

Early Years Services – QA7.5 Governance and Management

TRIM Reference: D15/54262 Due for Review: 17 September 2023
Responsible Officer: Coordinator Early Years

Purpose

This policy outlines Surf Coast Shire Council's (Council) commitment to ensure that governance systems are in place for all Surf Coast Shire Early Years Services. It is important for a service to have effective leadership and management to guide and support high quality health, education and care services delivering quality outcomes for children and families. Governance arrangements for services are required to reflect the appropriate legal status and authority to hold both provider approval and service approval.

Policy Principles

Evidence of link to National Quality Standard: 7.1.1, 7.3.5
Evidence of link to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 168 (2) (I)
Victorian Children's Services Regulations (2020)
Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2019
Maternal and Child Health Service Program Guidelines 2019

Scope

All Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services, including Family Day Care contracted educators.

Policy

- The Approved Provider and licensee of an Education and Care service has the responsibility to ensure that all Services have in place policies and procedures related to the governance and management of the Service, including confidentiality of records.
- Governance and management procedures set out in Surf Coast Shire Council policies and procedures will be applied to and implemented at all Surf Coast Shire Early Years Services.
- Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services sit within the Department of Community Strengthening. Management (inclusive of decision making) is provided through the Early Years Unit.
- Day to day operations of the services will be managed by the Responsible Person at each service; with the support of the Surf Coast Shire Council, in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.
- We value the important role played by our service leaders, educators and staff. They are provided with the necessary training and support to ensure they are familiar with our policies and procedures.
- We have effective systems of risk management, financial and internal delegation, and performance reporting.

- Confidentiality of Records: All persons involved in Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services have the right to the maintenance of appropriate confidentiality. The services are committed to protecting the privacy of all stakeholders and conduct business with respect and integrity. Services maintain and securely store all records required under legislation, while ensuring confidentiality and accessibility by authorised persons. This includes both electronic and hardcopy format.
Refer to *Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services Confidentiality, Management and Storage of Records Policy and Procedure*.

All Early Years Leaders will:

- Ensure that relevant policies and procedures are developed and reviewed every 2 years to ensure the Early Years Services operate within the regulatory requirements.
- Ensure all staff and educators comply with policies and procedural requirements when engaging in activities relating to the operation of ECEC Services.
- Ensure all staff and educators conduct themselves in an ethical manner and abide by codes of conduct.
- Ensure all records are maintained in a confidential and private manner.
- Ensure each Service has appointed a fully informed and accepting Nominated Supervisor, to be responsible for the day to day operation of each service, to be available during all hours of operation, and they understand their responsibilities
- Ensure each Service has a suitably qualified and accepting person available at each service, to step in as the Responsible Person in the event that the Nominated Supervisor is unavailable and they understand their responsibilities
- Ensure each Service has a suitably qualified and accepting staff member as a designated Educational Leader, who will lead the development of the services curriculum.
- Ensure there are clear and precise policies, procedures and guidelines available to all families, educators and staff that clearly outline the expectations of the service and adhere to the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010.
- Recruit staff and educators that meet the definition of a Responsible Person under the National Regulations and Law Act and the Child Safe Standards.
- Ensure the Educator to Child ratios for Occasional Care and Family Day Care are maintained at all times.
- Ensure the qualification requirements for teachers/educators at an Early Years' service for children preschool age or under are appropriate and current with the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) requirements.
- Ensure that the service is insured and keep evidence of this (section 51; regulations 29, 180)
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
 - a) affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - b) significantly impact the service's education and care of children or
 - c) significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.
- Ensure all newly appointed staff/educators undertake a scheduled Council/Corporate Induction and a full orientation to their specific Service prior to commencement in their role and this is recorded.
- Ensure all staff/educators complete their Annual Performance Review with a leader each year.

- Ensure disciplinary procedures for non-compliant educators and staff are documented.
- Ensure the prescribed information in section 172 (regulation 173, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011) is displayed at each Service.
- Ensure that all reporting and reporting requirements are met regarding the National Quality Framework, family assistance, taxation, child protection, approved funding agreements and other relevant laws.
- Notify the regulatory authority about the approved provider and operational changes, and changes in relation to the nominated supervisor, as detailed in section 173 (regulations 174, 174A, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011).
- Notify the regulatory authority about changes to the 'fit and proper' status of the approved provider, any serious incidents, and complaints relating to a serious incident or that the Law has been contravened (section 174; regulations 175, 176, 176A, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011).

ALL STAFF AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- Be aware and comply with all Early Years Services Policies, procedures and guidelines, where they can be accessed, and ensure that they are followed at all times.
- Be aware and comply with all relevant policies and procedures of the Surf Coast Shire.
- Read through Policies and Guidelines on an annual basis to maintain current knowledge.
- Understand and work within all relevant Regulations, Frameworks and Guidelines.
- Be aware of the Responsible Person for the service on any given day.
- Ensure the safe and secure storage of all information set out in Regulation 177 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

Family Day Care

The service recruits suitable educators as contracted educators to provide education and care to children in the Family Day Care residence or in-venue.

- The educator acknowledges their legal responsibilities in relation to regulations by signing an annual Family Day Care Educator Agreement.
- The Family Day Care Coordination Unit staff maintain regular contact with the educators to provide support and monitor compliance with the National Regulations and the scheme's policies and procedures.
- The Approved Provider may suspend an educator from registration or cancel an Educator Agreement for failing to comply with the National Regulations or the schemes policies and procedures.

Definitions

Governance

The need for governance exists anytime a group of people come together to accomplish an end. Though the governance literature proposes several definitions, most rest on three dimensions: authority; decision-making, and accountability. A working definition of governance reflects these dimensions: *Governance determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voice heard and how account is rendered.* Ultimately, the application of good governance serves to realise organisational and societal goals.

Approved Provider

A person or Organisations delegate who holds a provider approval under the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010. A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.

Nominated Supervisor

A person with responsibility for the day to day management of an approved service.

Educational Leader

The educational leader is an appropriately qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual designated in writing by the approved provider under regulation 118 (Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011) to lead the development and implementation of educational programs in the service.

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

D15/16337 Early Years Confidentiality, Management and Storage of Records Policy

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

Other References

- Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit
- Victorian Children’s Services Regulations 2020
- Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2019
- Maternal and Child Health Service Program Guidelines 2019
- Childcare Services Handbook (Department of Education)

Document History

Version	Document History	Approved by – Date
1	Approved	General Manager Culture and Community – 1 April 2014
2	Amended	Manager Aged and Family – 23 June 2017
3	Amended	Manager Community Strengthening – 23 June 2019
4	Amended	Manager Community Strengthening – 17 July 2020
5	Amended	Manager Community Strengthening – 17 March 2022