as well as the Educator's approach to education and care. They also allow families to ask questions, understand how the service operates and make an informed decision before proceeding with enrolment.

ASFDC aims to establish positive, respectful and sustainable partnerships between families, Educators and the Coordination Unit to support the best possible outcomes for children.

Enrolment and Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Before care can commence, families must complete the required enrolment process. Families will need to accept the enrolment through their myGov account before Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. can finalise the booking. Once the Coordination Unit issues an enrolment confirmation, this must also be accepted before your child's care can begin.

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is financial assistance provided by the Australian Government to help eligible families with the cost of approved child care. Families must register for CCS through their myGov account linked to Centrelink before commencing care. CCS eligibility and the amount a family receives are based on individual circumstances, including family income, activity levels, and other government requirements.

When a child first commences care, families may be required to pay the full fee until their CCS entitlement has been assessed and applied. The assessment and approval process is managed by Services Australia and is outside the control of Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc.

If a family is entitled to CCS during this period, Services Australia may make a retrospective adjustment or payment for eligible care provided, generally in accordance with their processes and timeframes.

What If My Child Is School Age? Do You Offer Before and After School Care?

Yes, many of our Family Day Care Educators offer care options for school-aged children, including before school care, after school care, and vacation care (during school holidays), depending on their availability and approved operating arrangements.

We encourage families to speak with their child's Educator to discuss whether these care options are available and suitable for their child's needs.

If your current Educator is unable to provide school-aged care, please contact the Alice Springs Family Day Care Coordination Unit. Our team will be happy to support you in exploring other available Educators who may be able to meet your family's requirements.

How Will My Child’s Development Be Supported?

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., we believe every child is unique and deserves an education and care experience that supports their individual strengths, interests, abilities, culture, and development.

Our Family Day Care Educators are qualified early childhood professionals who hold a minimum Certificate III in Early Education and Care. Educators are supported through ongoing mentoring, guidance, and professional development from our experienced Educational Leader who works collaboratively with Educators to promote high-quality learning and development outcomes for every child.

Educators observe, document, and reflect on children's learning and development to create meaningful experiences that build on each child's interests, ideas, and abilities. Families are encouraged to communicate regularly with their child's Educator, as they are the best source of information about your child's individual learning journey, observations, and developmental progress.

Your child's learning documentation, including observations, photos, and evidence of play and learning experiences, is securely shared with families through the **Kinderloop** platform. Families are encouraged to access Kinderloop regularly, celebrate their child's achievements, and contribute comments, information, and insights about their child's interests, experiences, and learning at home. These family contributions help

Educators develop a deeper understanding of each child and strengthen partnerships between families and Educators.

Alice Springs Family Day Care Educators plan and support children's learning in accordance with the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Version 2.0 (EYLF V2.0). This approved learning framework recognises five key learning outcomes that guide children's development:

- Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity
- Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners
- Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

Through play-based learning, responsive relationships, and partnerships with families, our Educators support children to develop confidence, curiosity, resilience, and a lifelong love of learning.

Smoke, Drug and Alcohol-Free Environment

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and secure environment that promotes the wellbeing of all children, families, Educators, and visitors.

All families, visitors, and Educators are required to comply with our Smoke, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy while on approved Family Day Care premises, during Scheme activities, and at any Educator-organised events, outings, or excursions.

Smoking, vaping, the use of alcohol, and the use of illegal or prohibited drugs are not permitted in any environment where Family Day Care education and care is being provided, or during activities associated with the service.

These requirements help ensure children are cared for in an environment that supports their safety, health, and overall wellbeing.

Privacy and Confidentiality

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., we respect and value the privacy of children, families, and Educators. We are committed to protecting personal information and ensuring that all records are managed securely, confidentially, and in accordance with relevant legislation and service policies.

Educators and the Coordination Unit are required to maintain accurate records relating to the children in their care. These records may include information about a child's learning and development, progress, attendance, health, wellbeing, and other matters relevant to providing quality education and care for children and supporting families.

All records are stored securely and, when no longer required by the Educator, are retained by the Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. Coordination Unit in accordance with legislative requirements and our privacy and record-keeping procedures.

The Northern Territory Regulatory Authority (Quality Education and Care Northern Territory; QECNT) may access service records when required as part of its legislative responsibilities, monitoring, and compliance processes.

