

Early Years Services – QA6.3 Family Code of Conduct

TRIM Reference: D22/209250 Due for Review: 7 September 2024
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 Year's 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 ~~and be~~ 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.

~~Surf Coast Shire Early Years is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We seek to prevent harm of any kind impacting children and young people and have zero tolerance for racism, child abuse and inequality. 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 foster a culturally safe, child safe and child friendly environment for all children and young people we have contact with, deliver services to, or are impacted by our work.~~

~~Surf Coast Shire is committed to being a child safe organisation and has zero tolerance for child abuse. The focus of our work is on children under the age of 18. We recognise our legal and moral responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe from harm and promoting their best interests.~~

~~We have a commitment to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, and to the safety of children with a disability. 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 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 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 embrace-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, 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 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 kindergarten 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 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, ~~or~~ at any Early Years ~~related~~ events, or on any online platform such as EDUCA, 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, staff, contractors and volunteers in the Early Years' service community.

Parents, carers or guardians must not:

- Take a photo or video recording of another student or parent without their consent
- Post a photo or video recording of another student or parent on social media without consent
- Post a photo or video recording of a child that is not their own on social media without obtaining consent from the child's parent beforehand
- Disclose the personal details of a child or parent to another person without consent.

Kindergarten only

In addition, a parent 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.

Definitions

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

- D22/217989 Early Years Enrolment and Orientation
- D15/35312 Early Years Child Safe Environment
- D14/94973 Early Years Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care service premises
- SCS – 032 Complaint Handling Policy
- ~~D16/68577 Complaints and Grievances Instructions~~
- 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 |
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| 1 | <i>New policy</i> | Manager Community Strengthening 7 March 2023 |
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