



**National Childcare
Accreditation Council Inc.**

Level 3, 418a Elizabeth Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010 Australia
Telephone: 61 2 8260 1900
Facsimile: 61 2 8260 1901
E-mail: qualitycare@ncac.gov.au
Web: www.ncac.gov.au
ABN: 82 270 247 664
ARBN: 110 877 524

Family Day Care Quality Assurance Quality Trends Report

For the period 1 July 2007 to 31 December 2007

The purpose of this *Quality Trends Report* is to identify key areas within Family Day Care Quality Assurance (FDCQA) that family day care schemes are performing well in and those which contribute to schemes receiving a Not Accredited status.

The Quality Areas and Principles referred to in this document are detailed in the FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide* (2nd edition, 2004) available for purchase from the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) website (www.ncac.gov.au). Where references are made to numbered indicators, these are listed in the FDCQA *Validation Report* (2nd edition, 2004).

Quality Trends Reports are conducted twice annually by NCAC, in January and July each year, for each of the Child Care Quality Assurance systems. Past reports are publicly available on the NCAC website (www.ncac.gov.au) as follows:

- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2005 - 31 December 2005)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 January 2006 - 30 June 2006)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2006 - 31 December 2006)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 January 2007 - 30 June 2007)

FDCQA Quality Trends Report

As at 1 January 2008, 328 family day care schemes were registered with NCAC to participate in FDCQA and **97%** of family day care schemes that have completed the 5 steps of Child Care Quality Assurance are Accredited. Of these services, **54%** have achieved High Quality in all 6 Quality Areas. This is a significant achievement for family day care schemes progressing through FDCQA.

45 family day care schemes received Accreditation Decisions between 1 July 2007 and 31 December 2007.

The Principles for which schemes most often achieve a High Quality standard are:

1.1	Carers and coordination unit staff interact with all children in a warm, friendly and respectful way	60%
1.4	Carers' personal and family arrangements provide a positive home environment that supports the provision of family day care	56%
1.5	Relationships within the scheme value diversity, teamwork, mutual respect understanding and professionalism	53%
2.1	The indoor and outdoor areas of carers' homes and play session venues are welcoming, comfortable and child friendly	56%
2.2	All children have access to a variety of interesting materials and equipment	53%
2.3	Facilities used by the coordination unit are welcoming and accessible	53%
4.5	Children's needs for rest, sleep and comfort are supported	71%
5.1	Recruitment, selection and orientation processes for carers and coordination unit staff encourage and support the provision of a quality service	51%

The Principles for which schemes have most often not met the Satisfactory standards are:

3.3	Carers and coordination unit staff guide children's behaviour in positive ways	13%
4.1	The environments provided for children are safe	20%
4.3	The health and safety of all children are protected	16%
4.4	Nappy changing, toileting and bathing are positive experiences for children	13%
4.6	Current State or Territory legislation relating to child protection and wellbeing is implemented consistently	13%
6.2	The scheme consults and works collaboratively with all stakeholders	11%
6.4	The scheme has simple and transparent grievance and complaints handling procedures	11%

Quality Area 1: Interactions

Positive interactions between children, families, carers and coordination unit staff are integral to a successful program and should support the development of trusting relationships, partnerships and teamwork within the scheme and with the wider community.

Partnerships with families are promoted by responsive and supportive carers, coordination unit staff and management and are fundamental to all aspects of the program, from orientation to ongoing information sharing. It is particularly important that children experience interactions that make them feel valued, respected and capable. By modelling courteous, considerate and effective communication, adults support children as they develop their communication and problem solving skills.

Interactions should ensure that all stakeholders in the service feel valued and respected and should take into account the different backgrounds, requirements and communication skills of individuals. Effective communication strategies can be developed through ongoing consultation between all stakeholders and should be reviewed regularly. Interactions that are founded upon respect, empathy, cooperation and professionalism ensure that all communications are successful and positive (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 9).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area.