We encourage families to communicate openly with their child's Educator, Educational Leader, or Scheme Manager if they have any questions, concerns, or feedback about their child's care. Your input is important and helps us understand your family's needs and continue improving the quality of our service.

We also ask families and visitors to respect the privacy of Educators and their homes, as Family Day Care takes place within their personal living environments. Respectful relationships and consideration for everyone's privacy help create a positive and welcoming experience for children, families, and Educators.

Grievance Procedure

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc., we value open communication and are committed to responding to concerns in a fair, respectful, and timely manner.

If you wish to make a formal complaint or raise a concern regarding your child's Educator or any aspect of your child's care, please contact the Coordination Unit Manager through the Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. office at manager@asdfc.org.au.

All concerns and complaints will be acknowledged and managed in accordance with our Dealing with Complaints Policy and Procedure, with appropriate consideration given to confidentiality and privacy.

We aim to respond to all enquiries as soon as possible and work collaboratively with families, Educators, and staff to achieve positive outcomes. We encourage families to raise concerns directly through the appropriate channels so they can be addressed accurately and professionally, reducing the risk of misunderstandings or information being shared without the full context.

Your feedback is valued and supports our commitment to continuous improvement and providing high-quality education and care for children and families.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES:

Routines

Consistent and predictable routines help children feel safe, secure and confident in their environment. Daily experiences such as arrivals and departures, mealtimes, rest

and sleep, toileting and play provide children with a sense of stability and belonging while supporting their learning, wellbeing and independence.

We recognise that every child is unique, and routines are planned to reflect each child's individual needs, stage of development, family practices and preferences. As children grow, routines are adapted to support their changing interests, abilities and emerging independence.

Open communication between families and educators is essential. Please let your educator know about any changes to your child's routine, health or wellbeing at home. Sharing information helps us provide continuity of care and learning and ensures we can respond sensitively to your child's needs. We also encourage families to become familiar with their educator's daily program and to share ideas, experiences and information that support their child's learning and contribute to positive learning outcomes.

Clothing

Children participate in a wide range of play-based learning experiences each day, including climbing, running, creative and sensory play, water play, outdoor learning and excursions. These experiences support children's learning, development and wellbeing and can sometimes be messy.

Please dress your child in comfortable, practical clothing that allows them to move freely, explore confidently and participate in all activities. We recommend sending several labelled changes of clothing each day, particularly for younger children or those who are toilet learning.

To support our Sun Protection practices, children should wear sun-safe clothing, enclosed footwear suitable for active play, and a broad-brimmed hat. Please avoid sending children in special or delicate clothing, as play experiences may involve paint, glue, mud, sand and other messy materials.

For more information about sun safety in early childhood education and care, visit StartingBlocks.gov.au for practical guidance on protecting children from the sun.

Rest and Sleep

Rest and sleep are important for children's health, wellbeing, learning and development. We work in partnership with families to provide rest and sleep routines that are responsive to each child's individual needs, while following current safe sleep recommendations and service policies.

Please discuss your child's usual rest and sleep routine with your educator, including any comfort items, settling strategies or individual preferences. Sharing this information helps provide continuity between home and Family Day Care and supports your child to feel safe, secure and comfortable.

We also encourage families to let their educator know about any changes to their child's sleep patterns, such as an unsettled night, early waking or changes to their routine. This information enables educators to respond sensitively to your child's needs and support their wellbeing throughout the day.

Toileting

Please provide enough disposable nappies or pull-ups, wipes, creams or other personal care items your child will need each day. Labelling your child's belongings helps ensure they are used appropriately.

When your child begins to show signs that they are ready for toilet learning, we encourage families to work in partnership with their educator to develop a consistent and supportive approach. Every child develops at their own pace, and together we can determine the most appropriate time and strategies to support a positive and successful transition.

To encourage independence, please dress children who are toilet learning in comfortable, easy-to-manage clothing that they can remove and replace with minimal assistance. Clothing such as elastic-waist pants and simple fastenings can help children build confidence and self-help skills.

We understand that toilet learning is an important developmental milestone, and readiness varies from child to child. Educators will work collaboratively with families, recognising each child's individual cues, abilities and confidence, and may recommend waiting a little longer if a child does not yet appear developmentally ready. Our shared goal is to ensure toilet learning is a positive, respectful and encouraging experience for every child.

