

Early Years Services – QA2.8 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness

TRIM Reference:	D14/105413	Due for Review:	7 February 2028
Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Early Years		

Purpose

Incident, injury, trauma or illness in relation to children may occur at any time. Staff/educators will be aware of the response, management and reporting requirements of such events; in order to safeguard the safety, health and wellbeing of all children attending the Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services.

Policy Principles

National Quality Standards: 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 7.1.2, 7.1.3
Education and Care Services National Regulations: r 77, 85, 86, 87, 89, 95, 97, 103, 104, 117, 168, 170, 171, 172, 175, 176, 177, 183
Education and Care Services National Law: Sections 165, 166, 167, 174, 174A
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 7.1.2
Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004
Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2017
Child Safe Standards Victoria - standard 2, 4, 6, 9, 11

Scope

This policy relates to all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff, students, volunteers, children and their families accessing the services.

Policy

All staff, volunteers, students, families at Surf Coast Shire Early Years Services must ensure that the safety, health, wellbeing, rights and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in all interactions and activities involving children.

Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff/educators have a duty of care to take immediate action and provide appropriate care or services to those involved in the event of an incident, injury, trauma situation or illness.

In the event of a serious incident, injury, or illness, staff/educators are required to administer appropriate first aid procedures within the scope of their training. The diagnosis and ongoing treatment of any injury or illness are the responsibility of the attending ambulance officers, paramedics, or registered medical practitioners.

In the case of a serious or notifiable incident, the approved provider with assistance from Team Leader, Lead Teacher, nominated supervisor or staff member must notify regulatory body via the NQAITS portal within 24 hours. They also must contact the parent/guardian to check on the wellbeing of the child and to inform them that it is a notifiable incident, and that the incident has been reported.

This policy is also to ensure that children who are unwell do not attend the services.

Parent/Guardian Notification

Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as is practicable (but no later than 24 hours after the occurrence) when a child is involved in **any** incident, injury, trauma or illness while the child is being educated and cared for by the service (r86).

Where possible parents will be contacted within the first 15 minutes of staff being made aware of an incident.

Procedures in relation to parent/guardian notification are outlined further in this document.

Illness

General Information

- The Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services aim to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all children in the services.
- The services are not able to provide the 1:1 support that a sick child requires to ensure their wellbeing.
- Any child suffering an Infectious Disease will not be permitted to attend the Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services. Note: Refer to the *Early Years Services - Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy & Procedure*.
- All illness occurring at the service is recorded on an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Form*, as outlined further in this document.

Information for Families

- Children in the education and care setting are at greater risk because of increased exposure to infections and illness in the group care setting. The service will therefore provide information to families about infection control requirements of the service, e.g. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, etc.
- Staff/educators are not to give families medical advice regarding treatment of children and will advise parents/guardians to contact a medical practitioner for diagnosis and ongoing care.

Responding to Unwell Children in Early Years Services

In order to safeguard the health of all children, staff and educators, children who are unwell, as defined below, cannot attend the education and care service.

Exclusion Criteria

A child who has any of the following symptoms cannot attend the service:

- any obvious signs of ill health (e.g. children with asthma – obvious difficulty breathing, barking cough, rib retraction, etc).
- ear, eye or discoloured nasal discharge;
- an undiagnosed rash;
- high temperature; (see High Temperature Indicator below)
- infectious sores or diseases; (children need a doctor's clearance before re-admittance)
- vomiting and/or abnormally loose bowel actions for that child (exclude for 24 hours after last bout).

Note: Refer to the *Early Years Services - Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy and Procedure*.

The *Minimum Period of Exclusion from primary schools and children's service centers for Infectious Diseases* cases and contacts Schedule is to be available at all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services.

Onset of Illness at the service

- If a child becomes unwell whilst at the service, the parents/guardians will be notified and asked to collect the child from the service as soon as possible.
- Staff/educators will complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Form as outlined in this document for all illnesses identified whilst a child is attending a service.
- If parents/guardians are unable to be contacted, the nominated emergency contacts will be telephoned and arrangements made for the collection of the child.

- While in the care of the service, the unwell child will be made comfortable and kept away from other children if practicable. Active supervision will be maintained at all times.
- The service will need to determine how the sick child can be cared for away from the other children, whilst still maintaining the required educator: child ratios. It may be possible for a non-contact staff member (e.g. Coordinator; Administration Assistant) to care for the child until the parent/guardian arrives to collect the child. Note: food handlers should not care for sick children.
- Where a parent/guardian is asked to seek medical advice regarding their child's health, the service will provide (for the Medical Practitioner's information), details about the child's symptoms and any illnesses that have recently affected children or educators/staff attending the service. All names other than the said child will be kept confidential.
- The child must not return to care until well; non-infectious and able to cope in the education and care service program.