Quality Area 1 has five Principles:

Principle 1.1: Carers and coordination unit staff interact with all children in a warm, friendly and respectful way

Principle 1.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	60	38	0	2

Principle 1.1 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 1.2: Communication between coordination unit staff and families is effective and supports the child's placement in care

Principle 1.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	49	47	0	4

Principle 1.2 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 1.3: Communication between carers and families is effective and supports the family and child to settle into care

Principle 1.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	47	49	0	4

Principle 1.3 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 1.4: Carers' personal and family arrangements provide a positive home environment that supports the provision of family day care

Principle 1.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	56	33	2	9

In Principle 1.4 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 1.4.5 *The scheme has clear, written guidelines about the roles other members of carers' families have in relation to the carer's provision of family day care*

Principle 1.5: Relationships within the scheme value diversity, teamwork, mutual respect, understanding and professionalism

Principle 1.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	53	33	5	9

In Principle 1.5 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 1.5.3 *There are opportunities for discussion between carers and with coordination unit staff about issues that have arisen and opportunities for quality improvement*

Indicator 1.5.6 *Carers and the coordination unit staff work as a team*

Quality Area 2: Physical Environment

Environments that are welcoming, safe, well resourced and aesthetically appealing support children and their families to access and settle into family day care and enhance effective learning settings for children. When planning a physical environment that supports children's play and development, carers and coordination unit staff work together to provide a safe environment which allows all children to explore, experiment and make decisions according to their individual needs and ability levels.

When planning and obtaining resources for the physical environment, carers and coordination unit staff consider factors such as the needs and backgrounds of individual children and their families, the existing family day care home, coordination unit environments and costs.

Carers foster children's learning experiences by using inexpensive resources and aspects of the family day care home in flexible and innovative ways. Relevant professional development opportunities and opportunities to network with other carers, support carers in developing their skills and strategies for creative planning.

Regular consultation between families, children, carers and coordination unit staff and knowledge of current safety recommendations, support the provision of functional child and family friendly settings (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 21).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area.

Quality Area 2 has three Principles:

Principle 2.1: The indoor and outdoor areas of carers' homes and play session* venues are welcoming, comfortable and child friendly

Principle 2.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	56	42	2	0

Principle 2.1 was not rated Unsatisfactory.

* For the purposes of FDCQA, the term "play session" is used to describe the situation where two (or more) carers join together with their children for child focussed play experiences. Play sessions may be organised by the carers themselves or by coordination unit staff.

Principle 2.2: All children have access to a variety of interesting materials and equipment

Principle 2.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	53	40	7	0

Principle 2.2 was not rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 2.3: Facilities used by the coordination unit are welcoming and accessible

Principle 2.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	53	38	2	7

In Principle 2.3 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 2.3.1 *The coordination unit facilities are well signposted and welcoming to families, carers and children*

Quality Area 3: Children's Experiences, Learning and Development

Successful learning environments recognise the value of play and positive social interactions in the promotion of children's learning and development. Children's learning and development is enhanced through opportunities to make choices and guide their own experiences according to their individual interests, personalities and skills. Children's learning occurs through planned and spontaneous experiences, during their participation in daily routines and through their experience of positive modelling by adults and peers.

A supportive learning environment is underpinned by behaviour guidance strategies which respect individual children's needs and abilities, and which foster the development of children's self-management skills.

A holistic approach to children's learning and development recognises the significance of creative and child-initiated play to the growth of children's self-esteem and personal competence.

Carers and coordination unit staff ensure that the balance between planned, spontaneous and routine experiences allows time and opportunity for children to engage in learning through a range of play and other learning experiences (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 29).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area. However, a significant proportion of schemes did not meet the Accreditation standards of Principle 3.3.