Separation Anxiety

It is common for children to experience some anxiety when separating from their parent or caregiver. This is a normal part of children's social and emotional development and can occur at different ages and stages. While separation anxiety often begins during infancy and toddlerhood, changes such as starting Family Day Care, transitioning to a new educator, welcoming a new sibling, moving house or other changes in family circumstances may also contribute to feelings of uncertainty.

Every child responds differently. Some children settle quickly after their family leaves, while others may take a little longer to feel comfortable. Our educators provide warm, responsive and reassuring support to help children build secure relationships, develop confidence and feel safe within their Family Day Care environment.

Families and educators working together can make transitions smoother for children. The following strategies may help:

- Say goodbye before you leave. A predictable and reassuring goodbye helps children build trust. Avoid leaving without telling your child, as this can increase feelings of uncertainty.
- Keep your goodbye calm, positive and consistent. Develop a simple farewell routine and reassure your child that you will return. Using familiar parts of the day, such as "after lunch" or "after your rest," can help children understand when you will be back.
- Bring a familiar comfort item. A favourite toy, blanket or family photo may help your child feel secure during the day, if appropriate.
- Support gradual independence. Short periods apart at home can help children build confidence and learn that trusted adults return. As children experience successful separations, they develop greater resilience and a stronger sense of security.
- Work in partnership with your educator. Share any changes at home or concerns about your child's wellbeing. Together we can develop strategies that support your child's individual needs and create a positive transition into care.

Building secure, respectful and responsive relationships takes time. With consistency, patience and collaboration between families and educators, most children develop confidence in the Family Day Care environment and enjoy participating in the daily experiences and learning opportunities on offer.

Biting

Biting is a behaviour that can occur during early childhood and is often a normal part of development. While it can be upsetting for everyone involved, young children are still learning how to express their feelings, manage emotions and communicate their needs. Biting is not uncommon and is usually a temporary stage.

Children may bite for a variety of reasons, including frustration, limited language skills, tiredness, teething, excitement, seeking sensory input, or difficulty managing strong emotions and social situations.

Our educators respond calmly and consistently to biting incidents, ensuring that the child who has been bitten receives comfort and care while supporting the child who bit to learn more appropriate ways to communicate and interact with others. Educators closely observe children's behaviour to identify possible triggers and implement strategies that reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

Families will be informed if their child has been involved in a biting incident, and educators will work in partnership with families to develop consistent, supportive strategies where needed. Together, we aim to help children build emotional regulation, communication skills and positive relationships in a safe, respectful and nurturing environment.

Play Sessions

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. offers regular play sessions throughout the school terms. Session days, times, locations and activities may vary and will be communicated to families by their educator or the service.

Play sessions provide valuable opportunities for children, educators and families to connect within the wider Family Day Care community. Children participate in engaging, play-based learning experiences that foster confidence, curiosity, belonging and positive relationships while supporting their learning and development.

Educators are encouraged to attend play sessions to collaborate with colleagues, share ideas, reflect on practice and extend their knowledge of high-quality early childhood education. These shared experiences support continuous improvement and enhance the learning opportunities offered within each Family Day Care environment.

Play sessions are planned to support all areas of children's learning and development in line with the Early Years Learning Framework, including:

- Language, literacy and communication
- Social and emotional development
- Gross motor development
- Fine motor development
- Creativity and self-expression
- Early numeracy
- Problem-solving, inquiry and critical thinking
- Connection with others, community and the natural environment

Through meaningful play experiences, children are supported to develop confidence, independence and a lifelong love of learning while working towards the outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework.

Outings and Excursions

Outings and excursions provide valuable opportunities for children to explore their community, develop a sense of belonging and extend their learning through real-world experiences. Educators plan outings that are meaningful, age-appropriate and responsive to children's interests, abilities and developmental needs.

Before any excursion or outing, educators complete a thorough risk assessment and obtain written permission from parents or guardians. All transportation arrangements are carefully planned and conducted in accordance with service policies, safety requirements and relevant regulations to ensure children's health, safety and wellbeing.

Educators are encouraged to provide children with regular opportunities to engage with the wider community through experiences such as visits to parks, play sessions, local walks, community activities, shopping experiences or social gatherings. These

experiences support children's confidence, independence, social connections and understanding of the world around them.

Families are encouraged to discuss any questions, preferences or considerations with their educator to support positive and inclusive experiences for every child.

