

Children's Services Policy and Procedure Manual



PHILOSOPHY

Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to providing early year's services which reflect its core values of leadership, integrity, respect, innovation and teamwork. This commitment supports the belief in the right of all children to experience the best start in life and Council promotes this belief by providing warm, safe, secure education and care environments which foster quality learning and development opportunities for children in our community.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

- We provide education and care settings underpinned by inclusive practices that build a solid foundation for children's lives, maximise their individual abilities and respect their unique family and cultural identities.
- We actively support a play-based learning approach which fosters children's sense of identity and wellbeing as well as supporting them in becoming confident learners and effective communicators, and in building strong links with their community.
- We acknowledge families as the first and most significant influence in their child's life and learning, and work in partnership with them to support children's ongoing development.
- We respect and value the experience, skills and commitment of our team of professional early childhood educators.
- We support and resource educators to actively promote children's learning and development in line with our philosophy and core principles.
- We support an ongoing professional development culture which enhances the skill levels of educators, fosters critical reflection and promotes best practice.
- We develop and maintain collaborative professional relationships which help to identify and respond to child and family needs.
- We regularly seek input and feedback from stakeholders to guide ongoing service improvement.
- We follow the Code of Ethics in its entirety.

Supporting Documents:

- *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959).*
- *Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (2006)*
- *National Quality Framework for Education and Care Services in Australia*
- *Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)*
- *Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011)*
- *Education & Care Services National Law Act (2010).*
- *Greater Shepparton City Council Municipal Early Years Plan (2009-2013).*

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ACCESS IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PRINCIPLE

Children's Services will be accessible to all children and families without exception, without distinction or discrimination due to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of the child or their family.

Greater Shepparton City Council will ensure the fair allocation of childcare and kindergarten places for those families participating in Council's Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme and Council's Long Day Care, Occasional Care, Fun Group and Family Day Care Services.

GUIDELINES

1. Within the requirements of State and Federal governments all children will have equal opportunity to access Council's Children's Service.
2. A child under 6 weeks of age cannot commence care unless a certificate from a registered medical practitioner or maternal child and health nurse is provided declaring the child is well and fit to attend care.
3. Educators will encourage input and participation by all parents, guardians, families and committees to ensure equal access for all children.
4. Where additional support/funding is required to ensure access to a council's children's services, every effort will be made to seek such support/funding prior to the child commencing at the service.
If no funding or CCB is available, full fees will be charged or care starting date maybe delayed.
5. Council will be responsible for major structural changes required to ensure that all children obtain access to council services. (Excluding FDC)
6. Every effort will be made to ensure individual needs of children are met in regard to a second year of kindergarten.
7. Priority of Access guidelines will be followed for Long Day Care and Family Day Care services (Appendix 2) to comply with the Victorian and National legislation, including anti-discrimination and human rights law.
8. Parents/guardians seeking childcare should contact the service to arrange an interview and to register the child with the service. Requests for childcare are recorded and prioritized according to the Commonwealth Government Priority of Access.
9. Parents/Guardians and/or educators are under no obligation to accept any placement.
10. All children's services will abide by the Greater Shepparton City Council Family and Children's Services Privacy statement (Appendix 1.1)

Orientation

It is best practice for children, families and educators to be orientated prior to the commencement of permanent placements but we recognise this is not always possible.

Orientation may include;

- Attending short periods 1-2 hours leading up to full days
- Parents/guardians attending for small plays with their child prior to care commencing
- Educators contacting parents/guardians regularly when children are left initially via phone, email etc.
- Providing communication books or forms as ongoing communication tools

All the above strategies can assist both children and their parent/guardian to separate and assist in cementing the foundation of healthy relationships with families and children.

Long Day Care

Family Day Care

Priority of Access

Council's long day care and family day care services operate under the Child Care Management System (CCMS) and offer Child Care Benefit (CCB) to families. It is a condition of approval when offering CCB that the services must comply with Family Assistance Legislation e.g. reporting under the CCMS guidelines and allocating places under the Priority of Access guidelines.

The Priority of Access Guidelines are set out in the Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000 and Child Care Services Handbook (DEEWR).

GUIDELINES

The Priority of Access guidelines (Appendix 1.2) apply to long day care, family day care and long day care places at Nancy Vibert Occasional Care. Failure to meet these guidelines is a breach of the conditions of continued approval and may result in a service being sanctioned under the Act. These sanctions may result in eligibility for CCB being withdrawn from all families.

Long Day Care

Requiring a child to vacate a place

Where a service has no vacant places and is providing childcare for a child who falls under Priority 3, under the Priority of Access Guidelines the service may require that child to vacate a place to make room for a higher priority child. The service can only do so if:

- The person liable for the payment of the child care fees was notified when the child first occupied that childcare place that the service followed this policy, and
- The service gives the person at least 14 days notice of the requirement for the child to vacate the place.

Procedure for waiting list application: Refer to section on waiting list

1. Parents are to complete a Request for Care/Waiting List form (Appendix 1.3) and return the form to the service in order to have their child/ren placed on a waiting list.
2. Parents will receive a copy of the Waiting List policy when their child is placed on the waiting list.
3. Parents will receive a letter confirming that their child/ren is on the service's waiting list (Appendix 1.4).
4. Waiting lists will be reviewed in March and August each year, unless a vacancy occurs earlier. Parents will be contacted in writing requesting that they confirm that care is still required. **Failure to confirm care will result in the child/ren being taken off the waiting list.**
5. When a vacancy occurs at the service a place will be offered to the first child on the waiting list according to:
 - The date when the "Request of Care" form was lodged.
 - Priority of access guidelines (long day care places only)
 - Whether the child is already attending the service.
 - Whether the child has a sibling already attending the service.
6. A parent will be given 24 hours to decide if they wish to accept a place.
7. If a parent does not wish to take up the offer of a place for their child it will be offered to the next person on the list.
8. A parent may elect to utilise an offered place by starting their child earlier or have it held for a short period. Places will be held for 2 weeks only. If a parent chooses not to take up the place at the end of the 2 week period, it shall be offered to the next person on the list.
9. Parents/ or guardians can elect to remain on a list if not ready to take up a vacancy.

Long Day Care

Occasional Care

1. All children aged 6 weeks up to school entry are eligible for enrolment in long day care and occasional care. Children may attend a service up until the time that they start school, including January of the year they are to commence school (see below for attendance by school aged children).
2. Enrolments can be made by contacting individual services. Parents will be asked to complete a "Request for Care/Waiting List" form (Appendix1.3) providing details of care required.

3. Childcare places will be allocated according to:
 - The date the “Request for Care” form was submitted
 - Priority of Access guidelines as set out by the Australian Government (Appendix 1. 2)
 - Whether the child is already attending the service
 - Whether the child has a sibling already attending the service
4. Parents/ or guardians may be asked to provide reasons and evidence for accessing childcare to allocate position according to priority of access guidelines.
5. Parents/ or guardians of a child not allocated a place will receive advice that their child is to be placed on a waiting list.
6. It is the parents/ or guardians responsibility to notify the service if their circumstances or contact details change.
7. Council’s services are to review all child care places on a quarterly basis to ensure families are accessing childcare places based on the Priority of Access guidelines.
8. School aged children may attend a childcare centre for a short period, as approved by the service leader. Early Childhood Services are suitable for preschool aged children so it is generally recommended that families access alternative after school or vacation care programs that are designed for the care of school aged children.

A number of factors will be taken into consideration when considering a school aged child’s attendance for a short period at a service:

- Age of the child
- Needs of the individual family
- Alternative care available to the family i.e. Family Day Care, Vacation Care
- Places available in the service
- Needs of the preschool children currently attending the service
- Number of school aged children seeking attendance at the service
- Needs of the individual child seeking attendance at the service

Access to Occasional Care

Priority of Access guidelines do not apply to occasional care places e.g. Nancy Vibert Occasional Care, Rural Occasional Care, however places will be allocated where possible to assist families identified as ‘at risk’ in accordance with the LDC guidelines.

Enrolments can be made by contacting individual services. Nancy Vibert parents shall be asked to complete a “Request for Care/Waiting List” form (Appendix 1.3) providing details of care required.

Nancy Vibert Occasional Care places:

1. Bookings will be taken for up to two weeks in advance.
2. If places are full, the family will be asked if they wish to go on waiting list for that day.
3. Parents will be asked to supply the following details: name, child’s name, child’s age, date and time care is required and contact phone number. The request will be dated by educators.
4. Parents will be given a copy of the Waiting List policy in the package of information they receive upon enquiry.

5. If a place becomes available it will be offered to the first child on the Waiting List according to the date requested. This will be in accordance with age requirements.
6. Where there is short notice of a cancellation if parent/s being offered the place cannot be contacted on the phone number supplied, no message will be left and staff will move on to next family on waiting list.
7. Parents are asked to let administration know as soon as possible if they no longer require being on the daily waiting list.

Rural Occasional Care Occasional Care Services:

1. Bookings can be added to the Booking Sheet up to two weeks in advance.
2. If places are full, the family can place their child on the waiting list for that day.
3. As soon as a parent cancels care, the place will be offered to the first child in that age group on the waiting list.
4. Where there is short notice of a cancellation if the parent/s being offered the place cannot be contacted on the phone number supplied, no message will be left and staff will move on to next family on waiting list.
5. If a place is not available the child goes to the top of the list for the next occasional care day.
6. Occasional care can be accessed at Nancy Vibert occasional care, Tallygaroopna occasional care, Katandra west occasional care.

Greater Shepparton City Council complies with the Information Privacy Principle contained in the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001.

Kindergarten

ACCESS TO KINDERGARTEN

First year of Funded Kindergarten

1. The Greater Shepparton City Council Central Enrolment process will assist access to a funded kindergarten program for at least one year for all eligible children. (Refer to Greater Shepparton City Council Enrolment Policy and Greater Shepparton City Council's Kindergarten Central Enrolment policy).
2. Greater Shepparton City Council and Kindergarten Committees of Management will consult with parents/ or guardians annually to invite input into the hours of operation and parent involvement in order to assist with access for all children.
3. The identified needs from such consultation will be considered in relation to funding and budget requirements for each program from year to year.
4. Children are normally allocated one funded year of kindergarten, although application can be made for a second year. Funding or a position for a second year cannot be guaranteed.

Department of Education and Early Childhood (DEECD) process will be followed as outlined in the Central Enrolment Policy.

5. Children having a funded first year or second year of kindergarten will take precedence over children having an unfunded year of kindergarten.
6. All families will be informed that their child is enrolled in a funded place in kindergarten when they commence attendance in a funded kindergarten program. Families will also be informed that each child is entitled to one year only attendance at funded kindergarten.

