

VISITORS TO FAMILY DAY CARE RESIDENCES AND VENUES WHILE EDUCATION AND CARE IS BEING PROVIDED TO CHILDREN AS PART OF A FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE POLICY GUIDELINES

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for visitors to family day care (FDC) residences and approved venues while education and care is being provided to children (Regulation 169).

The approved provider must take all reasonable steps to ensure that a record is kept of all visitors to a FDC residence or approved venue. The record must include the visitor's signature and time of arrival and departure. (Regulation 165)

The approved provider must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that children at the residence or approved venue are not left alone with a visitor (Regulation 166).

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, education and care services must have policies and procedures in place in relation to visitors to FDC residences and approved venues. These guidelines are part of a series and are intended to assist in the development of your *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy*. They have been designed to guide you in the development of your policy and are not an exact format.

1. Title

Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy

2. Policy statement

The policy statement will reflect your service's philosophy about managing visitors to FDC residences and approved venues.

For example:

We value the opportunities afforded by visitors to our service. During visits, safeguards are in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the children.

3. Background

Your policy needs to include a statement of why this requirement is in place.

For example, the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require policies and procedures to be in place in relation to visitors to FDC residences and approved venues.

There are a range of benefits from having visitors to FDC residences and approved venues. For example:

- Families looking to enrol their children are afforded an opportunity to meet the educator, learn about the educational program, and view the premises.
- Community members can contribute to the educational program, such as through story or music.

- Other FDC educators and children provide an opportunity for the children at the service to build relationships with their peers and for the FDC educator to meet with and learn from their colleagues.
- Coordinators support the educator in continuous improvement.

However, to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the children, visitors must not be left alone with the children while at the service, and a record must be kept with their details.

4. Legislative requirements

Your policy must be consistent with and refer to legislative requirements for visitors to FDC residences and venues. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Section 170	Offence relating to unauthorised persons on education and care service premises
Section 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
Reg 165	Record of visitors
Reg 166	Children not to be alone with visitors
Reg 169	Additional policies and procedures – family day care service
Reg 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Reg 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Reg 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Reg 178	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by family day care educator

When writing your policy, you will need to break down what is required under each Regulation and how your service will meet these requirements. How these work in practice will be contained in your procedures.

As you reflect on your *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy*, it might highlight the need to split its various areas into different policies and procedures. These can then be readily accessed by all FDC educators and staff members to follow in relation to your service’s philosophy and their roles and responsibilities.

5. Principles to inform your policy

All decision-making should be carried out in accordance with the principles of your service’s *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy*. Examples of principles could include, but are not limited to:

- We welcome visitors and acknowledge the benefits this affords them, the FDC educators, families and children.
- The health, safety and wellbeing of the children is our priority. We ensure that a record is kept of any visitors and that they are not left alone with children.
- We value the important role played by our coordinators, FDC educators, FDC educator assistants and other staff. They are provided with the necessary training and support in relation to the requirements regarding visitors.

6. Key terms

To make it easier for your audience, provide definitions of key terms that may not be used every day. For example:

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	
Approved FDC venue	A place (other than a residence) approved by a regulatory authority under section 50A or 54(8A) as an FDC venue for an approved FDC service.	National Law (Definitions)
Authorised person	An authorised person is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a person who holds a current working with children check - a parent or family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by the service or the FDC educator - an authorised nominee of a parent or family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by the service or the FDC educator - an emergency, medical personnel or emergency service personnel - a person who is permitted under the relevant jurisdictional working with children law to remain at the service premises without holding a working with children check. 	National Law (Section 170)
FDC residence	A residence at which an FDC educator educates and cares for children as part of an FDC service.	National Law (Definitions)
FDC resident	Any person aged 18 years or over who resides, or intends to reside, at the educator’s FDC residence.	National Law (Regulation 164)
Visitor	Includes all persons who do not normally reside in a FDC residence or approved venue. A visitor may in some cases be an unauthorised person. Examples: Coordinators, gardeners, FDC educators’ children’s teenage friends and inclusion support workers.	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/faqnqflead.aspx#link76
Working with children check (WWCC)	A notice, certificate or other document granted to, or with respect to, a person under a working with children law to the effect that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the person has been assessed as suitable to work with children; or (b) there has been no information that if the person worked with children the person would pose a risk to the children; or (c) the person is not prohibited from attempting to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment. 	