Transport Policy

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to ensuring that any transportation of children is conducted safely, responsibly and in accordance with legislative requirements and service policies.

Educators take all necessary precautions to ensure children's safety and wellbeing when travelling. Any private vehicle used to transport children in care must be appropriately maintained and undergo regular safety checks to ensure it is safe and suitable for use.

Written permission from parents or guardians is obtained when a child commences care for routine transport arrangements, such as attendance at play sessions, school or preschool drop-off and collection, or other regular community outings.

Families will be informed of planned transport arrangements, and educators will ensure that all children are safely secured using appropriate child restraints and supervised throughout the journey in line with current safety requirements.

The safety, comfort and wellbeing of children remain the priority during all transportation experiences.

CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to providing and maintaining a child safe environment where every child and young person is protected from harm, treated with dignity and respect, and supported to learn, grow and thrive.

We recognise that all children have the right to feel safe, be listened to, participate in decisions that affect them, and receive high-quality education and care in an environment that promotes their health, wellbeing and development. We are dedicated to upholding the rights of children and responding promptly, appropriately and effectively to any concerns about their safety or wellbeing.

We acknowledge the vital role that educators, staff, volunteers, families and the broader community play in creating a safe, inclusive and respectful environment. Everyone connected with our service shares responsibility for safeguarding children, raising concerns where necessary, and contributing to a strong culture of child safety and protection.

To support this commitment, all educators and any permanent residents aged 18 years and over living in an educator's residence must hold a current Working with Children

Clearance (Ochre Card) and complete all required criminal history screening in accordance with Northern Territory legislation and service requirements.

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to continuously strengthening its child safe practices by embedding safeguarding into everyday operations, valuing and respecting children's voices, and ensuring all children feel safe, supported, included and empowered.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. recognises that children's behaviour is a form of communication and reflects their individual development, experiences, emotions, needs, culture and relationships. Educators support children to develop self-regulation, confidence, resilience and positive ways of interacting with others through respectful and responsive relationships.

Our approach to behaviour guidance is flexible and responsive to each child's individual needs, abilities and circumstances. Educators use positive guidance strategies that encourage children’s sense of agency, independence and responsibility while supporting them to understand emotions, solve problems and develop respectful relationships.

Educators focus on building secure, trusting relationships and creating environments where children feel valued, understood and supported. Through modelling, intentional teaching, clear expectations, empathy and consistent responses, children are guided towards positive choices and social behaviours.

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. does not support or tolerate any form of physical punishment, verbal abuse, humiliation, intimidation, threats or any practice that causes harm, fear or distress to children. All children have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and understanding at all times.

Educators work collaboratively with families to ensure behaviour guidance strategies are culturally responsive, consistent and supportive of each child's wellbeing, learning and development.

HOME SAFETY AND HYGIENE

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. recognises that a safe, clean and hygienic environment is essential in providing high-quality education and care that promotes children's health, wellbeing and learning.

Educators are responsible for maintaining a home environment that supports children's safety, comfort and participation. This includes implementing effective hygiene practices and ensuring appropriate health and safety measures are followed in areas

such as food preparation and storage, toileting and personal care routines, cleaning practices, toy and equipment maintenance, and interactions with household pets.

Family Day Care environments are designed to provide welcoming, secure and engaging spaces where children can explore, play and learn while risks are identified, assessed and appropriately managed.

A Home Safety Inspection is completed before an educator becomes registered with Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. and is reviewed annually in accordance with the Educator Agreement and service requirements. Ongoing safety checks and discussions also occur during regular visits from the Coordination Unit to support continuous improvement, compliance and the provision of quality education and care.

NUTRITION

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. recognises that nutritious food and positive mealtime experiences play an important role in supporting children's health, wellbeing, learning and development.

Food provided to children will be fresh, varied and nutritious, incorporating a range of food groups in line with current healthy eating guidelines and the individual dietary, cultural and health needs of children. Educators support children to develop healthy eating habits by creating relaxed and enjoyable mealtime experiences where children can explore different foods, develop independence and build positive relationships with food.

Mealtimes are viewed as valuable opportunities for social connection, conversation and learning. Children are encouraged to participate in age-appropriate food preparation, serving and decision-making experiences, supporting skills such as confidence, independence, cooperation and an understanding of healthy choices.