Second year of Funded Kindergarten

1. Children who meet the current DEECD criteria will be eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten and will follow the normal process of the central enrolment system.
2. The developmental needs of the child will be the main criteria for all discussions regarding the access to a first or second year of funded kindergarten.
3. Parents/ or guardians will be assisted to seek alternative programs for a child who will not receive maximum benefit in the funded program for the current year. This will include discussions on the child's individual development, alternative programs and re-enrolment in kindergarten for the following year.
4. Where a child is considered unlikely to be ready for school in the following year, the kindergarten teacher will discuss the options available with the child's parents/guardians. These discussions will occur prior to the end of second term. Children withdrawn from the funded kindergarten program by the end of term two remain eligible for a full year of funded kindergarten in the following year. The normal process of the central enrolment system will be required to be followed.
5. If the kindergarten teacher believes that the child would benefit from a second year of funded kindergarten, the kindergarten teacher needs to complete a third term assessment that includes observations, aims and outcomes. (This will be done in consultation with the child's parent/s or guardian/s.)
6. Where possible parents/guardians will be encouraged to submit a central enrolment form by July 31 to enrol for the following year. Due to the timing of second year funded kindergarten approvals, if the child has not been re-enrolled before the close of enrolments and a place is unavailable the child will go to the top of the waiting list.
7. Once the position has been allocated and acceptance confirmed by the parents/guardians, the enrolment is treated as any other enrolment and the child's position cannot be allocated to another child.

Unfunded Kindergarten places

Every effort will be undertaken to ensure individual needs of unfunded children are met in regard to a second year of kindergarten.

Children may undertake a second year of kindergarten without Department of Education and Early Childhood Development funding if a place is available after all other eligible children have been allocated places.

It is a parent /or guardians right to access a second year of kindergarten if they believe that this is appropriate for their child. If funding for a second year is not approved, the teacher may still recommend a second year.

1. Places will be allocated to unfunded children and parents notified by the end of the year prior to attendance if a vacancy exists at this time.
2. Once the position has been allocated and acceptance confirmed by the parents/guardians, the enrolment is treated as any other enrolment and the child's position cannot be allocated to another child.
3. The full cost recovery of DEECD per capita funding and standard kindergarten fees will be charged and the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy discount will not apply.

Kindergarten in a child care centre

1. If a child is accessing kindergarten and care in a child care centre and is withdrawn from the kindergarten program before the end of term two they remain eligible to occupy a childcare place.
2. The decision regarding their placement within the centre will be made on the basis of individual circumstance.
3. The child's needs and available spaces within the overall centre will be considered.
4. Each individual case will be reviewed by the Team Leader – Children's services, Early Years Coordinator, Service Leader and Kindergarten Teacher.

Kindergarten Central Enrolment

Refer to central enrolment form.

DEFINITIONS

Funded Kindergarten: Usually the year immediately prior to the child's enrolment in primary school, partially funded by the Victorian State Government Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). Every Victorian child is entitled to one year of funded kindergarten. Eligibility for a second year of funded kindergarten is dependent on specific criteria being met.

Normal process of the central enrolment system: parent/ or guardians are required to complete a City of Greater Shepparton Kindergarten Central Enrolment Form and return it to Greater Shepparton City Council offices at 90 Welsford Street Shepparton by July 31 in the year prior attendance. Applications received after July 31 will be accepted as late applications.

Fun Group

There is no government subsidy for Fun Group and the cost of this program is met entirely by fees levied to parents and subsidized by council.

Access to Fun Group

Children can access Fun Group once they have turned three years of age, subject to places being available.

Fun Group Enrolment

1. Children are eligible to be enrolled and attend Fun Group when they have turned three years of age.
2. Applications for Fun Group will continue to be accepted while places are available.
3. Applications should be lodged at the service of choice.
4. Enrolment applications open on the 1st August.
5. All eligible enrolments received by 30th September in the year prior to Fun Group attendance will be allocated places according to birth age with older children given preference
6. Where enrolment applications at any one service exceed eligible places, all names will be allocated to the service by a random ballot conducted by the Central Enrolment Officer at Council.
7. The ballot will occur within five (5) working days of 30 September.
8. The ballot will continue until all names are selected. Names selected after the available places are filled, will be placed in order of selection on the waiting list for that service.
9. Letters to parents/guardians offering placements will be forwarded by the 4th November. Should acceptance not be received by the notified date the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. If there is no waiting list the place will be kept until parents/guardians accept or reject the place or a waiting list exists. Parents/or guardians of children NOT allocated a place in Fun Group will be notified by the Central Enrolment Officer at Council and will be given the option to enroll at another service or be placed on the waiting list. There is no guarantee of a place becoming available. This is only applicable to children who have already turned three.
10. Applications received after 30 September will be allocated a place if available. If no places are available the child's name will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list based on criteria of access.
11. When vacancies occur throughout the year, the place will be offered to the first child on the waiting list or the next eligible enrolment.
12. Where Fun Group sessions are shared with a funded kindergarten program, children must turn three years of age by 31st December, the year prior in order to commence Fun Group. In this situation, at the kindergarten teachers and Children's Services Management discretion, Fun Group may commence in March.
13. A second session may be available if enrolment numbers allow and in consideration of budget needs. Children may be offered two sessions if all the children enrolled have been allocated one session and vacancies exist. These places will be allocated as fees are paid.
14. A maximum of 20 enrolments will be taken for each session. (This number may be increased or reduced in consultation with Councils' management with consideration of family/community needs and budget requirements).
15. Orientation of children will commence only once the child turns three years of age. Parent/guardians are encouraged to visit their preferred service to meet with the educators who will be working with their child

Family Day Care

GUIDELINES

Care is provided for children up to the completion of primary school. Once a child begins secondary education it is expected that the parent make alternative care arrangements for the child.

Educators own children are counted within ratios and affect further placement of children until they are 13. (Regulation 124)

Situations where a secondary school aged child would remain in care include but are not limited to;

- The developmental ability of the child to manage the school to home transition.
- The distance that the child has to travel from school to home.
- The complexity of travel arrangements.
- The length of time that the child would be home alone before or after school.
- Child/family with 'at risk' issues.

- The child has a disability which would prevent the child from being able to care for himself/herself before or after school.
- The safety of the child was to be compromised if care was not available.
- The age of the child when they commenced high school.
- The type of care required is weekend, evenings or overnight care.

At all times the needs of the educator, the other children in care, the individual child and the families remain a priority. If the needs of one child compromise the safety or well-being of others the family may be asked to find alternate care arrangements.

PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

GUIDELINES

1. New parents/ or guardians will be invited to spend a small amount of time with coordination unit staff prior to child placement to discuss the needs of the child and family expectations, review the parent handbook, review child care benefit information, policies and guidelines and ensure essential family information is accurately recorded.
2. An enrolment form must be completed prior to commencement of regular care. It is preferred this form is lodged with the Family Day Care coordination unit office who will provide a copy for the family to give to their educator.
3. The parent/ or guardian and educator shall meet for the initial interview to discuss all aspects of the potential placement. The child's needs and the expectations of parents/ or guardians and the educator should be openly discussed. Once an educator has been selected, it is recommended a second interview be arranged for the parent/ or guardian and educator to discuss full details of care before care commences and complete the relevant paperwork.

Coordination unit staff will:

1. Gather as much information as possible regarding the potential placement on the initial query including:
 - Health information including asthma, risk of anaphylaxis, medical conditions and mental health issues affecting the family.
 - Family structure
 - Needs regarding care arrangements
 - Geographic area/transport
2. Contact educators regarding the placement and will discuss the care requirements. If possible, staff will give parents/ or guardians two or three referrals to choose from.
3. Call parents/ or guardians when a potential placement is available. The period of time for notification varies, according to the number of available spaces.
4. If requested by the educator and/or parent, dependant on availability a staff member will be present at the initial interview.
5. Be responsible for ensuring that the educator has the relevant family information.

Educators will:

1. Assume responsibility for the enrolment of a child in circumstances regarding priority one, exceptional circumstances, urgency/time of placement and remote living. Enrolment forms can be lodged with educators who will then ensure the enrolment form is completed accurately and delivered to the coordination unit as soon as possible. Educators will assume the responsibility of obtaining their own copy of the enrolment form in this case.
2. Educators can source their own placements but refer them to the office for due process

Parents/ or Guardians will:

1. Contact and arrange an interview with the educators they have been offered.
2. Contact the educators they have interviewed to notify them whether or not they will be starting care.
3. Contact the service and notify them of their choice of educator prior to care commencing.
4. Inform both the educator and the service if the information is changed at any time during the placement.

Recommended Emergency Placement Procedure

An emergency placement is one that is made outside normal working hours of the coordination unit or during exceptional circumstances as approved by children services – Family Day Care. In all instances of emergency placements the on call coordinator unit must be advised. The on call coordinator can be contacted on 0408 329 300 if this is not during office hours.

Emergency care may be offered under the following circumstances:

- If a parent/guardian is called away unexpectedly.
- If a parent/guardian must travel unexpectedly.
- Illness, accident, hospitalisation, or death of a family member.
- In the event of a parent/guardian being taken into police custody.
- Referral from specialist agencies

It is preferred that parents/ or guardians requesting an emergency care placement meet with coordination unit staff within 24 hours of the placement if possible. Where possible an initial interview should take place between the educator and the parent/guardian to ensure information is shared and expectations are clear.

It must be understood that neither party is under obligation to accept the placement.

An educator may not accept an emergency placement from any parent/guardian without the enrolment record being completed.

Care must not exceed 24 hours without the approval of the coordination unit. Twenty Four hour care requires educators to maintain the Family Assistance Office 'Record of 24 Hour Care' form. The service will store this for three years.

Amended regulation about FDC ratios occur in exceptional circumstances. For example, the FDC residence or venue is in a rural or remote area and no alternative education and care service is available.

Related Policies

- Philosophy
- Twenty Four hour care
- Numbers of children in care

Sources and Reference Tools

- Early Learning Years Framework – Being, Becoming, Belonging, 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- www.education.vic.gov.au Viewed 1/8/11
- Greater Shepparton Kindergarten Central Enrolment policy 2013
- Child Care Service Handbook 2013
- www.education.vic.gov.au Viewed 25/5/13
- Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959). Viewed 25/5/13
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000

Reviewed: October 2013

Next review due: October 2014

ACTIVE PLAY (Family Day Care – Original)

Principle

Greater Shepparton City Council Early Childhood Services recognizes the impact of active play/physical activity in early childhood on immediate and long term health consequences. Our service will provide opportunities for active play/physical activity within the program as per the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years.

