

Kaya Wonju Wonju – Hello and Welcome

Welcome to today's recognition and thank you function for the Cockburn Family Day Care Service.

I acknowledge the Whadjup people of the Nyungar Nation the traditional custodians of the land on which we have gathered today, and I pay my respect to their Elders past and present and I extend that respect to First Nation people with us today.

I also acknowledge:

- Mr Daniel Simms, Chief Executive Officer, City of Cockburn;
- Members of the Executive Team and other Members of Staff;
- Educators, Families, Friends and Supporters;
- My wife Patricia;
- Ladies and gentleman, one and all.

The City's Family Day Care service has been running since August 1978, and its strong reputation is entirely due to the care, professionalism, and dedication of our staff and educators.

Families and sector partners consistently recognise the quality of the service; this is because of the work you do every day.

The City has continually received positive feedback from families about the nurturing, personal support we provide.

Our funding body and sector regulators have also acknowledged the high standards and strong compliance achieved by the team.

These recognitions highlight the excellent work staff and educators have delivered over many years.

A farewell morning tea was organised for the educators.

Feedback received at the morning tea from educators was consistently really positive, with educators expressing their genuine fondness of the team and for the quality of support and service provided to them over the many years the service operated.

The sector has shifted significantly, with many new private providers entering the market since 2007.

Only two metropolitan Local Governments in WA still operate FDC: the City of Cockburn and the Shire of Mundaring.

There are now 30 approved Family Day Care providers statewide, giving families and educators many options.

The Family Day Care service, based in Cockburn, operated across Perth's southern suburbs* at the end of 2025 with 20 registered Educators, five located in Cockburn providing an average of 2,744 hours of care each week to 160 children from 109 families, including 26 families from the City of Cockburn.

Despite our strong service, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit new educators.

Given the large number of other providers and the changing landscape, it is no longer sustainable for the City to continue delivering Family Day Care.

After careful consideration, the City has decided this is the right time to transition out of the service.

We want to sincerely thank all staff and educators, past and present for their commitment and the positive impact they've had on children and families.

The care and connection you've provided is something the community has genuinely valued.

The educators were provided with support from the Family Day Care team throughout the transition including one to one visits, phone calls, and a morning tea.

Families continue to have access to quality Family Day Care options through the many existing providers already operating in the area.

All educators were successfully transitioned to a new provider by Wednesday 11 March 2026.

This is a significant shift, but the legacy of the City's Family Day Care service is something to be truly proud of.

As I said earlier the Family Day Care Service commenced in August 1978 under the leadership of Kath Vaughan and a short time later June Barton who carried out the role of co-ordinator as an employee of the City, and also, a councillor and then mayor of the City of Melville.

June was well known for her caring approach and love of children and creating pathways for their growth and development through play and outdoor activities.

My wife Pat was in the first intake of five Family Day Care providers and continued in that role for five years before going on to work at the Murdoch University Child Care Centre for 27 years.

Thank you again for your dedication and the heart you've brought to the role of family day care educators – only you will know the value you have brought to so many children and their families.

Thank you.