Food will never be used as a reward, punishment or behaviour management strategy. Children will be supported to develop a positive relationship with food through respectful, responsive and inclusive practices.

MEDICATION

Where a child requires medication to be administered while attending care, parents or authorised nominees must provide written authorisation before any medication can be given. Medication must be supplied in its original container, clearly labelled with the child's name, and include the pharmacist's label or manufacturer's instructions showing the prescribed dosage and administration directions. Medication will only be administered to the child for whom it has been prescribed or supplied.

Families are encouraged to discuss their child's medication requirements with their educator to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place.

A Medication Record must be completed and signed by the parent or authorised nominee prior to the administration of medication, except in emergency situations as permitted under the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The educator will record each administration of medication in accordance with service policies and regulatory requirements.

Medical Conditions (Asthma, Allergies, Diabetes and Other Health Conditions)

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to supporting the safe inclusion of children with diagnosed medical conditions. The effective management of medical conditions is a shared responsibility between families, educators and the service to ensure all reasonable precautions are taken to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of every child.

Parents or authorised nominees are required to advise the educator and the service at the time of enrolment, or as soon as a medical condition is diagnosed, if their child has a diagnosed medical condition, including asthma, an allergy, diabetes, epilepsy or any other condition requiring ongoing management. Families must provide a current Medical Management Plan completed by the child's registered medical practitioner, along with any prescribed medication and emergency equipment required for the child's care.

A child with a diagnosed medical condition cannot commence or continue attending the service until all required documentation, including a current Medical Management Plan, has been provided and the service is able to safely support the child's medical needs in accordance with legislative requirements.

SUNSMART

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to protecting children, educators and visitors from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiation. We promote safe outdoor experiences by implementing SunSmart practices that reduce the risk of skin damage while encouraging children to enjoy outdoor play in a safe and healthy environment.

To support children's health and wellbeing, educators will:

- Ensure children wear a broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat that shades the face, neck and ears whenever they are outdoors.
- Encourage children without an appropriate hat to play in shaded areas or other sun-protected environments until suitable sun protection is available.
- Plan outdoor learning experiences to make the best use of shaded areas and, where possible, minimise prolonged outdoor activities during periods of peak UV radiation.

- Encourage and model SunSmart behaviours by wearing sun-protective clothing, a suitable hat, sunglasses (where appropriate), applying SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, and seeking shade whenever possible.
- Apply SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen supplied by the family to children as required and in accordance with the family's authorisation.
- Incorporate learning experiences into the educational program that help children understand the importance of sun protection and developing lifelong SunSmart habits.
- Regularly promote and reinforce SunSmart practices through family communication, newsletters, noticeboards and educator information.

At enrolment, families will be:

- Informed of the service's SunSmart practices.
- Asked to provide a suitable sun-protective hat for their child.
- Asked to supply SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for their child's use, where required.
- Encouraged to dress their child in lightweight, sun-protective clothing that covers the shoulders and upper body whenever possible.

WATER SAFETY

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to providing a safe environment for children by implementing effective water safety practices and ensuring children are actively supervised whenever they are near or involved in water-based activities.

Educators may provide water play experiences, including the use of sprinklers, hoses and shallow paddling pools, where these activities are developmentally appropriate and children are under constant active supervision at all times. Water levels in paddling pools must remain shallow and must not exceed the knee height of the smallest child participating.

Children will not participate in swimming or other aquatic activities without prior written authorisation from a parent or authorised nominee. Educators must comply with all service policies, risk assessment requirements and regulatory obligations, including maintaining a 1:1 educator-to-child ratio during swimming activities.

Water safety extends beyond planned water play and includes identifying and managing all potential water hazards within the education and care environment. Educators ensure that nappy buckets, baths, ponds, water containers, outdoor areas, messy play experiences involving water, and any other water sources are appropriately supervised, managed or secured to minimise risk and protect children's safety at all times.

EXCLUSION OF UNWELL CHILDREN

Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. is committed to reducing the spread of infectious illnesses and maintaining a healthy environment for all children, educators and families. As young children are more susceptible to infections and spend time in close contact with others, illnesses can spread easily within education and care settings.

Families play an important role in protecting the health of all children by keeping unwell children at home and informing their educator of any suspected or confirmed illness, infectious disease or medical diagnosis. Educators are unable to provide the level of care required for children who are unwell while also meeting the needs of other children in care.