Quality Area 3 has seven Principles:

Principle 3.1: Carers respond to the interests and abilities of all children in ways that support learning in a home environment

Principle 3.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	29	55	7	9

In Principle 3.1 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 3.1.8 *The carer shares the television, computer and/or electronic game experience and discusses emergent issues with the children*

Principle 3.2: Coordination unit staff support children's learning through home visits and/or play sessions*

Principle 3.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	45	53	0	2

Principle 3.2 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 3.3: Carers and coordination unit staff guide children's behaviour in positive ways

Principle 3.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	47	38	2	13

In Principle 3.3 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 3.3.11 *Skills in guiding children's behaviour are enhanced through professional development*

Principle 3.4: Carers and coordination unit staff promote resilience and social competence in all children

Principle 3.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	36	56	4	4

Principle 3.4 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

* For the purposes of FDCQA, the term "play session" is used to describe the situation where two (or more) carers join together with their children for child focussed play experiences. Play sessions may be organised by the carers themselves or by coordination unit staff.

Principle 3.5: Carers and coordination unit staff promote physical competence in all children

Principle 3.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	38	60	0	2

Principle 3.5 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 3.6: Carers and coordination unit staff foster all children's language, literacy, curiosity, mathematical thinking and scientific exploration

Principle 3.6	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	29	64	0	7

In Principle 3.6 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 3.6.4 *Carers and coordination unit staff read books to individual children and the group and, where appropriate, adapt the language to keep the children interested*

Principle 3.7: Carers and coordination unit staff support all children's creative expression

Principle 3.7	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	31	69	0	0

Principle 3.7 was not rated Unsatisfactory.

Quality Area 4: Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing

Family day care homes constitute a unique child care setting as they have the dual functions of both family home and child care environment. To ensure that children receive quality care, coordination unit staff and carers share a responsibility to keep up to date with current research and recommended practice in relation to child health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and emergency procedures.

It is essential that scheme staff and carers are aware of and meet all State or Territory legal requirements for children's safety and wellbeing, particularly in relation to child protection.

Regardless of their individual skills or backgrounds, all children have the right to experience quality care in an environment which is clean, safe, healthy and where their wellbeing is a paramount consideration in the program. In exercising their duty of care, carers and coordination unit staff consider the unique aspects of the family day care environment, and the individual needs and cultural backgrounds of children and families. This is of particular importance when planning for children's mealtimes, their sleep or rest requirements, their dressing requirements and their personal hygiene (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 45).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area. However, a significant proportion of schemes did not meet the Accreditation standards of Principles 4.1, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.6 in this Quality Area.

Quality Area 4 has six Principles:

Principle 4.1: The environments provided for children are safe

Principle 4.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	34	33	13	20

In Principle 4.1 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.1.3** *The scheme safety procedures are implemented consistently by coordination unit staff and carers*
- Indicator 4.1.5** *Medications, detergents, cleaning products, garden chemicals and other dangerous products are clearly labelled and inaccessible to children at all times*
- Indicator 4.1.8** *Every domestic pet and farm animal is kept in an area separate to and apart from the areas used by children, unless involved in a specific activity that is directly supervised by the carer, staff member or other adult*
- Indicator 4.1.13** *Carers' and coordination unit staff efforts to protect children from exposure to the sun are consistent with the sun protection policy*
- Indicator 4.1.14** *Carers and coordination unit staff model sun protection practices*

Principle 4.2: Food and drink are nutritious and culturally appropriate

Principle 4.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	42	47	2	9

In Principle 4.2 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.2.2** *The scheme's nutrition policy is dated and sourced*
- Indicator 4.2.7** *The scheme has written food handling policies and procedures that are based on current advice from relevant health and safety authorities*
- Indicator 4.2.8** *The scheme's food handling policies and procedures are dated and sourced*

