

EARLY YEARS POLICY

Early Years Services Excursions	Policy No:	QA 1.2
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	Approved By:	Manager Aged and Family
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Responsible Officer:		Coordinator Early Years
Authorising Officer:		Manager Community Strengthening

1. Purpose

This policy is to ensure that all Surf Coast Shire Council early years services excursions (both regular and non-regular) and incursions (refer to definitions) are:

- well planned and documented and includes the required risk assessment, that ensures each child's health, safety and wellbeing at all times during the excursion/incursions;
- developmentally appropriate;
- within the planned education and care program for the children;
- conducted in a safe and inclusive manner in line with *Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations (2011)*.

2. Scope

Evidence of link to National Quality Standards: 2.3, 4.1, 6.3, 7.3

Evidence of link to Education & Care Services National Regulations: 100 to 102; 168(2) (g), 12(d) (i) & (ii)

Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2009.

3. Application

This policy and procedure applies to all Surf Coast Shire Council early years services staff, students, volunteers, family helpers, family day care (FDC) educators, children and their families enrolled at all Council's Early Years Services.

4. Definitions

Regular Excursions/Outings: A regular outing means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination that an education and care service visits regularly as part of its educational program, and where the circumstances relevant to the required risk assessment are the same on each outing (r4). Authorisation for regular excursions/outings is only required once every 12 months, unless the circumstance of the risk assessment and excursion change.

Non-Regular Excursions: Excursions/outings organised by an education and care service that are non-regular and usually a 'one off' require a risk assessment and documented planning; and specific authorisation from parents/guardians for children to attend that particular excursion.

Incursions: A non-regular activity that is offered in the service venue; requiring a risk assessment and additional planning.

5. Policy

When planning excursions / incursions for children enrolled in all Surf Coast Shire Council early years services, children's developmental levels and the planned educational program for the children will be used to guide excursion planning and processes.

The following applies when planning excursions/incursions:

- ensure the incursion/incursion context and learning reflects the Early Years Framework
- excursions/incursions that are provided will extend children's learning and development and planned around the children's emerging interests.
- excursions may include walks to parks or areas of local interest, visits to schools for transition experiences, attendance at performances or community events or other relevant activities.

- the needs of all individual children will be taken into account and arrangements made to ensure all children are able to attend the excursion/incursion. Discuss excursion guidelines with children prior to the trip, e.g. staying with staff/educator, not speaking to strangers, etc.
- staff/educators supervise children closely on excursions/incursions and conduct regular head counts to ensure all children are accounted for. On excursions particular attention will be paid when boarding/alighting buses/cars, when moving through crowded areas and arriving at/leaving a destination.
- review plans after each excursion/incursion and if identified, make modifications prior to the next excursion/incursion.

5.1 Risk Assessment Regular and Non-regular Excursions/Incursions

Documented risk assessments are conducted prior to each excursion / incursion. Risk assessments must identify the benefits of the activity and assess risks and hazards that the excursion / incursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child attending the excursion and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

Prior to the excursion / incursion the service staff/educators will undertake a risk assessment on the *SCSC Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan (Refer to TRIM document Number D14/87971*

Completion of the *SCSC Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan* must ensure that the following components are taken into account when undertaking the risk assessment (in accordance with r101):

- the proposed route and destination for the excursion;
- any hazards (including water hazards);
- any risks associated with water-based activities;
- the transport to and from the proposed destination for the excursion;
- the number of adults and children involved in the excursion / incursion;
- given the risks posed by the excursion/incursion the number of staff / educators or other responsible adults that is appropriate to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialised skills are required e.g. First Aid Training
- the proposed activities;
- the proposed duration of the excursion / incursion;
- the items that should be taken on the excursion, (see 5.4 below).

SCSC Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan must be communicated and authorised by Team Leaders, a minimum of 48 hours (FDC) and 4 weeks (Kindergartens) prior to excursion taking place.

Note: Children will not be taken outside the service on an excursion unless a risk assessment has been undertaken and a written authorisation has been provided by each child's parent or guardian.