Guidelines

This policy aims to ensure optimal adult guided and child initiated active play activities are provided in early childhood services. These will encourage young children to be active and develop fundamental movement skill, ensuring growth and development and assist them to be confident and enjoy participation in physical activity as they grow into active young people.

- Daily adult guided and child initiated active play will be a significant component of the programming.
- Television and other electronic media (DVD, Video, computer, electronic gaming) will be limited within the program as per the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for children 0-5 years.
- Age appropriate traffic safety education, including pedestrian and car safety and playing safely, will be provided as part of the program to children their families and educators in the service.

Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years:

- For healthy development in infants (birth to 1 year) physical activity – particularly floor based play in safe environments – should be encouraged from birth.
- Toddlers (1-3 years) and pre-schoolers (3-5 years) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day.
- For children aged 2-5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVD, computer and electronic gaming) should be limited to less than one hour per day.
- Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using electronic media (DVD, computer, electronic gaming).
- Infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers should not be sedentary, restrained or kept inactive for more than one hour at a time – with the exception of sleeping.

The following recommendations will assist the promotion of structured adult guided and child initiated active play activities:

- Each child is provided with equal encouragement to allow them to acquire skills and develop confidence.
- Gender, cultural, age and individual differences are considered when planning activities.
- Time allocated to adult guided and child initiated play for children 1-5 years will be a minimum of three hours over the child's whole day.
- Educators will ensure that a variety of indoor and outdoor active play experiences such as drama, dance, moving to music, climbing, building, digging, somersaulting, hurdling, ball skills, obstacle courses, jumping from various heights etc, are planned to encourage all children, and cater for a range of abilities.
- Educators will integrate some adult guided play into children's free play time by providing the children with games they can play during these times. Replication also allows them to learn and remember how to carry out the activities correctly.
- Active play will be presented in a fun way and the children's attempts at activities will be acknowledged and reinforced in a positive manner and will be inclusive of all children.

- Educators and field workers are positive role models, by participating in the physical activity with children and promoting the importance of regular physical activity for a healthy life.
- In adverse weather conditions, outdoor playing time will be substituted with equivalent indoor activities.
- Warm up and cool down exercises will accompany all physical activities including free and creative active play activities.
- Educators and fieldworkers will use active play opportunities to discuss and offer incidental learning about health, road and pedestrian safety.
- The service will provide activity and education information to families/guardians and educators regarding the importance of physical activity
- The service encourage parents to walk or ride their bikes to care with their children and facilitate opportunity for school aged children to walk or ride to school from the educators home if it is deemed safe by the coordination unit and all relevant permission forms have been signed.

Screen based activities

- Television and other electronic media will be limited within the program as per the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years.
- Television and electronic media will be age appropriate and monitored by the educator sitting with the children to discuss what is being viewed.
- Refer to Screen Time policy for more information and guidelines

Safety

- Pedestrian and car safety and playing safely will be promoted in play experiences within the program an on excursions
- Information and materials from Vic Roads will be provided for use in the program

Policies relating to this policy are;

- Screen Time
- Excursions
- Car Safety

Sources and Reference Tools

- Kids – ‘Go for your Life’
- National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years: Get up and Grow
- www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au (viewed 2/9/2011)

Reviewed: January 2012
Next review due: July 2013

ANIMALS

PRINCIPLE

The early childhood educators will take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of children in the service when pets or animals are resident or visiting. It is recognised that animals provide positive experiences for children: playing a significant role in the child's learning, development and sense of wellbeing as well as providing companionship and connecting them to their community and environment.

GUIDELINES

1. Discussions shall take place with families in regard to any allergies, fears or phobias that children may have in regard to animals/pets.
2. All animals in the service, whether visiting or permanent, will be kept clean and healthy with regular worming and vaccination where appropriate.
3. Educators will ensure that play areas, food preparation areas, sleep areas and outdoor play and garden areas within the service are free from animal hair, feathers and excrement.
4. Animals are to be kept separate to and apart from areas used by children unless involved in a specific activity that is directly supervised by educators. Enclosures, protective runs, pens, cages will be independently risk assessed by the educator/s in conjunction with the service leader/coordination unit staff with consideration to the physical environment, age of the children and the animals capacity to cause injury. Risk assessments (Appendix 2.1) will be documented. This applies if transporting an animal for an educational routine health appointment.
5. Any direct contact with animals must be actively supervised by the educator.
6. Educators are to ensure that children wash their hands thoroughly after touching the animals. On the occasion that animals are in the areas accessible to children, educators will also ensure that food areas are disinfected before any meal sitting.
7. Educators will ensure that animal food, bowls and litter trays etc. are inaccessible to children and are kept in a hygienic condition. Children will be supervised closely if involved with providing food and/or water for the animal.
8. Birdcages are not to be kept in food preparation areas. Feathers, droppings and seeds are to be cleared away at regular intervals. Cages are not to be cleaned while children are in the service and should be wet down before cleaning. Airborne diseases may be present in dried faeces of birds, particularly those from the parrot family and can therefore be breathed in by children and adults. Most bird disease will cease to exist in a wet environment.
9. Educators will take into account the ages, experience and skills of the children when including animals into the children's learning environment.
10. Educators will include educating the children about the care and respect of animals as part of their programming when animals are part of the service.

11. Dogs must not accompany educators and children on walks.

Related Policies

- Supervision
- Hygiene & Infection Control
- Infectious Diseases and Immunisations
- Medical Conditions
- Excursions
- Children's learning
- Visitors

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD: Area 1, 2, 5, 6

Sources and Reference Tools

- Children and Safety with Pets. Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre 2008. www.rch.org.au Viewed 12/03/14
- Dogs'n'Kids. Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre 2009. www.rch.org.au
- Keeping Pets in Childcare. Putting Children First Issue 36 December 2010. NCAC.
- Animals and Domestic Pets. FDCQA Factsheet #11.NCAC
- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- <http://www.birdclinic.net/bird12.htm> viewed 12.3.14
- Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011
- <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/>- Psittacosis factsheet – viewed 19.3.14

Reviewed: February 2014

Next review due: February 2016

ASSISTANT- FAMILY DAY CARE RELIEVER (Family Day Care – Original)

Principle

It is realized that consistency in environment is important and at times situations arise in which educators require assistance.

Family Day Care coordination unit staff and relief coordination unit staff (Family Day Care assistant relievers) can assist for short periods when educators are not available. Family Day Care educators can assist each other in times of emergency.

Guidelines

Once approved as a Family Day Care assistant reliever by the Early Years' Service Provision Coordinator the reliever will be inducted into the Greater Shepparton Family Day Care scheme in accordance with the induction checklist.

Guidelines for educators:

- A Family Day Care assistant reliever cannot be used to relieve an educator who is ill.
- Approval is to be given by the coordination unit prior to the care occurring.
- Bookings are to be made by the coordination unit.
- Educator's must allow between 15 to 45 minutes (depending on length of stay) to properly orientate the reliever into their home environment (excluding emergency situations).
- The Family Day Care assistant reliever is not at any time, to be responsible for, or collect payments from families.
- Parents/Guardians must be notified of the date and time period that the reliever will be present in the educator's home and written consent must be provided to the coordination unit.
- The educator must provide access to the telephone for incoming and outgoing calls
- 24 Hours preferred notice is to be given to the coordination unit to cancel the booking for the Family Day Care assistant reliever.
- Four hours is the maximum time a Family Day Care assistant reliever can be used to assist an educator.

Guidelines for relievers:

- The Family Day Care assistant reliever is not at any time to use their or the educator's car to travel.
- The Family Day Care assistant reliever can travel with the use of a council vehicle if one is available and it is fitted with appropriate restraints and checked by an authorized Restraint Fitter.
- The Family Day Care assistant reliever must have a council mobile phone with them at all

times, to be picked up from the Family Day Care office or if one is not available the council offices prior to the period of relief care.

- The Family Day Care assistant reliever must allow between 15-45 minutes (depending on length of stay) to properly orientate into the educators home environment (excluding emergency situations).
- 24 hours' notice is preferred to be given by the reliever to the coordination unit to cancel the booking.

Policies relating to this policy are;

- Emergency Situations

Sources and Reference Tools

2011 National Regulations

Reviewed: September 2011
Next review due: March 2013

CHANGE OF DETAILS (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Early childhood educators must have access to up to date details for each child in attendance at all times to ensure appropriate action can be taken when necessary.

GUIDELINES

1. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure educators in the services have access to up to date details for each child's Enrolment/Information form.
2. Changes to any of the required details on the enrolment form e.g. details of emergency contacts, change of address, work details etc. must be provided as soon as possible.
3. Educators will review the child's detail at least annually to ensure information is correct e.g. completion of new or annual review section on enrolment form, reminders to parents via newsletters, notices etc.

Related Policies

- Enrolments
- Confidentiality
- Family Law
- Records

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- DEECD Children's Services Regulation 2009
- Management – Aged and Children's Services, Greater Shepparton City Council

Reviewed December 2011
Review by June 2013

CHILD CARE BENEFIT/REBATE (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

To provide families with information on and access to Government schemes that are available to assist with reducing cost of childcare.

GUIDELINES

LONG DAY CARE AND OCCASIONAL CARE (Nancy Vibert Occasional Care)

1. Child Care Benefit is available to an eligible parent, foster parent or grandparent with a child in their care who is attending child care services approved by, or registered with, the Government.
2. Parents/Guardians may be eligible for child care benefit if they meet the requirements of the Family Assistance Office.
3. Information about the Federal Government Childcare Benefit Scheme will be available from the Family Assistance Office on 136 150 or www.familyassist.gov.au or www.humanservices.gov.au
4. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that a childcare benefit application is lodged prior to the commencement of care. Failure to do so will result in the full fee being charged from the date of care commencing.
5. It is the family responsibility to ensure their childcare benefit information is current with the Family Assistance Office.
6. Any debts accrued due to failure to ensure currency of child benefit information will be collected under the same terms as the Outstanding Fee policy.