Principle 4.3: The health and safety of all children are protected

Principle 4.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	33	35	16	16

In Principle 4.3 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.3.2** *Policies and procedures on infection control, illness, administering medication, accident and emergency are dated and sourced*
- Indicator 4.3.6** *Carers discuss with children strategies for maintaining dental health*
- Indicator 4.3.10** *Coordination unit staff and carers develop plans to effectively manage fire and other emergencies and these plans are displayed prominently in carers' homes and other scheme facilities*
- Indicator 4.3.13** *Health plans for children with specific medical conditions have been developed in consultation with families, are based on advice given to the families by medical practitioners and are implemented consistently*

Principle 4.4: Nappy changing, toileting and bathing are positive experiences for children

Principle 4.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	38	45	4	13

In Principle 4.4 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.4.1** *The scheme has written policies and procedures for nappy changing, toileting and bathing that are consistent with current recommendations by recognised health authorities*
- Indicator 4.4.2** *Policies and procedures for nappy changing, toileting and bathing are dated and sourced*
- Indicator 4.4.3** *The scheme procedures for bathing, nappy changing and/or toileting are implemented consistently*

Principle 4.5: Children's needs for rest, sleep and comfort are supported

Principle 4.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	71	20	0	9

In Principle 4.5 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.5.1** *The scheme has a policy relating to selection and use of cots, beds and bedding that is based on current advice from recognised safety authorities*
- Indicator 4.5.2** *The policy related to the selection and use of cots, beds and bedding is dated and sourced*

Principle 4.6: Current State or Territory legislation relating to child protection and wellbeing is implemented consistently

Principle 4.6	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	40	42	5	13

In Principle 4.6 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.6.1** *The scheme has written child protection policies and procedures that are based on current advice from relevant authorities*
- Indicator 4.6.2** *Child protection policies and procedures are dated and sourced*
- Indicator 4.6.5** *During the initial training program and during the past eighteen months, all carers and coordination unit staff have been provided with training in responding to suspected child protection issues*
- Indicator 4.6.6** *Carers' families have been provided with information and/or training to support their understanding and response to suspected child protection issues as they relate to the provision of family day care*

Quality Area 5: Carers and Coordination Unit Staff

Coordination unit staff are responsible for ensuring there are procedures, policies and systems in place to maintain quality in the scheme's activities, programs and organisation. Coordination unit staff work with carers, families and other professionals to ensure that the scheme's personnel policies and procedures are effective and meet all relevant legislative requirements, including occupational health and safety regulations. Acknowledging and promoting the value of professional development and effective recruitment practices is fundamental in advocating for the scheme and the professionalism of its staff and carers.

Coordination unit staff, carers and families evaluate the scheme's achievements and identify future areas for improvement from the perspectives of all individuals involved. All stakeholders have regular opportunities to contribute to reviews of the scheme's quality practices and procedures and to collaborate in the development of ongoing improvement plans. Encouraging families, carers and coordination unit staff to work together on continuing improvement strategies supports the development of practical and relevant approaches to all scheme operations (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 59).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area.

Quality Area 5 has four Principles:

Principle 5.1: Recruitment, selection and orientation processes for carers and coordination unit staff encourage and support the provision of a quality service

Principle 5.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	51	40	0	9

In Principle 5.1 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 5.1.2 *Policies and procedures for the recruitment and selection of carers and coordination unit staff are dated and sourced*

Indicator 5.1.5 *A consistent orientation program is provided to all new coordination unit staff, carers and carers' families*

Principle 5.2: The scheme has a systematic process in place to monitor current practice and identify areas for continuing improvement

Principle 5.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	33	60	0	7

In Principle 5.2 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 5.2.4 *The scheme has policies and procedures about conducting visits in a carer's home*

Indicator 5.2.7 *Coordination unit staff and carers are actively participating in the Family Day Care Quality Assurance process to ensure continuous improvement*

Principle 5.3: Professional development opportunities are accessed by carers, coordination unit staff and others involved in management

Principle 5.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	47	47	0	6

In Principle 5.3 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 5.3.1 *The scheme has a training and development policy that actively supports the ongoing professional development of carers, coordination unit staff and other involved in management*