Upon arrival, check for potential hazards. This should also occur for each visit on regular excursions/outings, even if the staff/educator is familiar with the setting.

5.2 Written Authorisation

Written authorisations must be given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise the taking of the child outside the service.

Refer to *SCSC EY Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy & Procedure D15/42541*.

- I. For Regular Excursions/Outings
In the case of a regular excursions/outings written authorisation (including all of the information listed under 5.1 Risk Assessment) will be obtained once in each 12 month period unless there is a change to the excursion/outing which effects the information previously provided to families and will affect the risk assessment information.
- II. For Non-Regular Excursions
The written authorisation will include:
 - the child's name;
 - the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises;

- the date the child is to be taken on the excursion (unless the authorisation is for a regular outing);
- a description of the proposed destination for the excursion;
- the method of transport to be used for the excursion;
- the proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion;
- the period the child will be away from the premises;
- the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion
- the anticipated ratio of staff / educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion;
- the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion;
- that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service;
- the name and signature of the person providing authorisation;
- an emergency contact number in case of an emergency.

III. All written authorisations are to be kept on the child's file.
Authorisations for excursions must be kept in the enrolment record for each child enrolled at an education and care service (regulation 161(1)(b)) and the enrolment record for each child educated and cared for by a family day care educator (regulation 161(2)(b)).

5.3 Child and Staff/Educator Ratios

All required child and staff/educator ratios must be adhered to as required for each service in relation to excursions and outings.

- 5.3.1 Key Resource Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services:
Education and Care National Regulations 2010: Educator to Child Ratios and Qualifications
- 5.3.2 Key Resource Occasional Care:
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2009: Educator to Child Ratios:

5.4 Staff/Educators must take on Excursions:

- completed up to date child detail information for each child
- contact details for each child's parent/guardian/emergency contacts
- children's health information and medical management plans (e.g. anaphylaxis)
- any required medication (including asthma inhalers and auto-injectors)
- operational mobile phone
- first aid equipment
- sunscreen
- staff identification
- staff information and emergency contacts

5.5 Family Day Care (FDC):

Family Day Care educator's personal appointments and tasks are to be conducted outside of the FDC service hours.

6. Records

Records shall be retained for at least the period shown below.

Record	Retention/Disposal Responsibility	Retention Period	Location
Early Years Excursions/Incursions Risk Management Plan	Records	Two years after delivery of the program	Off site
Family Day Care Regular Excursion Authority	Records	Two years after delivery of the program	Off site
Family Day Care Non Regular Excursion Authority	Records	Two years after delivery of the program	Off site
Vacation Care Program Booking and Excursion Information and Permission Form	Records	Two years after delivery of the program	Off site

7. Attachments

Not applicable

8. References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

MPP-030	Motor Vehicles Policy
SCS-020	Community Bus Policy
D15/42541	Early Years Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
D15/35312	Early Years Child Safe Environment Policy
D14/94973	Early Years Delivery & Collection of Children Policy
D14/94986	Early Years First Aid Policy
D14/104807	Early Years Food Safety Policy
D14/105413	Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy
D15/32925	Early Years Medical Conditions & Medications Policy
D15/32932	Early Years Nutrition & Healthy Eating Policy
D15/35300	Early Years Sun Protection Policy
D15/33004	Early Years Supervision of Children Policy
D15/38683	Early Years Water Safety Policy
D15/35333	Family Day Care Transport Policy/Vehicle Use Authorisation Policy

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Work Instructions and Forms

D14/28577	Family Day Care Supervision of Children Work Instructions
D18/29066	Family Day Care Regular Excursion Authority
D14/48378	Family Day Care Non Regular Excursion Authority
D14/87971	Early Years Risk Assessment Management Plan
D17/23578	Kindergarten Regular Excursion Form

Other References

Education and Care Services National Law 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2009
ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit
Childcare Service Handbook (Department of Education)
DET Excursions and routine outings – Practice Note 14 May 2010

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