

Early Years Services – QA6.2 Enrolment

TRIM Reference: D15/16297 Due for Review: 16 February 2023
Responsible Officer: Coordinator Early Years

Purpose

This policy outlines Surf Coast Shire Council's (Council) commitment to ensure that the enrolment processes for children commencing at Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services meet regulatory requirements and maintain current individual children's details.

Policy Principles

Evidence of link to National Quality Standards: 2.6.1, 6.1.1, 7.3.5

Evidence of link to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 168 (2) (k)

Scope

This policy applies to all children and their families accessing Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services.

Policy

Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services provide a fair and transparent process for allocating placements for children in Surf Coast Shire. Each service has an individual priority of access to allocate placement.

Priority of Access

Surf Coast Shire Council supports the Victorian State Government policy directions which articulate that children with additional needs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, children known to Child Protection and those eligible for fee subsidy, benefit most from being involved in early childhood programs. Families that provide evidence where possible that they have a child in one of these categories will be allocated as a priority.

Kindergarten Priority Groups – This includes 3 year old and 4 year old children

Children must turn 3 or 4 years old prior to 30th April in the year they are starting kinder to be eligible for funded kindergarten

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Asylum seeker and refugee children
- Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (including ESK)
- Children with additional needs
- Children requiring a second year of kindergarten, approved by the Department of Education and Training (DET).
- Children applying for a 4 year old program who are currently attending a 3 year old program at the same kindergarten
- Siblings who have previously attended the same kindergarten
- Surf Coast Shire residents or those employed within the municipality.

Family Day Care Priority Groups

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Asylum seeker and refugee children
- Children with additional needs

- A child from a family currently enrolled in the service
- Surf Coast Shire residents or those employed within the municipality.

Occasional Care Priority Groups

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Asylum seeker and refugee children
- Children with additional needs
- A child from a family currently enrolled in the service
- Surf Coast Shire residents or those employed within the municipality.

Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services General Procedure

Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services will:

- Allocate children according to the priority of access for each service
- Maintain a waiting list of families not allocated a placement. If a family chooses not to accept the position allocated the family can opt to be on a waiting list for a different session.
- Make available to families information including service philosophy and access to policies
- Ensure all documentation, including authorisations and medical action plans (if required) are completed during the enrolment process.

Attendance for 2 year olds in the Kindergarten Program

Children under three will not be able to attend a funded kindergarten program until their third birthday, unless the service has sufficient staff to cover the required ratios.

In circumstances where children are not given access to the program from the beginning of the kindergarten year because they are not yet three years old, fees will not be charged until they turn 3.

Parents/Guardians are required to complete the approved enrolment forms prior to the commencement of services and to provide updated details if information changes; including all relevant documentation and the Immunisation History Statement. Children will not be accepted into the service until the approved enrolment form and all relevant documentation has been completed and signed by the parent or guardian. A current Immunisation History Statement must be provided to access all early childhood education and care services in Victoria as per the 'No Jab, No Play' law.

Maternal and Child Health

The Victorian Maternal and Child Health Service is available to all families residing in Victoria, with children from birth to school age. The access pathway to Surf Coast Shire Council Maternal and Child Health Services is via the notification of a birth, or self-referral for families transferring from other municipalities.

All records containing personal information about children/families are kept in secure storage according to the Surf Coast Shire Early Years Confidentiality, Management and Storage of Records Policy.

Surf Coast Shire Privacy Statement

Surf Coast Shire Council considers that the responsible handling of personal information is a key aspect of democratic governance, and is strongly committed to protecting an individual's right to privacy. Council will comply with the Information Privacy Principles as set out in the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. The information will be used for the primary purpose it was collected or any related purpose for which the individual would reasonably expect Council to use or disclose the information. The information will not be disclosed to any other party unless Council is required to do so by law.

Definitions

Not applicable

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

D15/16286	Early Years Access and Inclusion Policy
D15/42541	Early Years Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
D15/16337	Early Years Confidentiality, Management and Storage of Records Policy
D15/16324	Family Day Care Sub-Contract Educators Advertising Policy
D15/32925	Early Years Medical Conditions and Medication Policy
D15/16324	Family Day Care Advertising Policy
D15/15748	Payment of Fees

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

D16/20238	Central Application Administration Work Instruction
D18/92421	Early Years Immunisation – No jab, No play Work Instruction
D17/30062	Early Years Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan
D17/113459	Maternal and Child Health Bookings Work Instruction
D17/86148	Entering Births into CDIS Work Instruction
D14/28709	Family Day Care Enrolment and Orientation Work Instruction
D16/43697	Family Day Care Waiting List Work Instruction
D14/28947	Occasional Care Waiting List Process Work Instruction
Online	Occasional Care Application Enrolment and Consent Form
Online	Confidential Enrolment & Consent Form - Kindergarten

Other References

Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014)
 Education and Care Services National Law 2010
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 National Quality Standards 2011
 ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit
 Childcare Service Handbook (Department of Education)
 Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
 Early Year Learning Framework for Australia
 My Time, Our Place
 Maternal and Child Health Service Guidelines 2019

Document History

Version	Document History	Approved by – Date
1	Approved	General Manager Culture and Community – 1 April 2014
2	Amendment/Review	Manager Aged and Family – 1 June 2015
3	Amendment/Review	Manager Aged and Family – 24 April 2018
4	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 28 November 2019
5	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 5 June 2020
6	Amended/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 16 August 2021