Indicator 5.3.2 *In addition to the orientation process an initial training program is provided for all new carers, coordination unit staff and others involved in management*

Indicator 5.3.3 *Carers and coordination unit staff and management are provided with opportunities for informal learning and have access to a range of professional development opportunities, including in-service training*

Indicator 5.3.5 *Professional development activities provided or organised by the scheme are evaluated*

Principle 5.4: The scheme promotes occupational health and safety

Principle 5.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	42	53	0	5

Principle 5.4 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Quality Area 6: Management and Administration

It is the role of scheme management and coordination unit staff to establish effective and ethical management policies and procedures. Scheme policies and procedures must be informed by relevant legislative requirements, current 'best practice' in management and also reflect an awareness of community needs and issues.

Comprehensive written policies and procedures provide clear guidance to coordination unit staff, carers and families in relation to management issues. Involvement of all stakeholders in policy review and development fosters an atmosphere of trust and teamwork and helps ensure that policies and procedures address real needs and are implemented consistently and effectively.

An essential element of quality scheme management is ensuring that clear and consistent procedures for the maintenance and confidential management of family, child, carer and staff records are implemented.

Decision making, grievance and complaints handling policies and procedures are transparent and clearly define accountability (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 69).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area. However, a significant proportion of schemes did not meet the Accreditation standards of Principles 6.2 and 6.4.

Quality Area 6 has five Principles:

Principle 6.1: Management practices are ethical and operate within relevant legislation

Principle 6.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	45	51	0	4

Principle 6.1 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 6.2: The scheme consults and works collaboratively with all stakeholders

Principle 6.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	29	60	0	11

In Principle 6.2 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 6.2.4** *The scheme has a process that provides opportunities for carers, coordination unit staff and families to be involved in an advisory, consultative and/or decision making role*
- Indicator 6.2.5** *Carers, families and coordination unit staff are actively involved in the development and review of scheme policies and procedures*
- Indicator 6.2.6** *Consultations on operation of the scheme are conducted in ways that enable all stakeholders to participate if they wish*
- Indicator 6.2.8** *Information about Family Day Care Quality Assurance is readily available to families*

Principle 6.3: The scheme has an efficient, effective and ethical process for the management of records

Principle 6.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	31	60	2	7

In Principle 6.3 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 6.3.1 *The scheme has clear written policies and procedures for managing records relating to children, families, carers and coordination unit staff*

Indicator 6.3.2 *The scheme maintains accurate, up to date and objective records relating to children, families and on-going care arrangements and these are kept confidential*

Principle 6.4: The scheme has simple, transparent grievance and complaints handling procedures

Principle 6.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	31	51	7	11

In Principle 6.4 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 6.4.2 *The scheme's grievance and complaints policies and procedures are dated and sourced*

Indicator 6.4.4 *Information about the grievance and complaints handling procedures are included in carer and coordination unit staff handbooks*

Indicator 6.4.6 *All grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner*

Indicator 6.4.7 *Carers and coordination unit staff are informed of their right to seek assistance from a support person when responding to a complaint about them*

Principle 6.5: Carers and coordination unit staff are effective advocates for their service within the community and actively seek to build links with other agencies to benefit children and their families

Principle 6.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	36	55	2	7

In Principle 6.5 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 6.5.3 *Carers and coordination unit staff liaise with other children's services in the community*

Family Day Care Quality Assurance Quality Trends

The National Childcare Accreditation Council has conducted five FDCQA *Quality Trends Reports* for family day care schemes:

- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2005 – 31 December 2005)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 January 2006 – 30 June 2006)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2006 – 31 December 2006)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 January 2007 – 30 June 2007)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2007 – 31 December 2007)

These *Reports* demonstrate a number of quality trends in the performance of family day care schemes against the standards of quality care outlined in the *FDCQA Quality Practices Guide* (2nd edition, 2004).

