

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

TRIM Reference: D14/105413 Due for Review: 1 August 2024
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: 2.21, 2.2.2, 2.2.3,
Education and Care Services National Regulations: r 86, 87, 168 (2) (b), 177
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
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 staff, students, volunteers, Family Day Care (FDC) educators, children and their families accessing the services.

Policy

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 case of serious incident, injury or illness, staff/educators are only required to administer the appropriate first aid procedures as per their training. Diagnosis and treatment are the responsibility of the ambulance officer or medical practitioner in attendance.

In the case of a serious incident, the Team Leader or staff member notifying DET via the portal must contact the parent to check on the wellbeing of the child and to inform them that it is a reportable 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.

Maternal and Child Health Service

The Maternal Child Health Service provides families with information for the promotion of health and development of the child; inclusive of:

- the recommended immunisation schedule;
- recognising illness in the child and recommending the required response, which can include seeing a medical practitioner;
- education in the reduction of health risks to the child.

(Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards, Standard 2).

The Maternal and Child Health Service is a “well child” service, and acutely unwell children or adults should not attend. Parents/guardians are asked to reschedule their appointment in the event a child is unwell. It is acknowledged that Maternal and Child Health is a universal health service and from time to time families may come to the service seeking advice for children who are displaying symptoms of illness. In this case, essential support will be offered to the parent/guardian, including information about first aid and comfort measures, and the family will be encouraged to contact their local General Practitioner.

Responding to Unwell Children in Early Years Services

Sick children, as defined below, cannot be admitted to the education and care service, in order to safeguard the health of other children and staff members/educators.

Exclusion Criteria

A child who has any of the following symptoms cannot be admitted to 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/Family Day Care educator’s homes/venues.

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.
- All illnesses at the service is recorded on an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Form*, as outlined further in this document.
- 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 be returned 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 monitor the child who has a temperature of 37.2 degrees and if either 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:
 - High temperature
 - Flushed cheeks
 - Drooling

The service will contact the parent/guardian who will be requested to come to the service to collect the child.

Accident, Incident, Injury and Trauma

Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services will ensure that the service's Nominated Supervisor and staff/Family Day Care educators are aware of and will follow the required policies and procedures in the event that 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 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 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

Serious Incident

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:

- ensure an ambulance has been called
- assess the injury, apply first aid as appropriate and report to the nominated supervisor/coordinator
- ensure that any contact with the injured child's blood or body fluids has been appropriately dealt with;
- If an ambulance is required:
 - provide the child's medical record for the ambulance officer;
 - discuss with the nominated supervisor/coordinator which staff member/educator will accompany the child in the ambulance;
 - Where possible the staff member/educator will arrange for emergency relief staff/educators to attend the service so that a staff member/educator can accompany the injured child in the ambulance, or take the child to the local clinic or medical practitioner.
 - In the case of Family Day Care, the educator will be required to stay with the other children in care and where possible coordinate a parent or contact person to accompany the child in the ambulance.
On occasion and depending on the circumstances the Coordination Unit staff may be able to stay with the other children until they are collected by their parents while the educator accompanies the child in the ambulance.
- The staff member/educator will contact the child's parents/guardians or emergency contact person to advise them of the incident and where they may meet their child from the ambulance. Every effort will be made not to panic the parent/guardian at this stage.
- The remaining children will be kept together until the emergency relief staff member/educator has arrived at the service.
- The educator/staff member will contact the relevant Early Years Services Team Leader or the Early Years Coordinator as soon as practicable to inform them of the incident and steps taken.
- Staff to complete a full report of the accident/incident detailing the incident and the action taken, on an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* and require the parent/guardian to sign the form to confirm their notification of the incident received within 24 hours
- 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 or the Early Years Coordinator to advise them of the situation and request they notify DET (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 appropriate time information about trauma counselling for their child (if needed) will be provided to parents/guardians.

- 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 DET of the death, or injury that results in a child being admitted into hospital, of an enrolled child during a care session, within one working day 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 DET
- 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 and Collection of Children Policy and Procedure*.

Note: All Serious Incidents are to be recorded on *the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* and follow the *Incident Reporting Requirements* for both DET 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 & Procedure*.

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/Family Day Care Educator 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
 - time and date the incident occurred, the injury was received or the child was subjected to 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 Aide 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

The aforementioned 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

DET 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 DET 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:

- WHS 9.0 Injury/Incident Reporting and Investigation
- Hazard, Accident or Near Miss Report
- Incident Management Employees Guide.

Family Day Care

As per the *Surf Coast Shire Council Family Day Care Service Educator Agreement*, all Family Day Care Educators are required to have Public Liability Insurance:

20. Public Liability Insurance - The Educator is responsible for maintaining all insurances required including public liability insurance for the amount of at least \$10,000,000.

Definitions

Non-Serious Incidents

An incident that happens to a child within an education and care service that can be appropriately responded to and does not require a response from outside the service; including incidents that can be responded to via simple first aid treatment administered by a staff member/educator who is qualified in first aid.

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, or illness of, 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. whooping cough, broken limb, anaphylaxis reaction
- (c) any incident where the attendance of emergency services at the education and care service premises was sought, or ought reasonably to have been sought

- (d) 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.

Notification to the regulatory authority via the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS) 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.

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Polices

SCS-014 (D13/4174)	Occupational Health and Safety Policy
WHS 8.0 (D14/15939)	Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Procedure - First Aid
WHS 9.0 (D14/15944)	Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Procedure – Incident/Injury Reporting and Investigation
WHS 2.0 (D14/15930)	Hazard Inspection, Risk Assessment and Control
WHS 32.0 (D15/2311)	Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Procedure – Infectious Diseases
D14/94986	Early Years 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 Services Enrolment & Orientation of Children and their Family Policy
D14/94973	Early Years Delivery and Collection of Children Policy

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

D14/28577	Family Day Care Supervision of Children Work Instructions
D14/48936	Early Years Medication Record Form
D15/63330	Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record Form
WHS9.1	Incident Report Form

Other References

Staying Healthy in Child Care, 5th Edition, NHMRC, 2013
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020
Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2019
Maternal and Child Health Service Program Guidelines 2019
ACECQA National Quality Framework Resource Kit (www.acecqa.gov.au)
Childcare Service Handbook (Department of Education)
Staying Healthy in Child Care, 5th Edition, NHMRC, 2013
ACECQA website - www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/notification-types-and-timeframes

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
5	Amendment/Review	Manager Community Strengthening – 1 February 2023