



Community Child Care  
Copy

# COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP QUALITY RATING SYSTEM

# CHECKLIST FOR CENTRE BASED CHILD CARE

1999

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

*[Signature]* (for the ACCC)

11 / 4 / 3

# THE COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP CHECKLIST

## 1. CENTRE INFORMATION

THIS FIRST SECTION OF THE CHECKLIST IS CONCERNED WITH BASIC DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS CENTRE AND THE LOCALITY.

Name of centre .....

Address of centre .....

.....

Telephone number (03) .....

Name of Coordinator/Director or senior staff member (*who does the daily coordinating of the actual centre*)

.....

Who is the licensee of this centre? (*The holder of the licence to operate the service.*)

.....

.....

How long has this centre been in operation? .....

Some centres belong to a group or cluster of centres with a Manager/Coordinator who undertakes the overall management of this centre and other centres?

Is this true of this centre? YES  NO

If YES, name of this Manager/Coordinator .....

1.1 Does this centre provide places for any particular company or workplace? YES  NO

1.1.1 If YES, how many places?

Comments .....

1.2 Type of service (*tick as appropriate*)

long day care       occasional care       sessional kindergarten

other (*please describe*) .....

.....

**2. OWNERSHIP, BELONGING AND LINKS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

THIS SECTION OF THE CHECKLIST FOCUSES ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THIS CENTRE DEVELOPS COMMUNITY NETWORKS AND PROVIDES A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP AND BELONGING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WHO USE ITS SERVICES.

**2.1 Does this centre have policies and programs which make staff and children aware of cultural diversity?** *(Tick appropriate box.)* YES  NO

**2.2 Does this centre have information available in any languages other than English?** *(Tick appropriate box.)* YES  NO

**2.3 Is information about this centre available to parents who have literacy problems?** *(Tick appropriate box.)* YES  NO

If YES, in what form? .....

.....

.....

.....

**2.4 Does this centre have the brochures of other relevant local services available to parents?** YES  NO

**2.5 Does this centre have an arrangement with the local Maternal and Child Health nurses to provide a service from the centre?** YES  NO

Comment:.....

.....

.....

**2.6 Does this centre have any arrangement with any other health or support service to provide a service to parents and/or children in this centre?** YES  NO

If YES, please describe:.....

.....

.....

.....

2.14 How often do local people, who are not parents, have opportunities to visit this centre and meet with the children? (eg. the mayor, police, community members with a special skill or interest.) *(Tick appropriate box.)*

- never
- occasionally - two or three times a year
- regularly - every month or so
- often - every couple of weeks

2.15 How often do children from this centre take part in community events or festivals? (eg. street festival, mothers day events, art show, or event in the local shopping centre.) *(Tick appropriate box.)*

- never
- occasionally - two or three times a year
- regularly - every month or so
- often - every couple of weeks

3.5 In general, how often do parents visit this centre informally? (just drop in for one reason or another.) (Tick appropriate box.)

- never
- occasionally - two or three times a year
- regularly - every month or so
- often - every couple of weeks
- almost every day

3.6 How often do other family members, such as grandparents, formally visit this centre? (eg for a children's concert or special day.)

(Tick appropriate box.)

- never
- occasionally - two or three times a year
- regularly - every month or so
- often - every couple of weeks

3.7 How often do other family members, such as grandparents, informally visit this centre? (Tick appropriate box.)

- never
- occasionally - two or three times a year
- regularly - every month or so
- often - every couple of weeks
- almost every day

3.8 How often do family members, such as grandparents have the opportunity to contribute to the work of this centre? (eg helping out with children, going on excursions, making toys and equipment.)

(Tick appropriate box.)

- never
- occasionally - two or three times a year
- regularly - every month or so
- often - every couple of weeks

4.6 Is there a procedure for parents and interested members of the community to contribute to the policy directions of this centre? (Other than on the Management Committee) (Tick appropriate box.)

YES  NO

If YES, please describe briefly how this is done: .....

.....

.....

4.7 How do you rate the financial administration of this centre?

(Tick appropriate box.)

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Needing improvement
- Poor

4.8 To whom is the coordinator/director of this centre financially accountable?

.....