If families are unsure whether their child is well enough to attend care, they should discuss their child's symptoms with their educator and refer to the current **Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services** guidelines published by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

The following procedures apply:

- If a child becomes unwell while attending care, the parent or authorised nominee will be contacted and required to collect the child as soon as practicable.
- Educators will document all incidents of illness and complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record in accordance with legislative requirements.
- Children may return to care once they are well enough to participate in the program and any recommended exclusion period has ended, in accordance with the NHMRC *Staying Healthy* guidelines.
- Decisions regarding the exclusion and return of a child will be made by the educator, in consultation with the service where required, to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and minimise the spread of infectious diseases.

CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS

Where there are court orders, parenting orders, parenting plans or other legal arrangements relating to a child's care, the parent or legal guardian is responsible for providing the service with current copies of all relevant documentation at the time of enrolment or as soon as any changes occur. The service will ensure the educator is informed of any legal requirements that affect the child's care or collection arrangements.

In the absence of current legal documentation restricting a person's access to a child, the service and educators are required to act in accordance with the information and

authorisations provided on the child's enrolment record. Educators cannot refuse a parent or authorised person access to a child unless a valid court order or other legally enforceable document is provided that limits or prohibits that access.

DIGITAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

At Alice Springs Family Day Care Inc. (ASFDC), we recognise that digital technology and media are part of everyday life and can provide opportunities for children to explore, learn and develop new skills. However, young children benefit most from hands-on experiences, active play, meaningful interactions and opportunities to engage with the world around them.

Educators are encouraged to prioritise play-based learning, physical activity, social interactions, creativity and exploration. Where digital media and technology are used, they must be age-appropriate, purposeful and support children's learning and development.

Use of Digital Media

Digital devices, including televisions, tablets, computers and other electronic equipment, may be used as part of the educational program where they provide meaningful learning opportunities. Educators are expected to:

- Ensure digital content is age-appropriate, suitable and educational.
- Actively supervise children when they are accessing digital media.
- Ensure screen-based activities do not replace opportunities for physical activity, outdoor play, rest, social interaction or hands-on learning.
- Follow current recommendations regarding screen time for young children.
- Ensure children are protected from inappropriate content, advertising and unsafe online environments.

Screen Time

ASFDC encourages Educators to minimise sedentary screen time and provide a healthy balance of experiences throughout the day. Screen time should be purposeful and limited, taking into consideration children's ages, developmental needs and individual circumstances.

Digital Images and Privacy

The privacy, safety and dignity of children are a priority at ASFDC. The taking, storage, use and sharing of photographs and videos of children must comply with the service's policies and procedures, including requirements for family consent and the protection of children's personal information.

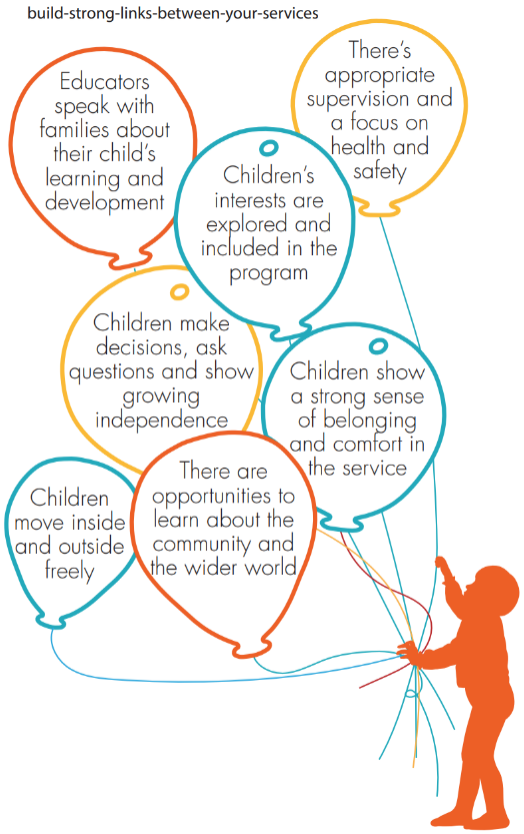
Families are asked to respect the privacy of all children attending Family Day Care and must not photograph, record or share images or videos of other children.

For further information about the use of digital devices, screen time, photography and children's privacy, please refer to the relevant ASFDC policies and procedures.

