

Early Years Services – QA6.3 Family Code of Conduct

TRIM Reference: D22/209250

Due for Review: 6 May 2027

Responsible Officer: Coordinator Early Years

Purpose

This policy is to guide families to act in a respectful and ethical manner for the benefit of the Early Years' Service and the community. It is expected that each family member understands and complies with this code of conduct when interacting with staff, volunteers, students, families and children when they attend the Early Years services.

Policy Principles

Evidence of link to National Quality Standards: 2.2.3, 6.1, 6.2

Evidence of link to Education & Care Services National Regulations 2010: 82, 83, 168 (2) (i)

Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020

Child Safe Standards 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 11

Scope

This policy applies to all parents, guardians, carers, children and families accessing Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services.

Policy

Surf Coast Shire Council Commitment Statement

Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to being a child safe organisation. We seek to prevent harm of any kind impacting children and young people and have zero tolerance for racism, child abuse and inequality.

We recognise that we all play an important role in protecting children and have legal and moral responsibilities to keep children and young people safe from harm. We promote a culture of safeguarding children and have procedures to follow when concerns about child safety are raised.

We have a commitment to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, children who are gender diverse and to the safety of children with a disability. Children and young people's rights, relationships, identity, and culture must be recognised and respected, their voices heard, and their concerns acted upon.

We aim to create enriching experiences for young learners and want children to feel safe, happy and empowered.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place to support employees, volunteers and contractors to achieve these commitments.

We create environments where all children have a voice and are listened to, their views are respected and they contribute to how we plan for, design and develop our services and activities.

Expectations

Anyone attending a Surf Coast Shire Early Childhood Education and Care service is expected to:

- Follow Surf Coast Shire child safe standards policy and uphold a commitment to child safety at all times.
- Behave in a respectful manner towards all staff, children and other families.
- Be responsible for establishing and maintaining positive relationships and modelling this to children.

Ethical conduct and communication with staff and children

Parents/carers/guardians play a key role in the education of their child/ren and should act in the best interest of children, their families and the wider community. When attending a Surf Coast Shire Early Childhood Education and Care service parents/carers/guardians must:

- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and report any allegations of suspected child abuse to Surf Coast Shire (SCS).
- Treat all children and adults associated with SCS early years' service with respect.
- Accept and respect cultural differences, differing needs and personal ability, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and families.
- Contribute to a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, other parents/carers/guardians, staff and volunteers.
- Promote a physically and culturally safe environment for all families.
- Report any injury or hazard in a building or playground that may cause an injury.
- Respect the property of the service and other people's property, privacy and confidentiality.
- Comply with all SCS policies.
- Refrain from engaging in malicious or judgemental conversations (either directly or online) and ensure that anything they say about others is fair and truthful.
- Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes bullying, harassment, discrimination or vilification towards other parents or staff of SCS.
- Refrain from offensive, insulting, racial or derogatory language or conduct towards other parents/carers/guardians or staff of SCS.
- Not smoke or vape on Early Years' service grounds or within four metres of any entrance (Victorian Law).
- Not possess alcohol on Early Years' service grounds.
- Never possess illicit drugs on Early Years' service grounds.
- Not attend Early Years events if affected by alcohol or other intoxicants.
- Conduct yourself in a manner that is consistent with the above principles.

Communication and interaction with staff, other parents/carers/guardians and children

Written and spoken communication to anyone in the SCS Early Years community should be courteous and respectful.

When communicating, parents, carers or guardians must:

- Interact civilly with staff, children and other parents at all times.
- Not use abusive/threatening language or expletives, raise their voice, insult or engage in violent behaviour to anyone on Early Years' service grounds, at any Early Years related events, or on any online platform such as Kinderloop, Xplore or WhatsApp.
- Not discipline or raise their voice or get involved in verbal altercations with another parent or child or staff member under any circumstances.
- Respect the privacy of other students, parents/carers/guardians, staff, contractors and volunteers in the Early Years' service community.

Parents, carers or guardians must not:

- Use personal electronic devices that can take images or video, such as tablets, phones and smart watches, whilst in the early childhood program (all devices are to remain in their bags, pockets) – if you need your phone to sign your child in or out, please access your phone in the hallway/foyer.

- Take any photos of their child or other children while visiting the service – this includes special events
- Download photos and video recordings of children or their own child from Kinderloop or Xplor and post to personal social media platforms.
- Disclose the personal details of a child or parent to another person without consent.

Kindergarten only

In addition, a parent/carer/guardian who is a member of the Kindergarten Parent Advisory Group (PAG) will also undertake to:

- Ensure all PAG activities are in compliance with relevant legislation and in line with the constitution, by-laws and policies and legal requirements as an incorporated association.
- Promote and support the work of the service and keep informed about its programs and activities.
- Not undermine or damage the reputation of the kindergarten or Surf Coast Shire.
- Act in the interests of all members of the kindergarten and not secure any benefit or advantage for themselves.
- Disclose any real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest promptly and comply with agreed processes for the management of such conflicts.
- Respect the confidentiality of PAG information, discussions, and decisions of the PAG.
- Act with honesty, fairness and openness in all dealings as representatives of the kindergarten PAG.
- Accept collective responsibility for the decisions of the PAG.
- Not post any photos or videos of children to PAG operated social media platforms.

Definitions

Nil.

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

MPP-052	Child Safe Organisation
D22/217989	Early Years Enrolment and Orientation
D15/35312	Early Years Child Safe Environment
D16/36657	Early Years The Safe use of digital technologies and online environments
D14/94973	Early Years Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care service premises
SCS – 032	Complaint Handling Policy
D22/31628	Early Years – Family Complaints and Grievances

Other References

The Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics
The National Convention of Rights of the Child 1989
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
ACECQA National Quality Standards
Commission for Children and Young people – Child Safe Standards
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020

Document History

Version	Document History	Approved by – Date
1	<i>New policy</i>	Manager Community Strengthening 7 March 2023
2	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Community Strengthening 30 September 2024
3	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Community Strengthening 6 November 2025