

EARLY YEARS POLICY

Early Years Services Management of Dogs	Policy No:	QA 2.24
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	Approved By:	Manager Community Strengthening
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Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Early Years	
Authorising Officer:	Manager Community Strengthening	

1. Purpose

This policy aims to clearly define:

- Procedures for dealing with dogs off leads that may enter the Bush Kinder environment;
- Guidelines for dealing with an angry or threatening dog and/or a dog in attack mode;
- The appropriate medical response to dog bites;
- A framework for the appropriate education and training of children, staff, parents/guardians and children on how to live safely with dogs

2. Scope

This policy applies to children, parents/guardians, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Surf Coast Shire Kindergartens.

3. Application

All Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff, students, volunteers, Family Day Care (FDC) educators, children and their families accessing the services.

4. Definitions

Safe behaviour around dogs: The following rules are recommended by the 'Responsible Pet Education' program and reinforced by the Victorian Government's Better Health Channel Website:

- Always supervise children and dogs;
- If you are unable to supervise even for a short time, separate children from dogs;
- Never approach a strange dog;
- When approaching dogs, ALWAYS:
 - ASK the permission of the owner
 - Always let the dog smell the back of your hand first
 - Pat dogs gently and calmly from the collar to the tail
 - Do not pat a dog on its head
- Stand still if a dog approaches (don't make direct eye contact, hands in fists by your side with thumbs on the inside);
- Never intervene between dogs that are fighting;
- Never disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping.

5. Policy

The Surf Coast is responsible for:

- Ensuring staff are appropriately educated on procedures in the event of an aggressive or threatening dog at the bush kinder site and in the event of a dog attack;
- Following all procedures as set out in the Incident and Medical Emergency Management Policy (including notice of notifiable incidents, appropriate record keeping in the event of an incident, maintain first aid kit etc.).
- Encouraging parents to practice safe dog behaviours at home and to teach children on an ongoing basis how to behave around dogs to minimise risk of dog bites;

Staff are responsible for:

- Running a 'Responsible Pet Education' session for each four year old kindergarten group, parents and staff. Particular attention in the session is given to recognising the warning signs given by dogs, the correct way to approach a dog and what to do if approached by an aggressive dog;
- Continually educating children on the appropriate behaviours around dogs, including recognising warning signs, the correct way to approach a dog, and what to do if approached by an aggressive dog;
- Ensure Bush Kinder Base is set in a 'dogs on leash' area of the parklands;
- Ensuring the Bush Kinder sign is clearly visible when operating in parklands, to encourage owners to responsibly leash their dogs;
- Ensuring a First Aid Kit is on site at all times;
- Administering first aid in the event of a dog attack;
- Follow procedures in the event of a dog in attack mode;
- Ensuring incidents are reported as per The Surf Coast Shire Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy;
- Ensuring children wash hands if they touch a dog;
- Carrying out the following specific procedures in the event of one of the following incidents occurring:
 - i. *If a dog off a lead enters the Bush Kinder site*
 - Remind children to stand still and not to touch or encourage the dog or make any sudden movements;
 - Locate the owner if possible and encourage the owner to move the dog away from the Bush Kinder site and put the dog on a lead.
 - ii. *If an aggressive and threatening dog enters the Bush Kinder site*
 - Remind children to keep quiet and still, look down (no eye-contact with dog), and put arms by sides with hands in fists with thumbs on the inside;
 - Encourage children to keep calm and not run;
 - Wait until the dog leaves the area before resuming activities;
 - Locate the owner if possible and encourage the owner to put the dog on a lead and move the dog away from the bush kinder site.
 - If staff are concerned please note breed of dog and any identifying details, e.g. red collar, in order to alert the Surf Coast Shire Council
 - iii. *If a dog attacks a child*

(The following procedures in response to a dog bite are listed on the Victorian Government's Better Health Channel Website)

- Calm the child;
- If the skin has been broken, wash the area under cold running water;
- Apply an antiseptic and cover the bite with a clean dressing;
- Notify parents of the need to take the child to the doctor, as a tetanus booster and antibiotics may be necessary;
- If a piece of flesh has been bitten off, call an ambulance;
- Control the bleeding by applying firm pressure to the wound using a sterile dressing or clean cloth until the ambulance arrives;
- If the child is pale or drowsy, lie them down and raise their legs on a pillow or folded blanket;
- Do not give the child any food or water;
- Staff are to follow procedures as set out in Incident & Medical Emergency Management Policy, including contacting parent /guardian, calling ambulance etc.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Practising safe dog behaviours at home and outside of the kindergarten;
- Teaching children on an ongoing basis how to behave around dogs to minimise risk of dog bites;
- If possible, attending the 'Responsible Pet Education' session as provided by the Surf Coast Council for children, parents and staff;
- Collecting their child as soon as possible when notified of an incident or medical emergency involving their child (such as a dog bite);
- Reading and being familiar with the policy;
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of staff, Team Leader of Kindergarten Programs

6. Records

Record	Retention/Disposal Responsibility	Retention Period	Location
Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record Form	Records	Permanent retention	Off-site
DET Serious Incident Notification Report	Records	Permanent retention	Online Portal
Early Years Medication Record Form	Records	Until the child is aged 25 years	Off-site
Early Years Enrolment and Consent Form	Records	Until the child is aged 25 years	Off-site

7. Attachments

Not applicable

8. References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

SCS-014 (D13/4174)	Occupational Health and Safety Policy
WHS 8.0 (D14/15939)	Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Procedure - First Aid
WHS 9.0 (D14/15944)	Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Procedure – Incident/Injury Reporting and Investigation
WHS 2.0 (D14/15930)	Hazard Inspection, Risk Assessment and Control
WHS 32.0 (D15/2311)	Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Procedure – Infectious Diseases
D14/105413	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
D14/94986	Early Years First Aid Policy
D15/16286	Early Years Access and Inclusion Policy
D14/94981	Early Years Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy
D15/32925	Early Years Medical Conditions and Medications Policy
D15/33004	Early Years Supervision of Children Policy
D15/16297	Early Years Services Enrolment Policy
D14/94973	Early Years Delivery and Collection of Children Policy

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

D14/28577	Family Day Care Supervision of Children Work Instructions
D14/95703	Early Years Enrolment and Consent Form
D14/48936	Early Years Medication Record Form
D15/63330	Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record Form
D14/4850	WHS 9.1 Incident Report Form

Other References

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

Occupational Health and Safety Compliance Codes, First Aid in the Workplace (2008)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (The Regulations) and the National Quality Standard (Schedule 1 of the Regulations)

Approval Date:	01/10/2015	Approved by:	Manager Aged & Family
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Amendment/Review 2:	10/10/2019	Approved by:	Manager Community Strengthening

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