

Early Years Services – QA4.3 Employment of Qualified Staff/Ratios, Volunteers and Students

TRIM Reference: D15/15724

Due for Review: 11 November 2024

Responsible Officer: Coordinator Early Years

Purpose

This policy outlines Surf Coast Shire Council's Early Years Services commitment to meet required qualified staff/ratio regulations and to ensure we are supporting staff wellbeing and the further development and training of students while providing opportunities for volunteers.

Policy Principles

Evidence of link to National Quality Standards 2018: 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 2020: r69

Scope

This policy applies to all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff, Family Day Care educators, students, and volunteers engaged with Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services

Policy

- We prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of children. With quality practices for staffing arrangements, we ensure that our educators, staff, volunteers and students safeguard the children at all times.
- Our educators, staff, volunteers and students are guided by a high level of professional standards - we provide position descriptions for our staff.
- 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 2020* (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.
 - to establish clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning.
 - to promote children's learning and development to families.
- 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.

Working with Children Checks and Police Record Checks

- All Council employees and contractors 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.
 - All Students and volunteers including Parent Advisory Group members are required to have a current working with children 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
- Refer to: HR-02 Working With Children and Criminal History Check Policy

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.

- Students must complete the Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Induction Training prior to commencing their placement.
- 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 Resources (HR) department.

Key Resources Ratios and Qualifications

- **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*
- **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 one 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.
- **Key Resource Occasional Care**
Refer to Department of Education and Training

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.

Related Procedure

Nil.

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

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

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
D17/6013	Responsible Persons Form
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

Other References

- Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard 2018
- Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020

Document History

Version	Document History	Approved by – Date
1	Approved	General Manager Culture and Community – 1 April 2014
2	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Aged and Family – 1 May 2016
3	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Aged and Family – 21 September 2018
4	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Community Strengthening – 13 February 2020
5	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Community Strengthening – 22 May 2020
6	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Community Strengthening – 22 November 2021
7	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Community Strengthening – 11 May 2023