High Temperature

- If a child has a temperature over 37.2 degrees and is also displaying signs of ill health such as drowsiness, paleness, breathing difficulty, less urine than usual or any of the symptoms listed in the exclusion criteria above, the child's parent/guardian will be notified and asked to take the child home.
- Staff/educators will monitor the child who has a temperature of 37.2 degrees and if any of the aforementioned symptoms are present and/or the temperature reaches 37.5 - 38 degrees, will call the parent/guardian to collect the child. However, dependent on other symptoms present, an ambulance may need to be called.
- Staff/educators will take physical steps to try to reduce the child's temperature, i.e. removing excess clothing, laying child in a cool place, encouraging the child to drink cool water, whilst waiting for parents/guardians/or ambulance to arrive.
- **Staff/educators will complete an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Form* as outlined in this document**

Teething

- Parent/guardians should advise staff/educators when their child is teething so that the child's needs are met.
- When the child who is teething becomes unwell and displays symptoms which include the following, then the service will contact the parent/guardian who will be requested to come to the service to collect the child.
 - High temperature
 - Flushed cheeks
 - Drooling

Accident, Incident, Injury and Trauma

Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services will ensure that the service's Nominated Supervisor and staff are aware of and will follow the required policies and procedures if a child at the service is injured or suffers a trauma.

Parents/guardians are required to provide written authority (included in the Enrolment Form) for educators/staff of the service to seek medical attention for their child if required.

Non-Serious Incident

When a non-serious incident occurs at the service, educators who are qualified in First Aid will:

- assess for any danger to themselves, children and staff.
- assess the injury.
- attend to the injured child and apply first aid.
- check that no-one has come into contact with the injured child's blood or body fluids,
- require these people to wash any contaminated areas in warm soapy water.
- clean up the spill using disposable gloves if bleeding or bodily fluids are involved.

- contact the parent/guardian (depending on the nature of the injury). If the parent/guardian is not contacted at the time of the accident they will be informed about the incident when they arrive to collect their child.
- write full details about the incident and the treatment given on an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* and require the parent to sign this form to confirm their notification of the incident.

Note: Non-serious incidents are to follow the *Incident Reporting Requirements* for the Surf Coast Shire Council.

Note: All incidents involving the head region are to be documented and parents/guardians notified as soon as possible.

Serious Incident

When a serious incident (as defined in this document under *Definitions*) occurs at the service a staff member/educator **MUST** contact the Team Leader or Coordinator of the service immediately after the incident has been managed.

When a serious incident (as defined in this document under *Definitions*, which requires more than simple first aid treatment) occurs at the service a staff member/educator who is qualified in first aid and CPR will:

- assess for any danger to themselves, children and staff
- assess the injury
- call an ambulance, where necessary
- administer first aid, and provide care and comfort prior to parents/guardians or ambulance arriving
- implement the child's current medical management plan, where appropriate
- notify parents/guardians as soon as possible of any serious medical emergency, incident or injury concerning the child, and request the parent/guardians arrange for the child to be collected from the services and/or inform the parents/guardians that an ambulance has been called.
- notify others (as authorised) on the child's enrolment form if the parents/guardians are not contactable.
- every effort will be made not to panic the parent/guardian at this stage.
- ensure that any contact with the injured child's blood or body fluids has been appropriately dealt with;
- ensure ongoing supervision of all children in attendance at the service

If an ambulance is required:

- provide the child's medical action plan and medication to the ambulance officer
- accompany the child in the ambulance when the parents/guardians are not present, provided that staff-to-child ratios can be maintained at the service.
- notify the approved provider (Team Leader Kindergarten or Early Years Coordinator) of the medical emergency, incident, injury as soon as is practicable and steps taken.
- staff to complete and submit an incident, injury, trauma and illness record detailing the incident and the action taken, and ask parent/guardian to sign the form to confirm their notification of the incident received within 24 hours
- Team Leader, Lead Teacher/primary nominee or nominated supervisor or staff member is to report the serious incident through to VECRA via NQAITS portal within 24 hours of the serious event occurring, add to serious incident database, enter into SCS incident reporting system 'Lucidity'.