Quality Childcare and Education Checklist

Choosing an education and care service is an important decision for every family. You want your child to be in an environment where they feel safe, happy, respected and supported to learn, grow and thrive. At the same time, the service should meet your family's needs by providing quality care that is accessible, reliable and responsive.

The Australian Government's **Starting Blocks** website (www.startingblocks.gov.au) provides helpful information for families about choosing quality early childhood education and care.



When visiting an educator or considering family day care, the following checklist may help you identify indicators of a high-quality education and care environment.

A Safe and Healthy Environment

Look for evidence that the environment is safe, clean and well maintained, including:

- Clean, welcoming and comfortable indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Toys, equipment and furniture that are safe and in good condition.
- Medicines, cleaning products and other hazardous substances stored securely and out of children's reach.
- Appropriate safety features such as safety gates, covered power points and working smoke alarms.

- Emergency contact information and procedures readily available.
- Current emergency and evacuation plans displayed and regularly practised.
- Effective hygiene practices, including regular handwashing by educators and children.
- Safe food preparation, storage and hygiene practices.

A Stimulating Learning Environment

Look for evidence that children are actively engaged in meaningful learning experiences, including:

- A variety of interesting, age-appropriate toys, materials and equipment.
- Books and literacy resources that are easily accessible.
- Spaces for active play, quiet play, rest, creativity and exploration.
- Opportunities for child-led play, investigation and discovery, supported by intentional teaching.
- Daily opportunities for outdoor play and learning.
- An educator who can explain how the educational program supports children's learning and development across all developmental areas.
- A program planned using the **Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)** and/or **My Time, Our Place** where applicable.

Positive Relationships and Behaviour Guidance

Look for evidence that children are treated with respect and supported to develop positive relationships by an educator who:

- Responds sensitively to children's feelings and individual needs.
- Uses positive, respectful and age-appropriate behaviour guidance strategies.
- Supports children to solve problems, negotiate and resolve conflicts.
- Models kindness, empathy and respectful communication.
- Encourages children to develop confidence, independence, a positive sense of identity and respect for diversity and culture.

Consistent Routines

Look for evidence that daily routines support children's wellbeing and sense of security, including:

- A warm and welcoming arrival each day.
- Calm and enjoyable meal and snack times.
- Rest and sleep routines that are relaxed and responsive to individual needs.
- Predictable routines balanced with flexibility to meet children's interests and wellbeing.
- Opportunities for both active and quiet play throughout the day.

Strong Partnerships with Families

Look for evidence that the educator values families as partners in children's learning by:

- Maintaining regular, open and respectful communication.
- Sharing information about children's learning, wellbeing and daily experiences.
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment.
- Working collaboratively with families to resolve concerns and support children's development.

Professional Practice

Look for evidence that the educator demonstrates professionalism by:

- Maintaining accurate and organised records.
- Demonstrating current knowledge of children's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Respecting the privacy and confidentiality of children and families.
- Providing a well-planned educational program that reflects children's interests, strengths and learning outcomes.
- Participating in ongoing professional learning and continuous quality improvement.

Quality early childhood education is built on safe environments, positive relationships, meaningful learning experiences and strong partnerships with families. Choosing an educator who demonstrates these qualities will help provide your child with the best possible start to their learning journey.

Thank you for choosing Alice Springs Family Day Care to support your child's early learning and care journey.

We value the trust families place in our service and are committed to providing a welcoming, safe and nurturing home-based education and care environment. We welcome and appreciate constructive feedback from families, as it helps us continue to improve and strengthen our service.

Our educators are valued members of our community, and we are committed to supporting their ongoing professional growth, learning and development. Families are encouraged to communicate openly with us and share any feedback, questions or suggestions at any time.

We look forward to being part of your child's early years experience and hope that your family enjoys a positive, meaningful and rewarding journey with Alice Springs Family Day Care.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Your first step into Early Childhood Education and Care
StartingBlocks.gov.au I Early Childhood Education & Care

Staying healthy in Childcare 6th edition
Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services - 6th Edition

Early Childhood Australia
Parent Resources - Early Childhood Australia

Care for Kids – The importance of good routine at home and at day care
The importance of good routines at home and in child care (careforkids.com.au)

Policies and Procedures
www.asfdc.org.au

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
ACECQA

Quality Education and Care NT - QECNT
Quality Education and Care NT | Department of Education