KINDERGARTEN, FUNGROUP AND EARLY YEARS RURAL OCCASIONAL CARE

1. Kindergarten, Fungroup and Early Years Rural Occasional Care services operated by the Greater Shepparton City Council are now registered with the Australian Government – Family Assistance Office.
2. Fees for Kindergarten, Fun group and Early Years Rural Occasional Care can be claimed by eligible families for a rebate.
3. Council has supplied each centre with an appropriate template receipt for fees which meets the requirements of the Family Assistance Office. Receipts will be issued at the end of each term as the benefit cannot be claimed until the service has been utilised.
4. In order to make this claim an application for Child Care Benefit for Registered Care form needs to be completed and lodged with the Family Assistance Office. Duplicate receipts are not available and statements will not be issued.
5. The form is to be returned to Medicare or Centrelink. The rebate will be paid directly into families' bank account (this cannot be claimed through the tax refund system).
6. Claims must be submitted within 12 months of the date on the receipt.
7. Enquiries can be directed to the Family Assistance Office on 136 150 or www.familyassist.gov.au or www.humanservices.gov.au
8. Information on the Governments Child Care Rebate is also available by contacting the Family Assistance Office on 136 150 or www.familyassist.gov.au or www.humanservices.gov.au

Related policies

- Access
- Confidentiality
- Enrolment
- Fees

Sources and Reference Tools

- Australian Government Australian Assistance Office www.familyassist.gov.au Viewed 26.6.2012
- www.humanservices.gov.au

Reviewed May 2012
Review by November 2013

CHILD SAFE

PRINCIPLE

All staff in Greater Shepparton City Council's Children's Services have a 'duty of care' to protect the safety of all children within the service including Aboriginal cultural safety, culturally and/or linguistically diverse cultural safety and the safety of children with a disability respectively. Staff are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks

All staff with an early childhood qualification are mandated and have a legal and moral obligation to report all concerns regarding the immediate safety, abuse, vulnerability and cumulative harm of a child in their care to the relevant organisations.

DEFINITIONS

Child abuse - Constitutes any act committed against a child involving:

- physical violence
- sexual offences
- serious emotional or psychological abuse
- serious neglect.

Cultural safety for Aboriginal children –

The positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity

Cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

An environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need.¹ Efforts need to be made to ensure the culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and their families receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner, including in relevant community languages.

Children with a disability

A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury or intellectual disability or developmental delay that affects a child's ability to undertake everyday activities.² A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden.³

¹ Williams, R. 1999, 'Cultural Safety – what does it mean for our work practice?', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, Vol 23, Issue 2, p213-214.

² s 3 *Disability Act 2006*.

³ Department of Health and Human Services, [About disability](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/disability-in-victoria/about-disability), <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/disability-in-victoria/about-disability>

Child Protection – The statutory child protection service provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), which is able to intervene to protect children and young people at risk of significant harm.

Child FIRST – A family services community based intake and referral service. Child FIRST ensures that vulnerable children, young people and their families are effectively linked to relevant services, including Child Protection.

GUIDELINES

Educators will support and empower children who are vital and active participants in the service and involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them by listening to their views and respecting what they have to say. All children including Aboriginal, culturally and/or linguistically diverse and children with a disability who have raised concerns will be taken seriously. Measures will be taken to promote the cultural safety of all children as outlined in the following guidelines:

1. All educators/staff within Children's Services will comply with the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (CYFA) and other relevant Acts/Legislation including the Education and Care Services National Regulation (84) and the Education and Care Services National Law (167) with the focus on the best interests of the child, including appropriate development, promoting stability, being aware of cumulative harm and keeping all children connected to their community and culture.
2. Child protection information will be provided initially at induction for all educators, staff, students and volunteers. Ongoing training and updated information will be offered to assist staff to recognize signs and symptoms of child abuse and to develop awareness of the effects of cumulative harm on children. The Child Safe Professional Development Training' template (Appendix4.1) must be completed by the service annually.
3. Educators will provide information about or refer families to Child FIRST, should they have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that a child and/or family is vulnerable, but the concerns have a low to moderate impact on the child and the immediate safety of the child is not compromised. Child FIRST are a platform for support and will ensure that vulnerable children and their families are linked effectively into relevant services by providing referrals to a range of community based family services.
4. All services will notify Child Protection if they have formed a belief on reasonable grounds or if it has been disclosed that any child:
 - has been abused physically, sexually, emotionally or psychologically, or
 - is experiencing persistent neglect, persistent family violence where there is a likelihood of significant harm to the child
 - whose actions or behaviour may place them at the risk of significant harm
 - who appears to have been abandoned and/or no other person is caring properly for the child.

Educators/staff are to refer to the definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm (Appendix 4.2)

5. When notification has been made to Child FIRST and Child Protection, educators are required to provide the following information to the practitioners if asked:
 - Child's name, age and address
 - Name of parents, carers or guardians and their addresses
 - Names of sibling/s, age/s and addresses
 - Language spoken in the family
 - Background or cultural status e.g. refugee
 - Whether family is aware of the report to Child FIRST or Child Protection

- Any services being received by the child or family
 - Staff member's relationship to the child
 - Reason for the report and nature of concerns for the child
 - Time and dates of incidents of abuse
6. All services are to follow 'A *step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST*' (Appendix 4.3).
 7. Educators/staff must document observations and anything said to them by a child or others in connection with concerns over child protection issues, using a Confidential Record (Appendix 4.4) that will be placed with the child's enrolment record.
 8. The service must notify Children and Youth Services Management, of any child abuse report or Child FIRST referral, within the guidelines of confidentiality.
 9. In the event of a service being contacted by Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding a child in their care, educators/staff are to refer the call to the Service Leader or Family Day Care coordination unit. Identification is to be provided by the person making contact from Child Protection and/or Child FIRST. In the case of contact being made by phone, the educator is to take their name and switchboard number and phone back to confirm their identification.
 10. If the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is requesting information about a child as part of an initial investigation, the service is obliged to provide such information.
 11. Where there is ongoing involvement with a family and Child Protection (or other involved agencies), the service may request a "Release of Information Form" (provided by the agency) that has been signed by the family.
 12. Educators/staff may wish to discuss with Child FIRST and/or Child Protection the nature of the injury and appropriate action to take, prior to discussing and/or raising it with the parent/guardian.
 13. If Child Protection **wants to visit and/or interview a child** at the service educators/staff must inform the Service Leader or Family Day Care coordination unit staff who will attend the interview. Children's and Youth Services Management must be notified before the interview takes place. Interviews can be conducted at the service without parental consent or knowledge.
 14. When Child Protection practitioners arrive at the service, educators/staff must ask to see identification before allowing Child Protection staff to have access to the child. It is the responsibility of Child Protection to advise the parents/guardians of any interview at the earliest possible opportunity. This should occur either before, or by the time the child arrives home.
 15. Educators/staff do not require the permission of parents, carers or guardians to make a report or to undertake an interview with Child Protection, nor are they required to tell them that they have done so, although disclosure is recommended if the educator is comfortable to do so.
 16. If a parent, carer or guardian removes a child before a planned interview has taken place, educators/staff will contact Child Protection or Victoria Police immediately. Staff do not have the power to prevent parents, carers or guardians from removing their child from the service and nor should they try and prevent them.
 17. If a Child Protection practitioner **needs to remove a child** from the service, educators/staff must notify Children and Youth Services Management. Educators/staff must ask to see identification. If the Child Protection practitioner doesn't provide identification staff/educators must not allow the child to leave the service until the Child Protection practitioner's identification has been confirmed. Confirmation can be made by contacting the Child Protection reception number and line manager. It is the responsibility of Child Protection to advise the parents/guardians of the details in accordance with their requirements.
 18. Should a service have an urgent issue regarding the protection of a child and need assistance **out of hours** they are to contact:
 - On call Coordinator 0408 329300

- Team Leader Children's Services on 0488990303, or
- Children and Youth Services Manager on 0418148166
- 000

19. Educators/staff are encouraged to debrief with Management/ Service Leader and to access the EAP (Employee Assistance Program).

20. Children's services aim for all staff, volunteers, children and families to feel comfortable and supported when talking about any child safety concerns in a confidential manner.

21. Children's Services understands that if an allegation of abuse concerns a child, including an Aboriginal child, culturally and d/or linguistically diverse child or a child with a disability, it will be taken seriously and measures will be put into place to support the child.

22. After the report has been made to Child Protection it is important that the service continues to monitor/record and observe the child and the family's involvement within the service and agencies in support of the family.

Allegation against a staff member, student or volunteer.

In the case of an allegation being made against an educator/staff member, student or volunteer by any person(s) in relation to child abuse of a child in their care, the following steps shall be taken:

1. The allegations shall be reported immediately to:

- Service Leader, or
- Team Leader Children's Services, or
- Manager, Children and Youth Services

This will be reported to the Greater Shepparton City Council People Performance Manager and where relevant and applicable the *CEO Directive Managing Workplace Performance and Behavior* will be followed.

2. The complaint is to be reported to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours by the Service Leader.(Education and Care Services National Law 174(2)(a)(b) and Education and Care Services National Regulations 176(2)(a)(ii))

Educators are advised to consult the '*Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people*', information on reporting concerns, who to report to and guidelines in regard to sharing information across services.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/provider/regulation/Pages/protectionprotocol.aspx>

Family Day Care

1. Should an allegation be made against an educator or a member of the educator's family the educator will be suspended and all children will be removed from care while investigations are being carried out.

Related Policies

- CEO Directives and Council Policies
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Training and Development
- Confidentiality
- Family Law
- Records

National Quality Standards – 2.3.4

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – Regulations 84, 273

Education and Care Services National Law 2010 – 167(1) (2) (3)

Sources and Reference Tools

- *Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People*. May 2010. Child Protection DHS, DET, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools (Appendices updated December 2013)
- *Child FIRST. Every Child Every Chance*. Department of Health and Human Services(DHHS)
- www.cyf.vic.gov . accessed 12/03/2015: website last updated 12/03/2012)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 - www.legislation.vic.gov.au – accessed 12/03/2015
- Child Protection – Department of Health and Human Services(DHHS), Victoria
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- CEO Directives and Council Policies
- Victorian Child Safe Standards

Reviewed May 2015
Review by November 2016

Please Note: The Child Protection Policy has been amended January 2016. The title has changed to Child Safe to come into line with the Child Safe Standards.

CHILDREN'S LEARNING and PROGRAMMING

PRINCIPLE

All parents/guardians and educators have a significant influence on children's learning.

"Pedagogical (education) leaders take an active role in promoting early childhood educators practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, curriculum decision making, teaching and learning"⁴

GUIDELINES

1. Educators will ensure the program meets the requirements of the Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011 and the National Quality Standard. Regardless of the style of programming there will be clear guidelines available at all times documenting the planning process and current program status. Educators will display a current, up to date plan of experiences and learning outcomes available to families at all times. (Reg 75) (NQS 1.2.1)
2. Educators provide opportunities, resources, and a culture of learning and inquiry to assist children in meeting their full potential in regard to the Early Years Learning Framework learning outcomes: (Reg 73)
 - Children have a strong sense of Identity
 - Children are connected with and contribute to their world
 - Children have a strong sense of well being
 - Children are confident and involved learners
 - Children are effective communicators
3. Our early childhood curriculum includes intentional and incidental teaching opportunities, collaboration with families and consideration of the community, children and families identity.
4. Educators will respond to families, children and the community's identity by sourcing information and actively seeking to understand their needs, interests and wishes for their children.
5. Children are capable and competent. Educators will promote this by:
 - Encouraging children to take acceptable risks
 - Recognising and responding to their own and others feelings
 - Asking for children's views and input on service decisions and the curriculum
 - Encouraging a sustainable environment
 - Promoting independence and having high expectations for every child
6. Children actively construct their own learning. Educators and staff will promote this by acknowledging children's contribution to our curriculum decisions, allowing them to lead play and assisting them to construct the environment when our help is needed. (NQS 1.1.6)
7. Learning is holistic. Educators will promote this by responding to children's cues and engaging with community, acknowledging significant family celebrations and incorporating these activities and events intrinsically into our daily practices. Learning experiences will include intentional teaching opportunities consisting of planned, purposeful experiences with strategy

⁴ Educators Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

and objectives as well as responding to children's strengths and interests through building on children's existing knowledge to enhance their learning.