If the event of the death or serious injury of a child should occur whilst the child is at the service, the educator/staff member will:

- Contact the relevant Early Years Services Team Leader/Coordinator to advise them of the situation and request they notify VECRA (the regulatory authority) and arrange for trauma counselling for all those who may need it;
- In the event of a child's death, contact the police, who should advise the child's parents/guardians in person and assist them with transport to the service or hospital;
- Contact the parents/guardians of the other children to advise them of an emergency (ensuring they are aware that their child is safe, and request they arrive to collect their children as soon as they are able. On arrival parents will be advised that a serious incident has occurred and a

child has been taken in an ambulance. At an appropriate time, provide information to the parents/guardians about trauma counselling for their child (if needed).

- As soon as practicable hold a debriefing session with all educators/staff and provide information about trauma counselling and EAP for those educators/staff who feel they need it.
- After a serious incident at the service, staff/educators will comfort children and be aware that some children may have shock reactions to the incident. Staff/educators will do all they can to ensure each child's health and wellbeing and will apply appropriate first aid in response to children's shock reactions.
- The Team Leader/Early Years Coordinator will notify the VECRA of the death, or injury that results in a child being admitted into hospital, of an enrolled child during a care session, within 24 hours after the incident occurred.
- The Team Leader/Early Years Coordinator will contact the parent to check on the wellbeing of the child and to ensure they have been informed that Council as the provider has reported the incident to VECRA.
- In the event of a serious incident, we will undertake a review (including a risk assessment) and take any appropriate action to remove or rectify the cause if required.
- Senior Management at Council will be notified in the event of a more serious incident or death of a child.

Other Serious Incidents

Serious incidents also include:

- An incident at the service premises where the attendance of emergency services was sought or should have been sought.
- If a child:
 - appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for
 - appears to have been taken or removed from the service premises in a way that breaches the National Regulations, or
 - is mistakenly locked in or out of any part of the service premises.

For service responses to these types of Serious Incidents refer also to the *Early Years Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy and Procedure* and *Early Years Delivery of children to, and Collection of Children from education and care service premises Policy*.

Note: All Serious Incidents are to be recorded on the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* and follow the *Incident Reporting Requirements* for both VECRA and Surf Coast Shire Council.

First Aid

Children requiring first aid treatment will be immediately treated by staff with First Aid qualifications.

For further information in relation to First Aid refer to the *Early Years Services First Aid Policy*.

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record

The services must ensure that an incident, injury, trauma and illness record is kept in accordance with *regulation 87*.

Staff members will ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed for any situation where a child develops an illness, received an injury, is exposed to a serious incident or is subjected to trauma while being educated and cared for by the service.

The Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record must include:

- a) Details of any incident in relation to a child or injury received by a child or trauma to a child which has been obtained while being educated and cared for by the service including the:
 - name and age of the child
 - circumstances leading to the incident, injury trauma
 - details of the incident, injury, trauma time and date the incident occurred, the injury was received or the child was subjected to trauma.
 - location – where in the service did this occur.
 - details of action take and follow up action required
 - Name of person who witnessed the incident/ injury/trauma
- b) Details of any illness which becomes apparent while the child is in the service including the:

- name and age of the child
- relevant circumstances surrounding the child becoming ill and any apparent symptoms
- date and time of the apparent onset of the illness.
- c) Detail of the actions taken by the service in relation to any incident, injury, trauma or illness which a child suffered whilst in the service including any:
 - medication administered or First Aid applied
 - medical personnel contacted.
- d) Details of any person who witnessed the incident injury or trauma.
- e) The name and telephone number of the parent/guardian/emergency contact:
 - whom the service notified or attempted to notify of any incident, injury, trauma or illness the child suffered while at the service.
 - the time and date of the notification or attempted notifications.
- f) The name and signature of the person making an entry in the record and the time and date that the entry was made.
- g) Parental Acknowledgement
- h) Any new information that is brought to light and/or discussed or witnessed that relates to the initial report

The above-mentioned information must be included in the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* as soon as is practicable; but not later than 24 hours after the incident, injury, trauma or onset of the illness. Refer to *Incident Reporting Requirements*.

Refer to *Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* template.

Incident Reporting Requirements

VECRA Requirements

If any child requires emergency medical attention for an incident, injury, trauma or illness that constitutes a serious incident (refer to *Definitions* in this document), the service must notify VECRA via the NQAITS portal within 24 hours of the incident, injury, trauma or illness occurring.