Please note: 45 family day care schemes received an Accreditation Decision between 1 July 2007 and 31 December 2007. This small number should be taken into account when considering the quality trends in this *Report*.

Notable trends in the data include:

- The achievement of all 6 Quality Areas at a High Quality level by 67% of family day care schemes that received an Accreditation Decision during this period.
- 64% of those services which received an Accreditation Decision were previously Not Accredited and achieved Accreditation during this period, indicating a significant improvement in the quality of care provided by family day care schemes and a commitment to quality improvement.
- A significant increase in the proportion of High Quality ratings achieved across 19 of the 30 Principles between the June 2007 and December 2007 reporting periods, by an average 10 percentage points.

High Quality ratings increased across 28 of the 30 Principles by an average 20 percentage points between the December 2005 and December 2007 reporting periods indicating a significant improvement in the quality of care provided by family day care schemes over time.

- In the June 2006 reporting period there were eleven individual indicators for which more than 20% of schemes received Unsatisfactory ratings. There were no individual indicators for which more than 20% of schemes received Unsatisfactory ratings in the December 2007 reporting period, demonstrating significant improvement in the quality of care provided by family day care schemes.

In the December 2007 reporting period the highest percentage of schemes which received Unsatisfactory ratings for an individual indicator was 11%.

- Quality Area 4: Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing, continues to receive a significantly higher proportion of Unsatisfactory ratings than any other Quality Area.

Failure to date and source written policies and procedures contributed significantly to the relatively high proportion of schemes receiving Unsatisfactory ratings across Quality Area 4: Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing.

- A significant proportion of Unsatisfactory ratings across several Quality Areas were related to the development, implementation, dating and sourcing of policies and procedures in the following areas:

Principle	Policy and Procedure
4.1	Safety
4.1	Sun protection
4.2	Nutrition and food handling
4.3	Infection control, illness, administering medication, accident and emergency
4.4	Nappy changing, toileting and bathing
4.5	Selection and use of cots, beds and bedding
5.1	Recruitment and selection of carers
6.3	Records management
6.4	Grievance and complaints handling

- The strengths of family day care schemes can be seen in those Principles for which for which no Unsatisfactory ratings were received between 1 July 2007 and 30 December 2007, which include:

Principle	
2.1	The indoor and outdoor areas of carers' homes and play session venues are welcoming, comfortable and child friendly
2.2	All children have access to a variety of interesting materials and equipment
3.7	Carers and coordination unit staff support all children's creative expression

NCAC Support for Services

The purpose of this *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* is to identify key areas within FDCQA that family day care schemes are performing well in and those which contribute to schemes receiving a Not Accredited status.

NCAC aims to work in partnership with family day care schemes to facilitate and support continuous improvement to the quality of child care provided for children in Australia. The *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* assists NCAC to provide targeted support to schemes as they progress through FDCQA.

NCAC has implemented several initiatives, addressing concerns raised in the *FDCQA Quality Trends Reports* as follows:

- The *NCAC Policy Development Guide* is available on the NCAC website to assist services to research, develop and review policies in collaboration with stakeholders. Services may find the *Developing a Policy Checklist* helpful when planning for and reviewing policies.

The Policy Templates, available as part of the *Policy Development Guide*, are designed to assist services to develop and implement policies that are relevant and appropriate to the service and that meet FDCQA requirements.