8. Educators will maintain regular individual snapshots for all children which bring together a range of observations to create a summary of each child's learning and development.(NQS area 1.2.3) These snapshots may be gathered through a variety of methods including:
 - Learning Stories
 - Photographs with written observation included
 - Developmental checklists
 - Anecdotal observations
 - Running records
 - Event sampling
 - Art work sampling (with child's permission)
 - Digital media
 - Children's comments/conversations
 - Diary jottings.

Educators will maintain evidence of: (Reg 74)

- Individual children's interest
 - Collaboration with families
 - Reflection and follow on
 - The physical environment being represented across indoor and outdoor spaces
 - How the families or community have influenced the plan
 - Developmental needs
 - How each individual child has participated in the program
 - Children's active play
9. Educators will analyse children's learning against an approved learning framework (Being, Belonging, Becoming, Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework or My Time, Our Place School Age Framework) Analysis of children's learning is critical in evaluating the effectiveness of our practices and children's progress against the learning outcomes in these frameworks and continuing to plan effectively for future learning that promotes individualized learning environments for each child.
 10. Educators will provide families with a copy of their child's assessment of learning against the approved framework outcomes. This can be done annually or as ongoing documented information exchange between educators and families. This can be achieved when kindergarten leaders provide copies of transition statements to families at the end of each child's kindergarten year. Educators in the LDC program will pass a copy onto the family and a copy to the next program leader when transition from room to room occurs.
 11. Educators and staff will actively seek to acknowledge and understand individual children's rationale for behaviour and respond in a way that promotes respect. Our interactions are responsive, warm and consistent, providing children with the capability to attach and form a secure relationship with their educators. (EYLF Outcome 1)

When educators have meaningful relationships with children, the children are:

- Happy
 - Settled
 - Engaged in learning
 - Have a sense of belonging
12. Educators and staff will talk openly and regularly with children and families regularly to support them in achieving effective learning outcomes for the children. (NQS 1.1.4)

13. Educators and staff will participate in ongoing professional development to update their knowledge of current research to ensure practices are in line with best practice. This will assist educators to undertake self-reflection and understand how theoretical practices influence their views on children's learning.

Educational Leader

An educational leader will be appointed by their peers at each service with the following considerations:

- Experience of the educator
- Days of work –minimum of 3 or dependant on session (kindergarten only)
- Communication skills
- Their evident passion for the education and care of young children

The educational leader will be required to:

- Be able to articulate the EYLF/VEYLDF and Framework for School (FDC only) to other educators, families and all stakeholders and reflect this in their actions.
- Place a standard item on every staff meeting/committee of management meeting agenda about the EYLF/VEYLDF and lead the discussion and ensure that this is recorded in the meeting minutes
- Be available for planning and children's development discussions if required
- Read and attend any professional development relating to the EYLF and report on this to their service
- Use the EYLF/VEYLDF to challenge the status quo re current thinking and processes.
- Mentor and guide other educators in their practice
- Consistently seek new information
- Share, educate and gather feedback from families in the service relating to the EYLF

The service will support the educational leader by;

- Displaying and promoting their name as the educational leader
- Provide time (this may be accrued over a month and taken as a block)

- Nancy Vibert – ½ hour per week
- FDC – ½ hour per week
- Arthur Dickmann – 1 hour per week
- Frank R Pullar – 1 hour per week
- Kindergarten – ½ hour per week

The educational leader will mentor and support other educators to fulfill the requirements of this Children's Learning and Program Policy.

Children's Clothing

GUIDELINES

1. Children are encouraged to be dressed in a manner to support their play and learning. Comfortable, non-restrictive clothes allow children to move freely and comfortably and participate freely in all experiences. Shorts or trousers may be more appropriate for play than dresses and skirts.

2. A variety of messy activities are provided for the children while they are at the children's service and although protective smocks are always provided, children can participate more freely and fully if dressed in casual 'play' clothes.
3. Educators will respect family's choice of clothing and cultural traditions and communicate with families to come to a solution for the child to participate in a range of experiences e.g. avoid clothing becoming soiled or damaged, provide access to extra clothing.
4. Thongs slip-ons and clogs are not suitable footwear in a children's service as they limit children's balance and mobility and are potentially dangerous in some play situations. Ensure proper yard/room checks and risk assessments have been carried out, as it is not a requirement for children to wear shoes in the service whilst playing.
5. Children are to be dressed appropriately for the temperature and weather. Children will be given the opportunity to go outside on a daily basis in all seasons.
6. Comfortable clothing that goes on and comes off easily is recommended to enable children to develop self-help skills and manage independently (especially at the toilet) e.g. trousers with loose elastic waists; tops with large necks, cardigans, jackets; slip on shoes/shoes with Velcro; bigger buttons/toggles etc.
7. Toilet trained children (no matter what their age) will wear underpants at all times.
8. Children's clothes and shoes are to be clearly marked with their name. Every care is taken, but no liability can be accepted for the loss or damage of clothes.
9. Educators shall convey respect for children and families choices and an appreciation of their individuality in regard to their dress and clothing e.g. building opportunities for them to make choices in relation to getting dressed and the clothing they wear.
10. Educators shall be aware of individual children's and family's attitudes regarding privacy and modesty when children are having their clothes changed or are dressing themselves e.g. children may need access to safe, comfortable and private spaces for dressing and changing.
11. Educators shall model appropriate dress e.g. wearing hats and sun safe clothing while outside; clothes and shoes that are safe, and clothing that allows them to be comfortable and easily interact with and care for the children.
12. Educators shall ensure that children engaging in dress up play areas are carefully supervised to monitor clothing hazards e.g. tripping, high heels, long, dangly clothing etc.
13. Parents are encouraged to provide a spare change of clothing for their child in case clothes become dirty during the day. Where clothing is soiled due to a toileting accident the solids shall be disposed into the toilet and soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag for parents to take home. If necessary the item may need to be double bagged. Soiled clothing/underwear will not be thrown out unless authorized by the parents/guardians

TOYS and BELONGINGS FROM HOME

GUIDELINES

Greater Shepparton Children's Services recognizes that:

- Belongings from home can be a comfort for children attending the service.
- Belongings represent different meaning for individuals and that a child's wish to share this meaning should be respected.

- Belongings can contribute to the Service program in representing the child's interest, culture and sense of belonging.

1. Belongings that represent meaning to individual children are welcome to be brought into the service according to the individual child's needs.
2. It is recognized that individual children's needs can vary greatly in regard to their dependence and relationship to items and their need to have or share them will be acknowledged and respected by educators.

For example:

- A dummy/blanket for a baby is of comfort and relied upon to provide a sense of being.
- A toy given from a distant parent may be a comfort and relied upon by the child to achieve a sense of identity.
- A war toy may represent a family member in the defense force and represent a sense of pride and becoming.

3. Violent toys are generally discouraged from being brought to the service. Educators will acknowledge the importance of these items to children and discuss this with the child (if appropriate).

4. In relation to superhero play it is acknowledged that:

- Superhero play can be seen as 'not a disruption to be prevented, but as another gateway to learning' (Holland 2003)
- Children use superhero play to give meaning to their own experiences at home or on television.
- Superhero play provides a safe way to achieve a sense of power and play out violence they observe in their own life.
- Superhero way can relieve anxiety and stress in young children.
- Superhero play can be a universal language for children whose verbal language is not fully developed, providing a sense of belonging.
- Superhero play promotes creativity, planning and problem solving and is a form of dramatic play.

Superhero play can be incorporated into children's play and supported by educators by:

- Providing boundaries and guidelines.
- Participating and watching for cues.
- Discussing with children conflict resolution and ethical approaches to good and bad.

5. If a child becomes distressed for his/her belongings the child's well-being should be considered as priority and the belonging should be provided. If the item is not deemed appropriate by the educator, in conjunction with Coordinator, then the following alternatives may be suggested:

- Providing an individual play space for the child and their belonging e.g. mat, carpet square.
- Providing an appropriate alternative that soothes the child.
- Parent/guardian should be informed of the distress of the child and suggestions for alternate belongings from home discussed.

6. Children are welcome to bring other belongings that would be relevant to the program and can be shared by the children. These could include tape, CD, book, games, puppets, musical instrument and items from other cultures. A discussion with educators prior may clarify the suitability of the item. Items are to be labeled clearly.

7. Educators will, wherever possible, encourage the child and other children to treat all toys with respect and to return their personal items to the child's bag but cannot accept responsibility for toys or play equipment that the child has brought into the Centre.

TRANSITION OF CHILDREN BETWEEN ROOMS

GUIDELINES

1. At each service educator meeting the room leaders/educators will discuss the children whose developmental progress and readiness indicates they are ready to move to the next age group/room.
2. The child's parents/guardians will be approached regarding their thoughts and wishes on the child's transition prior to any move to another room.
3. In the time leading up to their move the child will be taken into the new room with a familiar educator for orientation. If successful, the child will have opportunities to "visit" without familiar staff support ensuring ratios are maintained.
4. Parents will be provided with information about the child's new rooms' goals and routines and will be encouraged to meet with the new educators prior to their child transitioning. Where possible a meeting will be organised for the family to meet the new room educators.
5. Educators will complete a developmental summary so that the new room leader will have an indication of the child's abilities, interests and needs. The child's records will be forwarded on to the new room educators.
6. Educators will then report back to each other on how the orientation visits have gone and whether they believe the child is ready to move up. There will be further discussion with the parents before the transition takes place permanently.
7. At the next educator meeting, if the child has not moved up, the child's progress will be reassessed.
8. The new room educators will follow up with parents to discuss how their child is settling into their new room.