Refer to <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-agenda-it-system>

Surf Coast Shire Council Requirements

Refer to the following Surf Coast Shire Council Documents:

- **Inform Early Years leadership team**
- WHS 9.0 Injury/Incident Reporting and Investigation
- Hazard, Accident or Near Miss Report
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record
- Incident Management Employees Guide
- Enter on to Surf Coast Shire's Lucidity Reporting System

Notification to the regulatory authority via the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS) portal must be completed within 24 hours of the service or individual staff member becoming aware of a serious incident. Refer to: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-agenda-it-system> and sign into the NQAITS portal for Surf Coast Shire.

Definitions

Minor Incidents

An incident that results in an injury that is small and does not require medical attention.

Notifiable Incident

Any incidents that seriously compromise the safety, health or wellbeing of children. The notification needs to be provided to the Early Years leadership team, the regulatory authority and also to parents within 24 hours of a serious incident. The regulatory authority can be notified online through the NQAIT System.

An incident or allegation of physical or sexual abuse to a child while at an education and care service also needs to be notified to the regulatory authority within 24 hours or within 24 hours of the approved provider becoming aware of the incident or allegation.

Serious Incidents

The definition of serious incidents that must be notified to the regulatory authority is:

- (a) The death of a child:
 - (i) while being educated and cared for by an education and care service or
 - (ii) following an incident while being educated and cared for by an education and care service.
- (b) Any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child while being educated and cared for by an education and care service, which:
 - (i) a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner or
 - (ii) for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital.
e.g. broken limb, anaphylaxis reaction
- (c) any incident involving serious illness of a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital; Example: Severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis reaction.
- (d) any emergency for which emergency services attended;
- (e) any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an education and care service
 - (i) appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for or
 - (ii) appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care service premises in a manner that contravenes these regulations or
 - (iii) is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises.

VECRA

Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA): The independent statutory body that regulates early childhood education and care services in Victoria. VECRA is responsible for assessing service quality, monitoring legislative compliance, and enforcing Child Safe Standards.

Sexual Abuse For the purposes of NQF notifications, the definition of child sexual abuse varies depending on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. In the context of education and care, the definition of sexual abuse is any sexual behaviour, including grooming behaviour, between by an adult and to a child. Adults working in an education and care service are in a position of power or authority over children and any sexual behaviour by an adult towards a child is sexual abuse.

Trauma

Is when a child feels intensely threatened by an event he or she is involved in or witnesses.

Injury

Any physical damage to the body caused by violence or incident.

Medical attention

Includes a visit to a registered medical practitioner or attendance to a hospital.

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

MPP-018 (D13/4174)	Workplace Health and Safety Policy
WHS 8.0 (D14/15939)	First Aid
WHS 9.0 (D14/15944)	Incident/Injury Reporting and Investigation
WHS 2.0 (D14/15930)	Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Control
WHS 32.0 (D15/2311)	Infectious Diseases
D14/94986	Early Years Administration of 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
D22/217989	Early Years Enrolment & Orientation Policy
D14/94973	Early Years Delivery of children to and Collection from, education and care services premises Policy

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

D14/48936	Early Years Medication Record Form (Kinderloop for Kindergarten Programs)
D15/63330	Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record Form (Kinderloop for Kindergarten Programs)
D16/45493	WHS 9.3 Kindergarten Incident/Injury re child and Equipment Report Index
WH9.3	Early Years Incident/Injury re child and Equipment Report
WHS9.1	Incident Reporting Form
D25/101224	Serious Incident – What to do
D25/65185	Serious Incident Register – Early Years
D26/112745	Infectious Diseases – Flow Chart
D26/112748	Reporting Staff Injuries – Flow Chart

Other References

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
 Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020
 ACECQA National Quality Framework Resource Kit (www.acecqa.gov.au)
 Childcare Service Handbook (Department of Education)
 Staying Healthy in Early Childhood Education and Care Services, 6th Edition, NHMRC, 2024
 ACECQA website - www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/notification-types-and-timeframes
 Victorian Child Safe Standards, Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), 2016
 DE Serious Incident Notification
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/vcsincidentform.pdf>

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 May 2015
3	Amendment/Review	Manager Aged and Family – 1 June 2016
4	Amendment/Review	Manager Aged and Family – 3 October 2018
5	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 1 April 2020
6	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 16 August 2021
7	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 1 February 2023
8	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 4 July 2024
9	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 4 April 2025
10	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 6 August 2025
11	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 7 August 2026