

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

TRIM Reference: D15/15724

Due for Review: 30 July 2026

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, 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, as well as ongoing professional development.
- 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 teaching strategies, and processes are implemented in the curriculum.
 - to establish clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning reflect the National Quality Standards.
 - 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 staff hours? With days and times that each staff member/educator is working with the children.

Volunteers

- Volunteers will need to complete a registration form and induction, which is available at each kindergarten service – and kept in the volunteers folder at each service once completed.
- Volunteer names are recorded at each service in the Volunteers Folder.
- Volunteers must read the Volunteers Handbook and watch the Child Safeguarding Video, which are both found on the Surf Coast Shires Website
- People that fail to meet the requirements set out in the Volunteer Handbook will not be able to volunteer at any of the kindergarten locations.
- Volunteers will not be included in staff ratios required to meet regulatory requirements.
- Volunteers must sign in and out of the visitor book when volunteering at the service.

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.
- Victoria Police Officers and Australian Federal Police (AFP) are exempt from the Working with Children Check (HR 02), however if the officer is suspended or dismissed from Victoria Police or the AFP, they are no longer exempt and must apply for a 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.
- 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 – Tertiary

- Refer to Work Instructions D18/72021
- 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.
- 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 and the Child Safe Organisation 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 policies via the Surf Coast Shire Website 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.
- Students will not be included in staff ratios required to meet regulatory requirements.

Work Experience Students – secondary school

- Refer to Work Instructions D18/72021
- Work Experience students are to be approved by Kindergarten Program Advisor
- A Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement form, or Work Experience Arrangement form from the Victoria State Government – Department of Education must be completed by all parties prior to commencement of work experience.
- Students must complete the Surf Coast Shire Council Workplace Health and Safety Induction Training prior to commencing their placement.
- Students will not be included in staff ratios required to meet regulatory requirements.

Key Resources Ratios and Qualifications

- **Key Resource Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services**
*Refer to Department of Education website
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Educator to Child Ratios and Qualifications Fact Sheet*
- **Key Resource Occasional Care**
Refer to Department of Education

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

HR01	Recruitment and Selection Policy
HR02	Working with Children and Criminal History Checks
HR03	Employee Induction Checklist
MPP-037	Volunteer Management Policy
D15/42616	Determining the responsible Person Present Early Years 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
- HRF010 Reference Checking Guide
- D17/6013 Responsible Persons Form
- D17/6015 Educational Leader Role Agreement Form

- D20/40559 Kindergarten – 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
- D24/78151 Staff Induction handbook
- D24/109187 Kindergarten – Student Work Experience – Induction Checklist
- D23/130373 Kindergarten Volunteer application form
- D25/2048 Kindergarten Volunteers Instruction
- MPR-007 Volunteer Management Procedure

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
8	Amended/Reviewed	Manager Community Strengthening – 31 Jan 2025