Related Policies

- Philosophy
- Interactions and Communication with Children
- Confidentiality
- Records
- Active Play
- Orientation
- Program
- Children's Clothing
- Sleep, Rest and Safe Sleeping
- Sun Smart
- Hygiene
- Toileting Training /Toileting

Sources and Reference Tools

- <http://naac.aceqa.gov.au/family-resources> Embracing Quality Child Care: A Collection of NCAC's Family Factsheets Viewed 22/7/2013
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- The Early Learning Years Learning Framework – Being, Becoming and Belonging Viewed 22/7/2013
- “The Value of Superhero Play”. Putting Children First Issue 27 September 2008. NCAC Viewed 22/7/2013
- We don't play with guns here. War and weapon and superhero play in early years. Holland.P. (2003) Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Australian Early Childhood Code of Ethics
- Educators Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia Viewed 22/7/2013
- Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standards
- Children's Clothing in Childcare. Factsheet #15. www.ncac.gov.au Viewed 22/7/2013
- Dressing Your Child for Childcare. Factsheet for families. www.ncac.gov.au Viewed 22/07/11
- The Cancer Council Victoria Viewed 22/7/2013
- Quality Practices Guide. National Childcare Accreditation Council
- International Association for the Child's Right to Play

Reviewed July 2013
Review by

CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCES

PRINCIPLE

Every attempt will be made to satisfy a parent/guardian, educators or staff member's concerns promptly and courteously, by reference to the Service Leader or Children's & Youth Services management, Greater Shepparton City Council and Councils People and Performance team. (Regulation 168)

GUIDELINES

The Greater Shepparton Children's Services will protect the rights of families and educators to have grievances raised and resolved by:

1. Making a genuine effort to establish an atmosphere of trust and open communication between all parties, so grievances can be dealt with constructively.
2. Acknowledging any grievance within seven (7) days of receiving the details. If the situation involves breaking the law, the management team will seek support from the people performance team and the appropriate agency will be informed.
3. Keeping a record of all grievances raised and the steps taken to resolve the grievance. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.
4. Supporting the right for the educator, staff member or parent/guardian to have a support person in attendance while they are discussing their concern. If this is a disciplinary matter it comes under the CEO Directive (employees only).
5. Providing a written policy on grievances to all parents/guardians and educators. (Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011 - 168)
6. Displaying at the service premises the steps for dealing with a complaint and the contact details for the DEECD if the matter is in regard to the Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011 or National Law Act 2010.
7. Reviewing the grievance policy regularly, in consultation with Children & Youth Services management.
8. For matters concerning the 2009 Children's Services Regulations (Occasional Care) provision and display of information of, "the name and telephone number of the person at the Children's service to whom complaints be addressed". (Regulation 41)
9. For matters concerning adherence to the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, parents may also contact the:

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Phone: 1300307415

Email: licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au

10. Complaint notifications relating to an approved service working within the NQF will be lodged to ACECQA by the service leader via the protected portal if they are alleging;
 - Complaints alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised
 - Complaints alleging the law has been breached

The following steps are recommended to resolve grievances/concerns:

- Step 1** Discuss the matter directly with the person concerned, if appropriate.
- Step 2** If unresolved, register a complaint verbally or in writing to the Service Leader or the Team Leader – Children’s Services.
- Step 3** If a satisfactory resolution has not been achieved, a written complaint should then be sent to the Manager, Children & Youth Services, and a panel will be formed to seek a satisfactory resolution. This panel will comprise representatives of both parties.

All complaints will be handled with the strictest confidence.

Staff grievances shall be dealt with according to Council’s CEO Directive.

Every attempt will be made to satisfy a parent’s concerns promptly and courteously, by reference to the appropriate source.

Related policies

- Confidentiality
- Code of Conduct
- De registration of an educator
- Recruitment and orientation of Educators
- Recruitment, selection and orientation of coordination unit staff

NQS Areas – 6, 7

Education and Care Services National Regulations - 168 (2, o)

Sources and Reference Tools

- My Safety (Greater Shepparton City Council) in compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.
- Local Government Act 1989
- Greater Shepparton City Council Enterprise Agreement 2011
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Workplace Relations Act 1996
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Children’s Services Adviser – DEECD
- Customer Service: Greater Shepparton City Council
- Management – Children’s & Youth Services: Greater Shepparton City Council
- GSCC - People Performance Team

Reviewed August 2014

Review by August 2016

CONFIDENTIALITY (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

All information provided to the service regarding children, families and staff will be treated in strict confidentiality and within the guidelines of the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic.) and the Health Record Act (2001).

GUIDELINES

1. All confidential information e.g. enrolments records, attendance records, family data, staff records etc. will be stored in a secure, lockable place.
2. Early childhood educators will explain the requirement to respect confidentiality to all students, voluntary workers and helpers.
3. Before divulging information to medical, police or other agencies, permission will be obtained from parents/guardians or, where that is not possible, from the Early Years' Service Provision Coordinator/Team Leader Children's Services, except in circumstances relating to the reporting of child abuse (refer to Child Protection Policy).
4. Records will only be available to:
 - Parents (those pertaining to their own child)
 - Children's Services Advisor, (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)
 - Child Protection (after consultation with Children's Services Advisor)
 - Police conducting police business and/or upon issue of a warrant form.
5. Solicitors and/or court upon issue of subpoena of records.
6. Council's Aged and Children's Services Management staff
7. Early childhood professionals e.g. Specialist Children's Services to whom the child has been referred with parental permission.

Related Policies

- Records
- Child Protection
- Family Law

Sources and Reference Tools

- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victoria)
- Health Records Act 2001
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- Child Protection Unit (Department of Human Services)
- Child FIRST (Family Care)
- Victoria Police – Shepparton

Reviewed December 2011

Review by June 2013

CONFIDENTIALITY (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

All information provided to the scheme/educator regarding the child and the family or to the scheme regarding the educator will be treated with strict confidentiality in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles contained in the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001.

GUIDELINES

1. All confidential information will be stored in a secure place.
2. Family Day Care coordination unit staff will explain the requirements with respect to confidentiality to all educators during the registration process.
3. Educators will ensure family records and documented information regarding children and families are stored confidentially.
4. Information learned in respect to individual educators, parents/guardians, staff and children under the umbrella of Family Day Care will be kept confidential and not divulged to other persons.
5. Coordination Unit staff will check records are stored confidentially at Family Day Care residences annually on safety checks and ongoing through the home visit process.
6. Coordination unit staff and educators will ensure all information pertaining to regulations is not divulged or communicated, directly or indirectly to another person other than;
 - To the extent necessary for the education and care or medical treatment of the child to whom the information relates
 - Parents/guardians of children in care
 - Regulatory Authorities or an authorized officer
 - If authorized, permitted or required to be given by or under any Act or law
 - With written consent of the person who provided the information
7. Information/Records regarding children will only be available to:
 - Parents/guardians (those pertaining to the child in their care).
 - Child Protection Unit (Department of Human Services) and Child FIRST (Family Care) - after consultation with the Coordination Unit or Manager Aged and Children's Services, Greater Shepparton City Council.
 - Police upon issue of a warrant form.
 - Solicitors and/or court upon issue of subpoena or letter of request.
 - Other services that authorized persons have given written consent to share information with.
 - Coordination unit staff and Management Children's services
8. Information/records regarding educators will only be available to:
 - The educator
 - Greater Shepparton Family Day Care staff.
 - Management Children's services
 - Police upon issue of a warrant.
 - Solicitors and/or court upon issue of subpoena or letter of request.

Sources and Reference Tools

- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victoria)
- Health Records Act 2001
- Child Protection Unit (Department of Human Services) 2011
- Child FIRST 2011
- Education and Care Services National Regulations – Draft 2011

Reviewed: September 2011

Next review due: March 2013

DANGEROUS GOODS AND STORAGE (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Safe storage and minimal use of potentially dangerous products will be enforced throughout all Council Centres to protect all children from access to these products without jeopardising hygiene.

A dangerous product is defined as any chemical, substance or material that can cause potential harm, injury or illness to persons or damage to the service's environment. Dangerous products can include: chemicals, medications, household products, washing detergents, disinfectants/sanitiser, environmentally friendly chemicals/cleaning products etc.

GUIDELINES

1. Dangerous products will be used in a safe manner and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. They will not be left unattended whilst in use.
2. Correct measurements of all products shall be used as per manufacturer's directions.
3. All purchased chemicals will have a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and referred to for further information on correct use of products and first aid. These will be available and displayed in chemical storage areas.
4. All dangerous products will be left in their original packaging and not transferred from their original containers.
5. All products will be correctly labeled e.g. spray bottles, containers.
6. All dangerous products be stored safely out of reach of children in a locked or child resistant cupboard (at least 1.5m high) whilst not in use.
7. Household products will be stored safely out of reach (at least 1.5m high).
8. Signs will be displayed where dangerous products are stored.
9. Washing detergents will be used on a daily basis to clean toys and equipment.
10. Disinfectants (or sanitiser) will be used to clean toys and equipment as per the service's cleaning schedule.
11. Sanitiser/detergents etc. will not be sprayed in the presence of children e.g. children to be clear of meal tables/chairs, nappy change areas when they are sprayed.
12. The service will ensure that there are emergency procedures and practices for accidental spills and contamination. Additionally, corresponding first aid plans for all dangerous goods handled and stored in the service will be displayed (refer Material Safety Data Sheets for individual chemicals).
13. The service will consider the use and appropriateness of environmentally friendly chemical and cleaning products.
14. In the circumstance of suspected poisoning educators will refer to the Material Safety Data Sheets for First Aid information and/or contact the Poisons Information Line on 131126.

Related policies:

- Emergency Situations
- Medication
- Hygiene
- Infectious Diseases and Control
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Food Safety
- Supervision
- Disposal of Needles, Syringes and Condoms

Sources and Reference Tools

- www.childsafetyaustralia.com.au Viewed 21/9/11
- www.kidsafevic.com.au Viewed 27/09/10
- Victoria Poisons information centre – Austin health www.austin.org.au Viewed 21/9/10
- Dangerous Products: Model Policy. NCAC Viewed 21/9/11
- Safekidsnow and the Family home. www.kidsafe.vic.com Viewed 21/9/11
- Safety in Children’s Services. Fact Sheet #2. NCAC
- Hazardous Substances and Chemical Use. CogSafe Procedure 46.PR03.20. Greater Shepparton City Council
- Every Day Supplies

Reviewed October 2011

Review by April 2013

DELIVERY & COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

(LDC/K/OC – Original) (under review)

PRINCIPLE

To ensure the safety of children at all times by ensuring the delivery and collection of children by the appropriately legally appointed guardians or other delegated person.