7. Links to other policies

Refer to related policies and procedures, for example:

- Assessment of FDC educators, FDC educator assistants and persons residing at FDC residence
- Monitoring, support and supervision of FDC educators
- Providing a child safe environment
- Governance and management of the service

8. Induction and ongoing training

State information about induction training and frequency of ongoing training and information sharing to assist managers, coordinators, FDC educators and staff to fulfil their roles effectively.

9. Policy created/reviewed

Include the date the policy was created, reviewed or changes were made.

10. Monitoring, evaluation and review

State when the policy will be reviewed and who will be responsible for this.

11. Checklist

- Have you referenced the relevant Regulations and are these reflected in the policy?
- Does the title provide a clear and concise statement identifying the intent of the policy?
- Have you checked the policy requirements and referenced related legislation that applies to your service type?
- Does your policy statement provide a framework for decision-making and ensure consistent practice?
- Does your policy statement reflect your service philosophy?
- Is it clear why this policy exists?

VISITORS TO FAMILY DAY CARE RESIDENCES AND VENUES WHILE EDUCATION AND CARE IS BEING PROVIDED TO CHILDREN AS PART OF A FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE PROCEDURES GUIDELINES

The approved provider must ensure the service has procedures in place in relation to visitors to family day care (FDC) residences and approved venues.

A record of visitors must be kept and visitors must not be left alone with children while at the residence or approved venue.

The steps and guidelines you document in your procedures will not only guide your practice, but also inform regulatory authorities of FDC educator and staff expectations and responsibilities.

Your procedures should be written in clear and concise language, making them easy to read, understand and implement.

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, education and care services must have policies and procedures in place in relation to visitors to FDC residences and approved venues. These guidelines are part of a series and are intended to assist in the development of your *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children procedures*. They have been designed to guide you in the development of your procedures and are not an exact format.

1. Title

Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children procedures

2. Reference to policy and philosophy

Here you refer to your *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy* as seen in your policy documents. You can reference where you will find the policy to help those looking for it.

Your procedures will also reflect your service's overall philosophy, *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy*, and evidence-based quality practice guidelines for visitors to FDC residences and approved venues

3. Procedures

This is where you detail the way you will implement the *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy*.

It is the 'How to' in your service and includes specific step-by-step procedures for managing visitors to FDC residences and approved venues.

Some areas that will be outlined here will include:

- where the procedures will be kept
- when they were last reviewed
- templates and documents that might be required and/or used as a part of the procedures
- systems to monitor the implementation of the procedures.

As you reflect on your Visitors to *FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy*, it might highlight the need to split its various areas into different procedures, which will be displayed or accessed by all staff to follow in relation to their actions.

4. Roles and responsibilities

This is where you will designate specific roles and responsibilities for the people who hold different positions within your service. This needs to align with the Regulations.

It is important to note that it is the legal responsibility of approved providers to ensure systems are in place to minimise risk and ensure health and safety procedures are implemented by the responsible people in services. Ultimate responsibility lies with the approved provider to ensure their service/s are meeting the requirements under the National Quality Framework.

When developing this section consider:

- What are the roles and responsibilities of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinators, FDC educators or other staff in your service in relation to visitors to FDC residences and venues?
 - How will you clearly define these roles and expectations and where will it be documented?
 - Why are clear and robust procedures for visitors to FDC residences and approved venues important for children's safety and wellbeing?
 - How will you learn from the administration of these procedures to improve your practices?
 - How will you ensure that the necessary tools are available so the approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinators, FDC educators and other staff members can follow the procedures? How will they be made aware of the procedures?
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An example of roles and responsibilities could include, but is not limited to:

Roles	Responsibilities
Approved provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that obligations under the <i>Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations</i> are met • ensure that a record is kept of all visitors to a FDC residence or approved venue, including their signature and time of arrival and departure (Regulation 165) • ensure that children at the residence or approved venue are not left alone with a visitor (Regulation 166) • take reasonable steps to ensure that the nominated supervisor, coordinators, FDC educators, FDC educator assistants, staff and volunteers follow the <i>Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy and procedures</i> • ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, FDC educators, FDC educator assistants, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection • notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or - significantly impact the service’s education and care of children or - significantly impact the family’s ability to utilise the service
Nominated supervisor/ Responsible person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to visitors to FDC residences and approved venues • ensure that the record of visitors is kept • ensure that children are not left alone with a visitor
Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform FDC educators of their responsibilities in relation to visitors at FDC residences and approved venues • monitor, support and supervise FDC educators in relation to visitors at FDC residences and approved venues
FDC educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must be aware of and follow the <i>Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy and procedures</i> • ensure that the record of visitors is kept, it includes visitors’ signatures and time of arrival and departure, is accurate, and is made available to a child’s family on request (Regulation 178) • ensure that children are not left alone with a visitor • ensure that visitors are fit to be in the presence of the children • ensure that visitors do not negatively impact the educational program • prepare children and families for the visitor

The following table will assist you in developing procedures specific to your needs and context. Referring to the Regulations when you are writing your procedures will assist you to ensure that you are meeting your obligations.

Areas to include in your procedures	Things to consider and outline in each area <i>(this will be specific to the context of your service)</i>	Strategies for monitoring and implementing procedures	Related policy and/or procedures
<p>Responsibilities in relation to visitors</p> <p>Leg: s170, s175</p> <p>Reg: 165, 166, 169-172, 178</p> <p>QA1</p> <p>QA2: 2.2</p> <p>QA4</p> <p>QA5</p> <p>QA6</p> <p>QA7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether anything beyond the signature and time of arrival and departure could be included in the record of visitors, e.g. if needed, sighting identification to ensure the visitor is who they say they are • Where to keep the record of visitors, noting the need for easy access and any privacy considerations • What processes are needed to ensure that children are not left alone with visitors • How best to inform FDC educators of their responsibilities in relation to visitors at FDC residences and approved venues • How coordinators can effectively monitor, support and supervise FDC educators in relation to visitors at FDC residences and approved venues • Ways to ensure that visitors are fit to be in the presence of the children • Ways to ensure that visitors do not negatively impact the educational program • Ways to prepare children and families for the visitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your policy and procedures are available for all to access • Ensure procedures are part of coordinator and FDC educator induction training, and regularly reviewed at team meetings • Allocate time for coordinators to support FDC educators with these procedures • Ensure a check of the record of visitors is part of coordinator support visits • Consider having coordinators role model appropriate visitor supervision practices during support visits 	<p>Assessment of FDC educators, FDC educator assistants and persons residing at FDC residence</p> <p>Monitoring, support and supervision of FDC educators</p> <p>Providing a child safe environment</p> <p>Governance and management of the service</p>

5. Procedures created/reviewed

Include the date the procedures were created or reviewed.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

Your service, in consultation with the nominated supervisor, coordinators, FDC educators, families and other stakeholders, should review the effectiveness of these procedures within a set timeframe or earlier if there is a change in relevant legislation.

State when the procedures will be reviewed and who will be responsible for this.

7. Checklist

- Do the procedures align with your *Visitors to FDC residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children policy*?
 - Have your procedures been written in plain English and can they be easily implemented by a nominated supervisor, coordinator, FDC educator or FDC educator assistant new to your service?
 - Is it clear who is responsible for the implementation of the procedures?
 - Are all coordinators, FDC educators and FDC educator assistants aware of the procedures and can implement them if required?
 - Do you need to develop any resources to monitor and record the procedures?
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Useful Resources

Include links to useful resources that have helped inform the development of your policy. In addition, be mindful of the existence of any state- or territory-specific content.

Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Family day care approved provider compliance responsibilities – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/22851>
- Family day care educator compliance responsibilities – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/22856>
- Family day care nominated supervisor compliance responsibilities – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/22861>
- Guide to the National Quality Framework – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide>
- Record keeping in family day care services – <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/25926>