

EARLY YEARS POLICY

Early Years Services Employment of Qualified Staff/Ratios, Volunteers and Students	Policy No:	QA 4.3
	Document No:	D15/15724
	Approved Date:	1 April 2014
	Approved By:	Manager Aged and Family
	Review Date:	22 November 2021
Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Early Years	
Authorising Officer:	Manager Community Strengthening	

1. Purpose

To ensure that the Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services meet required qualified staff/ratio regulations and to ensure the Surf Coast Shire’s commitment in supporting the further development and training of students while providing opportunities for volunteers.

2. Scope

Evidence of link to National Quality Standards: 4.1, 4.2, 7.1.3,
 Evidence of link to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 118, 19-120,121-124,125-128,129-135,136 / r145, r146, r147, r151, r152, r149-1, r168 (2) (h), (i), r299, r342, r343, r344
 Victorian Children’s Services Regulations 2009: r69
 Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2019
 Maternal and Child Health Service Program Guidelines 2019

3. Application

All Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff and Family Day Care educators.
 All students, and volunteers engaged with Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services

4. Definitions

Educational Leader: a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual as educational leader at the service to lead the development and implementation of educational programs in the service.¹

Student: A student undertaking a placement as part of a relevant recognised educational institution course / registered training organisation (either secondary or tertiary).

- Volunteer: A person that engages in an activity, on behalf of Council on a particular project or event which provides unpaid opportunities. The volunteer must be registered with and approved by Council before commencement.

5. Policy

- Early Childhood staff/educators will be employed in line with the requirements set out in the *Education and Care National Regulations 2011* under the Education and Care Services National Law or the *Victorian Children’s Services Regulations 2009* (Occasional Care).
- All staff/educators will have the required educational qualifications as outlined in the *Education and Care National Regulations (2011)*.
- Required ratios of qualified staff/educators will be adhered to at all times when approved programs are operational.
- The Educational Leader will support Teachers and Educators:
 - for the development and implementation of the educational program.
 - to ensure clear strategies, and processes are implemented in the curriculum.
 - establish clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning.
 - to promote children’s learning and development to families.

¹ 118, *Educational Leader*, *Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011*

- At each service a **Nominated Supervisor** will be determined by the Approved Provider and details of this person will be displayed in the entrance to the service. The Nominated Supervisor will be responsible for the day to day operations and the service.
- Where the Nominated Supervisor is not able to be responsible for the day to day operations of the service, a responsible person will be appointed. This person meets the criteria including, qualification, skills, work experience and knowledge in accordance with the National Regulations.
- Up to date staff/educators records will be kept at each service including:
 - Staff/educators contact details
 - Copies of approved qualifications and training completed
 - Record of Working With Children Check sighted and checked each 6 months
 - Victoria Institute of Teaching (VIT)
 - Records in the form of Time Sheets with days and times that each staff member/educator is working with the children.
- Volunteers and students details will be recorded on a volunteer/student record and will include days and times of attendance at the service.
- Volunteers will need to complete an online registration form, which is available on the Surf Coast Shire website.
- People that fail to meet the requirements set out in the Volunteer Handbook will not be able to volunteer at any location within The Surf Coast Shire including kindergartens.
- Students and volunteers will not be included in staff ratios required to meet regulatory requirements.

5.1 Maternal & Child Health Service

All Maternal and Child Health Nurses are required to hold dual registration of Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife. Proof of annual renewal (online) and adherence to Continuing Professional Development requirements are reviewed by Team Leader Maternal and Child Health in May each year.

5.2 Working with Children Checks and Police Record Checks

- All Council employees, students, contractors and volunteers are required to have a current Working with Children Check and undergo a Criminal History Check where required. If you are a teacher you will need to be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) and have a current VIT number, which includes a Criminal History Check.
- If you are a teacher who is currently registered with the (VIT), you are exempt from the Working with Children Check.
- However, if the teacher's (VIT) registration is suspended or cancelled, the teacher is no longer exempt. The teacher must apply for the Check and within 7 days of the registration being suspended or cancelled, notify in writing every organisation that engages them in child-related work that they are no longer exempt.
- Family Day Care Educators and volunteers are required to apply for a police check every 12 months.
- Parents that are engaged in an Early Years program are required to have a current Working With Children Check and undergo a police check
Refer to: HR-02 Working With Children and Criminal History Check Policy