GUIDELINES

1. Parents will write the exact time of arrival and departure and sign the Attendance Book each day (Reg. 158).
2. All deliveries and collections of children must be noted in the Attendance Book.
3. Educators will check the attendance book throughout the day to ensure information is accurate.
4. No child will be allowed to leave the service unless collected by an authorized person. This regulation does not apply if the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or because of another emergency (Reg. 99).
5. Children going on excursions cannot leave the service unless an authorisation form has been completed and signed by the parent/guardian/authorised person.
6. Parents will provide the service with a list of persons authorised to collect their child and will inform the educators of any changes to this list. Parents will be encouraged to provide a list of persons authorized to deliver their child and will update this list as required.
7. Parents will notify early childhood educators of any change to the normal collection arrangements for their child by:
 - verbal notification, or
 - a phone call from a nominated authorised person.
8. If an authorised person is unable to collect a child, the service is to be contacted by an authorised person and given details of the person collecting the child. The latter person must provide proof of identity. Educators are to record any phone authorisation with time and date.
9. If an unauthorized person (**including a parent/guardian who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child**) delivers or comes to collect a child, the educator will ring the parent/guardian for authorisation. Educators will record phone authorisation with time and date.
10. A fee will be charged if children are collected **after** the normal operating hours of the Service.
11. Parents will make contact with a staff member upon arrival and prior to departure to ensure educators are aware of a child's arrival and departure and to allow for exchange of any relevant information.
12. Educators delivering a child must sign the child in prior to signing in for work and can only collect a child after they have signed off from duty. Therefore, where an educator is:
 - Opening (on early shift) they cannot deliver a child
 - Closing (on late shift) they cannot collect a child

LATE COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

GUIDELINES

1. It is often upsetting for children who are not collected at the appropriate time. If unforeseen circumstances prevent prompt collection of any child, educators should be notified in advance or, as soon as possible.
2. If educators have not been notified that the parent/guardian will be late, they will ring all contact numbers at regular intervals for 15 minutes after closing time.
3. As a service needs to cover the costs of remaining open after closing time, the parent/guardian will be charged \$2 for every minute late per child, unless exceptional circumstances apply, as determined by the Coordinator/Program Leader on a case by case basis. Fun group, Kindergarten and Rural Years Occasional Care late fees may apply from 5 minutes after scheduled session finish time.
4. **If no contact has been made after 15 minutes after closing time, the educators are to notify Aged and Children's Services (A&CS) at Council and they will be directed to try for a further 15 minutes. Contact A&CS by ringing the Team Leader - Childcare Services Coordinator on 5832 9709, or after hours:**
 - **Manager of A&CS on 0419 597 322 or 58329 783**
 - **Emergency after hours number at Council on 0418 577 420**

If after a further 15 minutes of ringing (30 minutes after Service closure), contact cannot be made, A&CS is to be notified again. The Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit at Shepparton Police Station will then be notified on **5820 5878 (BH), or 5820 5777 (AH)** regarding the child's situation. If the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit direct staff to ring Child Protection, then educators are to follow that direction.

If staff at any time, have genuine concerns regarding the welfare of a child who is not collected, then they are to ring Child Protection, Department Human Services at Wangaratta on 1800 650 227 (after hours 131 278).

5. Where a child has not been collected after closure time, two educators will stay with the child and shall follow the above procedure.
6. Educators will document steps taken to contact parent in late collection book and where possible on the arrival of parent they have the parent co-sign the acknowledgement of the collection time.
7. Where a child is taken off the premises by appropriate authority and the service has closed, staff must leave a notice on the service door advising the parents who to contact:
 - Manager, Aged and Children's Service on 0419 597 322, or
 - The Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit at the Shepparton Police Station on 5820 5878 (BH) or 5820 5777 (AH), or
 - Contact numbers as directed by the above.

Consistent late pick up of children

1. Where a child is collected up to 15 minutes late on more than 5 occasions, the Coordinator/Program Leader will give formal notification that this situation is unsatisfactory. This shall inform the parent of the number of late pick-ups accrued and explain the service's legal responsibilities in regard to caring for children out of operating hours. A discussion may be required as to whether the parents' needs are being met.

2. If late pickups continue to occur, a meeting shall be arranged between the Team Leader Children's Services, Service Coordinator/Program Leader and the parent to discuss the situation and determine further action.

LATE FEES

1. A late fee of \$2.00 per minute per child will be charged to parents who arrive to collect their child/ren after the service closing time.
2. Educators are to ensure late book is signed by parent and correct departure time is written on child's attendance sheet.
3. Payment of the late fee will be required within fourteen days. Nonpayment will incur the same penalty as non-payment of the usual childcare fee. CCB is not applicable to late fees.

Related Pollices

- Supervision
- Child Protection
- Fees
- Excursions

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care services National Regulations 2011
- Delivery and Collection of Children. Practice Note 15 March 2011, updated September 2011.
- www.deecd.vic.gov.au Viewed 06/02/12
- Victoria Police - Shepparton
- Child Protection - Department Human Services
- Management -Aged and Children's Services, Greater Shepparton City Council

Reviewed February 2012
Review by August 2013

DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN (Family day care – original)(under review)

PRINCIPLE

“When children are being delivered to and collected from the service is an ideal time for relationships to be formed between educators and families”⁵

Children form a strong sense of identity when they are welcomed and acknowledged on arrival and have a place for their belongings.

GUIDELINES

1. Parents/guardians will provide the service with a list of persons with lawful authority who will be authorized to drop off and collect their child at the time of enrolment.
2. Educators or parents/guardians will notify the coordination unit of any changes to the list provided on enrolment.
3. Persons with lawful authority will write the exact time of arrival, departure and place their signature beside each day of attendance.
4. Educators will sign children in/out if the authorized person is unable, and note the reason on the timesheet e.g. arrivals of school children, kinder pick up etc.
5. Parents/guardians will notify the educator in writing, verbally in person or by phone call of any change to the normal collection arrangement for their child.
6. If circumstances require a child to be collected from care by an unauthorized person, the parent/guardian must contact the educator and give details of the person collecting the child/ren. Such a person will also be required to provide photo evidence of identity e.g. drivers license etc.
7. It is expected that children arrive within one hour of their booked arrival time. After one hour educators are able to continue with their day.
8. It is a breach of regulation to release any child to an unauthorized person unless the child requires medical attention, needs to be hospitalized, an ambulance is required or any other emergency situation arises.

LATE COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

It is often upsetting for children who are not collected at the appropriate time. If unforeseen circumstances prevent prompt collection of any child.

The following guidelines apply;

1. Parents/guardians will notify the educator in advance or as soon as possible of a late arrival.

⁵ Delivery and collection of children – Practice note 15 DEECD

2. If the educator has not been notified that the parent/guardian will be late, he/she will ring all contact numbers twenty (20) minutes after the expected collection time and will continue ringing at regular intervals if no answer is received.
3. Educators are entitled to charge a late fee (as described in their individual fee schedule) should a parent/guardian arrive later than the booked collection time. This fee is payable directly to the educator at the time it is accrued and is not subject to child care benefit.
4. One hour after the notified collection time, the educator if during office hours will notify the Family Day Care coordination unit for further clarification and a decision will be made as to the most appropriate action.
5. One hour after the notified collection time, the educator if outside office hours will notify the on call coordinator for further clarification and a decision will be made as to the most appropriate action.
6. In cases of extreme delay and/or where concerns are held for the child's well being, notification may be made by the coordination unit and/or Aged and Children's service management to Child First or Child Protection Unit, Department of Human Services.

Policies relating to this policy;

- Emergency Situations
- Code of Ethics
- Service Philosophy

Sources and Reference Tools

- 2009 Children's Services Regulations
- Child Care Services Handbook 2010 -2011
- Delivery and collection of children – Practice note 15 DEECD 2011
- Visible Learning in Family Day Care -Gowrie Victoria 2010
-

Reviewed: August 2011

Next review due: February 2013

DISCONTINUE EDUCATION AND CARE

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton Children's and Youth Services will ensure consistent practice when education and care in children's services is discontinued.

It is important that children receive continuity of care and parent's/guardian's and educators have adequate notice if education and care is to cease.

GUIDELINES

Long Day Care

Family Day Care

1. A minimum of two weeks written notice prior to the last day of care is required from the parent/guardian when discontinuing education and care, (unless otherwise approved by the service leader).
2. Parents/guardians are required to complete a Notification to Discontinue Education and Care form (Appendix 5.1) (M14/60763).
3. All fees up to the last day of attendance are to be paid in full.
4. Child care benefit cannot be paid if on the last day of care the child is absent. Full fees will be required for the whole period the child did not attend after notice to cease care was given.
5. In a situation that a family hasn't attended for four weeks without notifying the service, the service will make two attempts to contact the family, written (letter/email) and phone. If notification isn't received by the due date, the education and care will be ceased.

Family Day Care

1. An educator is required to notify parents/guardians and the coordination unit staff verbally and in writing of their intention to cease care for any child/ren at least two (2) weeks before care is to cease (unless emergency conditions apply as approved by the service leader).

Occasional Care

1. Casual occasional care: cancellations must be made by 8.00am on the day of booking or fees for booked care will be charged.

2. Permanent Occasional care bookings: Cancellations must be made by 4.00pm on the day prior to booked care or fees for the booked care will be charged.

In a situation that a family hasn't attended for four weeks without notifying the service, the service will make two attempts to contact the family, written (letter, email) and phone. If notification isn't received by the due date, the education and care will be ceased.

Rural Occasional Care – Tallygaroopna and Katandra

1. Casual occasional care bookings: cancellations must be made by 8.30am on the day of booking or fees for booked care will be charged.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten Withdrawal (in order to access funded program the following year)

1. Kindergarten Leaders are to inform the Central Enrolment Officer (at Council offices) of the withdrawal of a child from a funded four year old kindergarten program. This will be registered in the Kindergarten Information Management system.

Kindergarten Withdrawal/Non Attendance

1. If a parent/guardian elects for their child to cease attending a kindergarten they are required to notify the kindergarten and the Central Enrolment Officer (at Council offices).
2. Parent/guardians are encouraged to discuss their reasons for withdrawal with the Kindergarten Leader or Team Leader Children's Services (at Council offices).
3. Fees are payable for the kindergarten place until the Central Enrolment Officer is notified.
4. In a situation that a family hasn't attended for four weeks without notifying the service, the service will make two attempts to contact the family, written (letter, email) and phone. If notification isn't received by the due date, the education and care will be ceased.

Kindergarten Transfer

1. In the case of relocation within the City of Greater Shepparton, the Central Enrolment Officer will be able to provide available options for the relocation.
2. On submission of a Change of Preference form (Appendix 5.2) (M14/76257) the enrolment will be considered under the same conditions as late enrolment.
3. Fees must be paid in full up to the conclusion of the child's attendance before attendance at the new kindergarten can commence.