.....

4.9 How do you rate the management of personnel in this centre?

(Tick appropriate box.)

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Needing improvement
- Poor

4.10 Approximately, what percentage of parents attend the Annual General Meeting? \_\_\_\_\_ %

Is there a complaints or grievance procedure in place which is known to the parents?

YES  NO

Comment:.....

.....

.....

Group five: number of children

age range of children ----- to -----

Any comments: .....  
.....  
.....

Group six: number of children

age range of children ----- to -----

Any comments: .....  
.....  
.....

Group seven: number of children

age range of children ----- to -----

Any comments: .....  
.....  
.....

Group eight: number of children

age range of children ----- to -----

Any comments: .....  
.....  
.....

Group nine: number of children

age range of children ----- to -----

Any comments: .....  
.....  
.....

Group ten: number of children

age range of children ----- to -----

Any comments: .....  
.....  
.....

5.5.2 The following questions apply only to centres that have higher ratios for under threes than required by regulation. (Others skip to 3 to 5s section.)

*Please enter the appropriate number of hours below as accurately as you can.*

If the staff/child ratio for under 3s is higher than required by the regulations, by how many hours is it higher per week?

hours

If the qualified staff/child ratio for under 3s is higher than required by the regulations, by how many hours is it higher per week?

hours

### 5.5.3 Three to fives

*(Tick all boxes where the statement about the staff/child ratio applies to this centre.)*

This centre:

meets state regulations for the staff/child ratio for 3 to 5s

has a higher staff/child ratio for 3 to 5s than regulatory requirements

meets state regulations for the qualified staff/child ratio for 3 to 5s

has a higher qualified staff/child ratio for 3 to 5s than regulatory requirements

5.5.4 The following questions apply only to centres that have higher ratios for 3 to 5s than required by regulation. (Others skip to staff qualifications and training.)

*(Please enter the appropriate number of hours as accurately as possible.)*

If the staff/child ratio for 3 to 5s is higher than required by the regulations, by how many hours is it higher per week?

hours

If the qualified staff/child ratio for 3 to 5s is higher than required by the regulations, by how many hours is it higher per week?

hours

### 5.6 Staff relationships with children

5.6.1 To what extent is the importance of "attachment" to children acknowledged in this centre? *(Tick appropriate box.)*

- not at all
- a little
- to a large degree
- totally

5.6.2 To what extent is the continuity of the relationship between particular staff and children taken into account in the organisation of this centre? *(Tick appropriate box.)*

- not at all
- a little
- to a large degree
- totally



5.7.3 How many staff have qualifications other than those related to early childhood?

Please list these other qualifications below:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**5.8 Staff development over the past year.** *(Please enter appropriate number in box.)*

5.8.1 Over the past year how many training course has the coordinator/director of the centre attended?

5.8.2 Over the past year how many staff development training courses have been attended by qualified staff?

5.8.3 Over the past year how many staff development training courses have been attended by unqualified staff?

**5.9 Other staff skills**

5.9.1 What languages, other than English, are spoken by staff at the centre?

Please list the languages below:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5.9.2 If any staff member speaks a language other than English, do they use this language at the centre? *(Tick appropriate box.)*

YES

NO

5.10.3 Over the last two years, how would you describe the stability of staffing at this centre? (Tick appropriate box.)

- very stable
- fairly stable
- becoming unstable
- fairly unstable
- very unstable

Comments: .....

.....

.....

**5.11 Staff membership of professional organisations**

5.11.1 Does the Coordinator/Director belong to any professional organisations? YES  NO

If yes, please indicate which: .....

.....

.....

5.11.2 How many staff members belong to a professional organisation?

Please list organisations below:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

6.4 What measures are taken at this centre to ensure that parents from non-English speaking backgrounds are able to make their needs known and to consult about their children?

Please comment briefly: .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

6.5 What measures are taken at this centre to ensure that parents from non-English speaking backgrounds are able to participate in activities?