5.3 Student Placements:

- The student must be studying at a recognised educational institution/training organisation.
- The placement must directly contribute to their study.
- A written agreement between the educational institution/training organisation and Surf Coast Shire Council must be received before the commencement of the student.
Students must come to the placement with insurance coverage provided by the educational institution/registered training organisation.
- Surf Coast Shire Council does not pay the student for their work.
- The Surf Coast Shire Early Years Services will liaise with the recognised educational institution/registered training organisation regarding the placement of students and will complete the required documentation.
- Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Service will utilise the Early Years Services Student Application and Induction (D18/72018) and Student Placement Spreadsheet (D18/71224).
- Student roles and responsibilities will be as per the educational institution/registered training organisation's requirements for the placement; as negotiated with the relevant Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services Team Leader and appropriate Teacher.

- Students are to inform the staff member/educator early in the placement of requirements of practicum which need to be completed while on placement and are responsible for completion of their own assessment requirements.
- Students will be placed with staff/educators that have a qualification level equal to or greater than the level being studied by the student.
- Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff/educators must ensure that students have read the confidentiality policy. For all early Years students, any discussion of child health and development and education should occur under the supervision of an experienced staff member.
- Students will access Early Years policy via the surf Coast and are expected to familiarise themselves with relevant policies and procedures of the day to day operations of the Service and their obligations under these policies.
- Maternal and Child Health staff will check with families prior to an appointment commencing to see if they are happy for a student to attend the session.
- Families must be notified in advance of the commencement of a student placement and any objections or concerns must be dealt with immediately in consultation with the service management.
- Early Years Services will display a photo and information about the student for families to access.
- Surf Coast Shire Early Years Student work instructions is available on TRIM (D18/72021)
- School Work Experience students are to be approved by Surf Coast Shire Human Recourses (HR) department.

5.4 Key Resources Ratios and Qualifications

5.4.1 Key Resource Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services

Refer to Department of Education & Training website

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Educator to Child Ratios and Qualifications Fact Sheet:

5.4.2 Surf Coast Shire Family Day Care Service (additional policy position)

The educator will not care for or educate more than four (4) pre-school children (including the educators own children or any other child that resides in the Family Day Care residence) at any time; or more than 7 school aged children under the age of 13, in total (including the educators own children or any other child that resides in the Family Day Care residence) at any one time.

5.4.3 Key Resource Occasional Care

Refer to Department of Education and Training

6. Records

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

Record	Retention/Disposal Responsibility	Retention Period	Location
Recruitment and Selection Forms	Records	7 years after conclusion of action	Off-Site Records Dept
Educational Leader Role Designation Form	Records	7 years after conclusion of action	Off-Site Records

7. Attachments

Not applicable

8. References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

D15/15250	Recruitment of Family Day Care Educators Policy
HR01	Recruitment and Selection
HR02	Police Check and Working with Children Check
HR03	Induction
SCS-047	Volunteer Policy

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

HRF001	Employment Application Guide
HRF009	Recruitment and Selection Form
HRF010	Reference Checking Guide
D17/6015	Educational Leader Role Agreement Form
D15/77695	Family Day Care Induction Program Form
D19/17204	Early Years Induction Checklist
D18/72021	Early Years Service Student Placement Work Instruction
D18/71224	Kindergarten Student Placement Spreadsheet
D18/72018	Early Years Services Student Application and Induction
D19/83650	Early Years Staff Record Template
D14/28791	MCH Maintenance of Registration/Professional Development Requirements Work Instruction

Other References

Education and Care Services National Law 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
National Quality Standard 2011
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2009
Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2019
Maternal and Child Health Service Program Guidelines 2019

Approval Date:	01/04/2014	Approved by:	General Manager Culture and Community
Amendment/Review 1:	01/05/2016	Approved by:	Manager Aged and Family
Amendment/Review 2:	21/09/2018	Approved by:	Manager Aged and Family
Amendment/Review 3:	13/02/2020	Approved by:	Manager Community Strengthening
Amendment/Review 4:	22/05/2020	Approved by:	Manager Community Strengthening