- NCAC's newsletter, *Putting Children First*, is distributed quarterly to all services participating in the Child Care Quality Assurance systems. Recent articles supporting quality practices include:
 - *Supporting children with additional needs* (September 2007)
 - *Developing a service philosophy* (September 2007)
 - *Involving families in planning for quality improvement* (September 2007)
 - *Ask a Child Care Adviser – Building links with your community* (December 2007)
 - *Celebrating the holidays* (December 2007)
 - *Valuing male child care professionals* (December 2007)
- *Factsheets* are distributed to all long day care centres registered to participate in the QIAS to provide information to child care professionals regarding quality practices. NCAC continues to develop new *Factsheets* for family day care schemes.
- NCAC is currently developing *Family Factsheets* to support families' understanding of quality issues and practices in child care. The *Family Factsheets* will be available for download from NCAC's website in early 2008.
- NCAC refers services to the *Quality Trends Reports* through publications such as *Putting Children First*. Services can use the information provided by the *Quality Trends Reports* to assist their progress, particularly during Step 2: Self-study and Continuing Improvement. It may be necessary for services to spend some time working towards reaching the Satisfactory standard required by those Principles and Indicators for which services have most often not met the Satisfactory standards.

NCAC will continue to use the information provided in the *FDCQA Quality Trends Reports* to develop ways to effectively support family day care schemes participating in FDCQA.

Family Day Care Quality Assurance

Principle Ratings

Comparative statistics of the December 2005, June 2006, December 2006,
June 2007 and December 2007 *Quality Trends Reports*

Quality Area 1		High Quality (%)	Good Quality (%)	Satisfactory (%)	Unsatisfactory (%)
Principle 1.1	Dec-05	29	64	7	0
	Jun-06	39	57	4	0
	Dec-06	41	58	1	0
	Jun-07	39	61	0	0
	Dec-07	60	38	0	2
Principle 1.2	Dec-05	42	48	3	7
	Jun-06	32	62	2	4
	Dec-06	48	49	2	1
	Jun-07	41	57	0	2
	Dec-07	49	47	0	4
Principle 1.3	Dec-05	22	52	19	7
	Jun-06	28	62	4	6
	Dec-06	35	56	6	3
	Jun-07	45	49	2	4
	Dec-07	47	49	0	4
Principle 1.4	Dec-05	39	35	3	23
	Jun-06	44	39	1	16
	Dec-06	49	42	3	6
	Jun-07	57	31	0	12
	Dec-07	56	33	2	9
Principle 1.5	Dec-05	20	71	7	2
	Jun-06	22	74	4	0
	Dec-06	34	63	2	1
	Jun-07	43	55	0	2
	Dec-07	53	33	5	9
Quality Area 2					
Principle 2.1	Dec-05	38	38	11	13
	Jun-06	30	57	4	9
	Dec-06	39	51	5	5
	Jun-07	51	47	2	0
	Dec-07	56	42	2	0

Principle 2.2	Dec-05	18	39	10	33
	Jun-06	25	41	9	25
	Dec-06	31	51	5	13
	Jun-07	43	51	2	4
	Dec-07	53	40	7	0
Principle 2.3	Dec-05	39	41	7	13
	Jun-06	35	46	10	9
	Dec-06	39	56	3	2
	Jun-07	47	49	2	2
	Dec-07	53	38	2	7
Quality Area 3					
Principle 3.1	Dec-05	12	32	33	23
	Jun-06	10	61	12	17
	Dec-06	18	60	17	5
	Jun-07	18	72	6	4
	Dec-07	29	55	7	9
Principle 3.2	Dec-05	30	51	3	16
	Jun-06	20	55	3	22
	Dec-06	41	53	1	5
	Jun-07	55	39	4	2
	Dec-07	45	53	0	2
Principle 3.3	Dec-05	17	44	17	22
	Jun-06	28	35	4	33
	Dec-06	42	43	5	10
	Jun-07	45	37	2	16
	Dec-07	47	38	2	13
Principle 3.4	Dec-05	26	51	13	10
	Jun-06	33	61	3	3
	Dec-06	33	60	5	2
	Jun-07	47	53	0	0
	Dec-07	36	56	4	4
Principle 3.5	Dec-05	13	80	1	6
	Jun-06	22	68	3	7
	Dec-06	29	70	1	0
	Jun-07	29	65	4	2
	Dec-07	38	60	0	2