Please comment briefly: .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

6.6 Does this centre have a policy and processes in place to ensure confidentiality of information about children and families? *(Tick appropriate box.)*

YES  NO

6.7 Are there any processes in place which enable parents to contribute ideas and make contributions to the centre even if they are not on the management committee? *(Tick appropriate box.)*

YES  NO

If yes, please describe briefly: .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



# 9. THE CHECKLIST

Who was involved in filling in this checklist? (Tick all boxes that apply)

- coordinator/director of this centre
- manager/coordinator for this and other centres/services
- staff
- parents
- management committee
- other (please describe:)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

9.1 Approximately how long did it take to fill in this checklist?

hours

---

Please take this checklist to your next Management Committee meeting for parents to comment on and make any suggestions for change. When this has been done please ask the Chair of the committee to sign and date below.

Signature of Management Committee Chair:.....

Date .....

Please place the completed checklist in the stamped and addressed envelope provided and return it to:

Community Child Care  
Level 1, 48 High Street  
Northcote 3070

## **GUIDELINES FOR VALIDATOR/ENDORSEER USING COMPLETED CHECKLISTS**

This checklist has been designed to include a range of concepts involved in the notion of 'community': 'access', 'equity', 'participation', 'empowerment', 'support', 'rights', 'trust', 'diversity', 'links and networks', and 'quality'. Good community child care centres network with other services in the community, support and expand the social networks of parents, involve parents in the decision making and policy development, provide support for parents with difficulties and refer them on to other services when necessary, support parenting, are accessible to all parents, acknowledge and support families from all backgrounds, involve the community in the centre and vice versa, and respect the rights of children, parents and staff.

Community owned centres should also be able to show that they are providing good quality care that goes beyond the minimum requirements of the state regulations. Overall they should be able to show that they manage resources so that important aspects of quality are retained although finances may be restricted. They should also be able to demonstrate support for ongoing training and development for staff as an important element of quality.

There are eight sections in the checklist: 1. Centre information; 2. Ownership, belonging and links with the local community; 3. Family links; 4. Management and administration; 5. Quality; 6. Access; 7. Advice and support for parents, and 8. Support for staff. There is a great deal of overlap between the community concepts listed above and each of the sections in this checklist are designed to include one or more of these concepts.

### **Introduction: Choose Community Owned (p.1)**

This page contains information about the concepts involved in community ownership and for filling in the checklist. It is self explanatory.

### **1. Centre Information (p2)**

This section is also self explanatory but gives the basic facts about the centre. However, item 1.4 which asks for a description of the community served by the centre is very important when looking at other sections of the checklist. It will indicate the type of

population using the centre and provide a context for all other information. It should be kept in mind when looking at how other sections are answered.

## **2. Ownership, belonging and links with the local community (p4)**

2.1 The centre should have policies which make children aware of cultural diversity even if it is not in an ethnically or socio-economically diverse location and community.

This section provides the opportunity for the centre to show the extent to which they consider all aspects of diversity including children with special needs, links with other services through availability of brochures etc. and information in community languages etc. Most centres in the pilots indicated that they dealt with literacy problems verbally. This may require some mention on a visit as they be unaware of some problems.

## **3. Family Links (p7)**

This section indicates the extent to which parents and members of the extended family are involved both formally and informally in the centre and centre activities. There should be sufficient evidence of both for you to be satisfied. Where children are involved and catered for at centre functions for parents this is a plus.

## **4. Management and administration (p9)**

This section links also with other sections of the checklist including 5. Quality and 8. Advice and Support for Staff. Some of the questions are factual and others require judgement.

Centres in hospitals, universities and some other institutions may have advisory committees rather than advisory committees although they are considered community owned. Check to see that they are not for profit if unsure and check to see how they answer question 4.8 about financial accountability.

Centres should be able to show that the parents are involved in managing the centre, that there is some stability in the management committee with some parents continuing for more than a year.

Check question 4.9 on the coordinator's view of her management of personnel with answers in section 5. Quality re ratios and staff development over the past year. See if there has been encouragement of training, good management of staff re the ratios and the use of casual staff, and check also 5.6 staff relationships with children to see if staff are managed in ways that encourage them to take into account the 'attachment' needs of children. Also check 8. Advice and Support for Staff to see if staff needs are taken into account, that they have regular staff appraisals and meetings. You should be satisfied that personnel are in fact well managed and may in some cases need to make further enquiries.

