

3 February 2014

Childcare and Early Childhood Learning
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City ACT 2601

Dear Ms Underwood

Subject: Childcare Inquiry Submission - Lake Macquarie Family Day Care

Lake Macquarie City Council has supported Lake Macquarie Family Day Care for 35 years. The service operates as cost neutral to Council and is non-profit. All funds go directly into the operation and support of the service. There are two main funding sources,

- Federal government to assist with the operational costs of the service and
- User levies- family administration levy and educator levy

The service has a strong and consistent record of providing high quality care and quality improvement focus. Under the current National Quality Framework Assessment and Rating System achieved Exceeding National Quality Standards across all seven areas. *Important note: this was achieved whilst operating with a 1:5 ratio for children under school age.*

The service currently supports 86 educators in the provision of high quality education and care to 650 children in the Lake Macquarie and Newcastle area.

Lake Macquarie Family Day Care always places the best interests of children at the forefront of decision-making.

The recent decision by our neighbouring Council Newcastle to devolve their support of family day care is a reminder (very close to home) that family day care services need federal government support to be increased, not reduced in order to remain viable and sustainable. Family day care is the quality education and care service of choice for many families in our community. Attached is a submission summary and recommendations for consideration.

Should you require further information, please contact me on 4921 0149.

Yours faithfully

Jan Morgan
Service Manager
Community Planning Department