Principle 3.6	Dec-05	13	58	19	10
	Jun-06	13	59	16	12
	Dec-06	20	64	10	6
	Jun-07	27	69	4	0
	Dec-07	29	64	0	7
Principle 3.7	Dec-05	11	64	19	6
	Jun-06	13	74	10	3
	Dec-06	18	72	9	1
	Jun-07	10	86	4	0
	Dec-07	31	69	0	0
Quality Area 4					
Principle 4.1	Dec-05	12	22	17	49
	Jun-06	19	17	15	49
	Dec-06	19	45	6	30
	Jun-07	22	45	10	23
	Dec-07	34	33	13	20
Principle 4.2	Dec-05	12	39	19	30
	Jun-06	14	52	9	25
	Dec-06	19	57	8	16
	Jun-07	17	61	12	10
	Dec-07	42	47	2	9
Principle 4.3	Dec-05	11	19	22	48
	Jun-06	14	28	12	46
	Dec-06	25	39	6	30
	Jun-07	27	43	12	18
	Dec-07	33	35	16	16
Principle 4.4	Dec-05	17	31	9	43
	Jun-06	25	36	10	29
	Dec-06	29	36	8	27
	Jun-07	39	33	8	20
	Dec-07	38	45	4	13
Principle 4.5	Dec-05	29	38	9	24
	Jun-06	39	32	3	26
	Dec-06	56	31	1	12
	Jun-07	65	25	2	8
	Dec-07	71	20	0	9

Principle 4.6	Dec-05	20	20	16	44
	Jun-06	26	23	15	36
	Dec-06	28	43	11	18
	Jun-07	39	41	2	18
	Dec-07	40	42	5	13
Quality Area 5					
Principle 5.1	Dec-05	36	38	3	23
	Jun-06	38	38	3	21
	Dec-06	55	38	0	7
	Jun-07	53	35	2	10
	Dec-07	51	40	0	9
Principle 5.2	Dec-05	42	51	1	6
	Jun-06	30	57	4	9
	Dec-06	35	56	3	6
	Jun-07	45	47	2	6
	Dec-07	33	60	0	7
Principle 5.3	Dec-05	14	67	7	12
	Jun-06	15	68	4	13
	Dec-06	26	67	3	4
	Jun-07	20	72	2	6
	Dec-07	47	47	0	6
Principle 5.4	Dec-05	45	40	9	6
	Jun-06	39	46	2	13
	Dec-06	48	46	3	3
	Jun-07	33	59	4	4
	Dec-07	42	53	0	5
Quality Area 6					
Principle 6.1	Dec-05	35	51	8	6
	Jun-06	39	55	3	3
	Dec-06	49	45	3	3
	Jun-07	49	47	2	2
	Dec-07	45	51	0	4
Principle 6.2	Dec-05	27	41	13	19
	Jun-06	22	50	6	22
	Dec-06	32	53	4	11
	Jun-07	37	47	10	6
	Dec-07	29	60	0	11

Principle 6.3	Dec-05	15	65	10	10
	Jun-06	13	71	10	6
	Dec-06	27	56	11	6
	Jun-07	33	45	16	6
	Dec-07	31	60	2	7
Principle 6.4	Dec-05	25	42	8	25
	Jun-06	19	46	12	23
	Dec-06	31	56	5	8
	Jun-07	31	49	8	12
	Dec-07	31	51	7	11
Principle 6.5	Dec-05	27	41	12	20
	Jun-06	29	44	13	14
	Dec-06	32	54	8	6
	Jun-07	47	39	12	2
	Dec-07	36	55	2	7

All figures rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Number of family day care schemes which received Accreditation Decision between:

1 July 2005 and 31 December 2005: 69

1 January 2006 and 30 June 2006: 69

1 July 2006 and 31 December 2006: 154

1 January 2007 – 30 June 2007: 51

1 July 2007 – 31 December 2007: 45