## **5. Quality (p 12)**

Questions 5.1 to 5.4 are factual information but should be accurate and give you background knowledge of the centre and its basic organisation.

Questions 5.5 to 5.5.4 are about ratios for the 0 to 3s and the 3s to 5. This is the most difficult section to fill in (the coordinators have been instructed in the introduction that they can write in additional information if necessary) but it is also very important in terms of quality to see if the centre is above the requirements of regulations and by how much and where.

Questions 5.6 to 5.6.4 indicate the way in which children's 'attachment' needs are considered within the organisation of the centre. Children's attachment needs should be a priority in a good quality child care and to be told it is too costly is not good enough. It is a priority to find other ways of managing expenses so that these questions are answered positively.

5.7 Staff qualifications and training and development are indications of an ongoing commitment to quality. The answers to these questions should satisfy you that there is a commitment to training and development in the centre or enquiries should be made why this isn't so.

Staff experience and the stability of staffing in the centre are also indicators of quality. If staff turnover has been high it requires further investigation.

Membership of professional organisations is an indicator of commitment to the profession.

## **6. Access**

This section is concerned with the accessibility of the staff and coordinator/director to parents for consultation and information sharing. You should be satisfied that there are several avenues and that access is available to families from all backgrounds and circumstances.

## **7. Advice and support for parents**

Parents often turn to caregivers in centres for general advice on parenting and specific advice about their child. You should be satisfied this is readily available through several avenues.

## **8. Support for staff**

Respect for staff as individuals, and as professionals with an ongoing career, is an important aspect of staff satisfaction and wellbeing and also of providing a good quality



service. This section is concerned with the way in which staff are supported in their day-to-day working environment.

The answers to these questions should satisfy the validator/endorser that staff are valued and supported. Further enquiries should be made if the answers to these questions are unsatisfactory. This section is also linked to the sections in 5, Quality on staff training and development, and staff turnover and stability. Meeting staff needs is a very important aspect of quality.

### **Overview of completed checklist**

You should be satisfied that the centre is providing good quality in all sections of the checklist. Where you have any queries, whether factual or in regard to quality and community provision, you should make further enquiries when contact is made with the centre.

## **Key Criteria for the Endorser/Validator in the Community Ownership Project**

The endorser is a professional who ascertains if long day care centres meet the standard which qualifies them to use the Community Ownership logo and associated promotional material. This individual is likely to change over time and will not always be the same person. However, it is essential that the endorser, who carries out the half day visits to centres after they have filled in the Community Ownership checklist, has the experience and qualifications that make them suitable for the task.

The following are the necessary criteria for choosing endorsers:

1. A minimum qualification of a Diploma in Early Childhood Studies at a recognised tertiary institution.
2. A minimum of two years experience as a Director/Coordinator of a long day care centre in the not for profit sector.
3. The endorser must be have a commitment to the community child care sector and be respected in the field.

# 17. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR SETTLING DISPUTES

1. The grievance procedure set out in this rule applies to disputes under these rules between:
    - (a) a member and another member; or
    - (b) a member and the Association.
  2. The parties to the dispute must meet and discuss the matter in dispute, and if possible, resolve the dispute within 14 days after the dispute comes to the attention of all of the parties.
  3. If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute at the meeting, or if a party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator.
- 
4. The mediator must be:
    - (a) a person chosen by agreement between the parties; or
    - (b) in the absence of agreement -  
 In the case of a dispute between a member and another member, the Committee of the Association would appoint the mediator.
  5. A member of the Association can be a mediator.
  6. The mediator cannot be a member who is a party to the dispute.
  7. The parties to the dispute must, in good faith, attempt to settle the dispute by mediator.
  8. The mediator, in conducting the mediation must -
    - (a) give the parties to the mediation process every opportunity to be heard; and
    - (b) allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and
    - (c) ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the mediation process.
  9. The mediator must not determine the dispute.
  10. If the mediation does not result in the dispute being resolved, the parties may resolve the dispute in accordance with the Act otherwise at law.