Fun Group

Fun Group

1. If a parent/guardian elects to withdraw their child from a Fun Group service they are asked to inform the service that their child is currently enrolled in.
2. Parents/guardians are to ensure that all fees are up to date.
3. In a situation that a family hasn't attended for four weeks without notifying the service, the service will make two attempts to contact the family, written (letter, email) and phone. If notification isn't received by the due date, the education and care will be ceased.

Related Policies

- Access in Children's Services
- Fees

Sources and Reference Tools

- Management – Children's and Youth Services , Greater Shepparton City Council
- Kindergarten Central Enrolment policy, Greater Shepparton City Council.
- www.education.vic.gov.au Viewed 1/10/2014
- The Kindergarten Guide 2014

Reviewed: October 2014

Next review due: October 2016

DRUGS, ALCOHOL and ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES (Family day care – original) under review

PRINCIPLE

All Coordination Unit staff members, educators, educator family members and visitors and/or adults must be free from the influence of drugs/alcohol/controlled substances while care is being provided.

GUIDELINES

1. Any alcohol or controlled substances must be out of reach* of children.
2. Venues such as Cafes and Theatres that serve alcohol if compliant with legislative requirements are able to be attended.
3. No illegal substances should be used and/or taken while children are in care.
4. Personal prescribed drugs must only be taken in accordance with doctor's instructions.
5. Long term medication, which may affect the quality of care provided by an educator, must be discussed with Coordination Unit staff on a case-by-case basis and stored as per the Safety policy.
6. No person adversely affected by drugs, alcohol or illegal substances shall supervise or remain in the presence of any child/ren in care.
7. Where educators believe that an authorised person collecting a child is under the influence of drugs/alcohol/illegal substances the educator should:
 - Suggest an alternative person be contacted to collect the child.
 - Release the child if the authorised person insists on taking the child.
 - Contact police if they believe the child's safety may be at risk.
 - Document the incident.
 - Immediately contact the Family Day Care Coordination Unit who will notify Aged and Children's Services management. If the event occurs out of office hours contact the out of hour's emergency number 0408 329 300.

Sources and Reference Tools

- Child Protection Victoria – Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2010
- Family Day Care National Standards
- Children's Services Act 2009

* Out of reach is deemed 1.5 meters as determined by Kidsafe Victoria

Reviewed: September 2010

Next review due: September 2012

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

PRINCIPLE

In the event of any injury, trauma, illness or critical incident occurring on the premises, appropriate emergency procedures will be followed which will be displayed in each service.

GUIDELINES

- All educators at Greater Shepparton City Council Children's Services will have appropriate First Aid qualifications, including Emergency Asthma Training, Anaphylaxis, Level II First Aid and CPR in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Reg. 136 and 137) and ACECQA (www.acecqa.gov.au).
- Evacuation Plans and Lockdown Emergency Procedures will be displayed in each service and FDC homes.
- Emergency contact numbers (Appendix 6.6) will be displayed prominently near phones in all services and in FDC homes
- All services educators/staff will practice an emergency, evacuation drill every three months. This will be in conjunction with the educators, children in care and any other visitors in the service. Educators are required to complete an emergency drill or lockdown report checklist (Appendix 6.4).

a) In the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness of a child:

1. In the event of a minor injury parents/guardians will be informed, as soon as practicable but, within 24 hours of the incident i.e. upon collection of the child. Where the child incurs an injury to the head parents/guardians are to be notified immediately.
2. In the event of any other incident, injury, trauma or illness of a child, if necessary, educators shall seek medical assistance and/or ambulance (000).
3. Parent/guardian will be contacted by phone immediately, either at home or at work. Emergency contacts will be called if parent/guardian cannot be contacted.
4. The child will be kept warm and comfortable and under observation at all times until parent/guardian/ambulance arrives. Regular checks will be made for deterioration of the child's condition.
5. Details of the incident will be entered into an incident, injury; trauma and illness report (Appendix 6.1) no later than 24 hours after the incident (Reg. 87). The parent/guardian is to be notified of the incident, injury, trauma or illness as soon as practicable but, within 24 hours of the incident. Parents/guardians are to sign and date the record of the incident (Appendix 6.1)
6. In the case of a **serious incident or injury:**
 - Children and Youth Services department Greater Shepparton City Council must be notified as soon as possible. Educators will be required to complete an incident, injury, trauma and

illness report (Appendix 6.1), and an ACECQA Notification of serious incident form within 24 hours of the incident.(Appendix 6.3)

- Notification must be made to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of a serious incident or within 24 hours of the approved provider becoming aware of the relevant information (Reg. 176.).

b) In the event of critical injury or death of a child

1. Educators shall implement first aid procedures **IMMEDIATELY**.
2. Educators will call an ambulance on 000. First aid will continue by educators until instructed to stop by an ambulance or other emergency officer.
3. Educators will phone police and notify them of emergency and police will advise as to who shall contact parent/guardian.
4. If requested by emergency services to do so educators will phone parent/guardian and advise them of the emergency regarding their child. Educators will contact Greater Shepparton City Council Manager – Children and Youth Services or a Children and Youth Services department staff member at the Council offices to notify of details and seek assistance i.e. replacement of educators, supporting children, staff, families. Where required council will contact staff that have undertaken specific training in 'Children in Acute Emergency Situations' to assist (Refer Staff Training Registrations Trim Reference: M10/10928).
5. If the incident has occurred out of hours educators can contact:
 - **On Call Coordinator: 0408 329 300 who will contact the relevant person.**
6. If possible, an educator should take other children to another part of the building.
7. Police will arrive and question educators and other adults present. This is a necessary routine procedure.
8. Educators and other adults present must respect the confidentiality regarding the death of a child and they are not to make public the fact of a child's death. **THIS IS THE FAMILY'S RIGHT.**
9. Notification must be made to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of a serious incident or within 24 hours of the approved provider becoming aware of the relevant information (Reg. 176.). An ACECQA Notification of a Serious Incident form is to be completed and forwarded to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development -Quality Assessment and Regulation Division. (Appendix 6.3)

c) In the event of accident or illness of educator:

1. Educators shall implement first aid procedures, as appropriate.
2. Replacement of the educator shall be organised, as appropriate.
3. Emergency contact for the person shall be notified, if appropriate and such information is available.
4. Children and Youth Services management at Council will be notified immediately and Work cover procedures initiated, as appropriate.

5. Details of the incident will be entered in the service Workplace Injury and Illness Record Book and an OHS Incident/Near Miss/Hazard form is to be completed (Appendix 6.2) and signed by the direct supervisor.

d) In the event of accident/illness of other adult (parent, visitor, volunteer, student)

1. Educators shall implement first aid procedures, as appropriate.
2. Emergency contact for the person will be notified if appropriate and such information is available.
3. Children and Youth Services management at Council will be notified immediately.
4. Details of the incident will be entered in the service Workplace Injury and Illness Record Book and an OHS Incident/Near Miss/Hazard form is to be completed (Appendix 6.2) and signed by the direct supervisor.

e) In the event of the critical injury or death of a educator/staff member or other adult in the Centre

1. Educators shall implement first aid procedures **IMMEDIATELY**.
2. An ambulance will be called on 000. First aid will continue by educators until instructed to stop by an ambulance or other emergency officer.
3. Police will be phoned and notified of the emergency.
4. Police will advise as to who shall contact next of kin or emergency contact and advise of emergency.
5. Educators will contact Greater Shepparton City Council Manager – Children and Youth Services or a Children and Youth Services Team Leader at the Council offices to notify of details and seek assistance i.e. replacement of staff, supporting children, staff, families. Where required council will contact staff that have undertaken specific training in 'Children in Acute Emergency Situations' to assist (Refer Staff Training Registrations Trim Reference: M10/10928).
6. If the incident has occurred out of hours educators can contact:
 - **On Call Coordinator: 0408 329 300 who will contact the relevant person.**
7. If possible, an educator should take children to another part of the building.
8. Police will arrive and question educators and other adults present. This is a necessary routine procedure.
9. Educators and other adults present must respect the confidentiality regarding the death of any person, and they are not to make public the fact of any person's death. **THIS IS THE FAMILY'S RIGHT.**
10. In the case of critical injury, Children and Youth Services management at Council will be notified immediately and Workcover procedures initiated, as appropriate. Details of the incident will be entered in the service Workplace Injury and Illness Record Book.

f) In the event of a fire at the premises:

1. Educators shall ring 000 and evacuation procedures will be followed as outlined in the Evacuation Plan prominently displayed in the service.

g) In the event of a natural disaster (e.g. Bushfire, Flood, Severe Storm):

Educators shall ring 000 and dependent upon the nature and location of the natural disaster the service may:

1. Follow the evacuation procedures as outlined in the Evacuation Plan prominently displayed in the service, or
2. Follow the Lockdown Emergency Procedures as displayed in the service and as noted below.

h) In the event of a gas leak or chemical spill

Dependent upon the nature and location of the gas leak or chemical spill the service may:

1. Follow the evacuation procedures as outlined in the Evacuation Plan prominently displayed in the service, or
2. Follow the Lockdown Emergency Procedures as displayed in the service and as noted below.

i) In the event of kidnapping/siege/hostage situation:

1. Educators should attempt to engage the person's attention by keeping up a conversation if possible.
2. Educators should try to keep moving casually, if possible and not stopping physically, unless it is necessary.
3. Educators should try to get the attention of another staff member and alert them to the situation (using an emergency code if appropriate or panic alarm system).
4. If alerted, the other educators/adults must contact 000 and give details of the situation.
5. Educators should not refuse to hand over a child or defy a direct request/order from the person/offender if it may endanger their personal safety and/or safety of others.
6. Educators must consider their own safety and that of all children and other adults in the centre.
7. Council's Children and Youth Services management must be contacted as soon as possible with details of the situation.
8. Parents should be contacted as soon as possible

i) In the event of an external threat e.g. threatening intruder, police emergency in area:

Educators shall ring 000 and dependent upon the location and nature of the threat the service may:

1. Follow the evacuation procedures as outlined in the Evacuation Plan prominently displayed in the service, or

2. Follow the Lockdown Emergency Procedures as displayed in the service and as noted below.

j) In the event of a bomb threat:

1. Evacuation procedures will be followed as for all emergency situations.
2. Educators must contact 000 as soon as possible and give details of the situation.
3. If a suspicious article is discovered, educators will keep the area clear, contact 000 and follow emergency evacuation procedures as directed.

SERVICES LOCATED IN BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS:

The following Greater Shepparton City Council Early Childhood Service is deemed as being located in a high risk bushfire area:

1. This service will be pre-emptively closed on days when a CODE RED warning is issued. There will, in most cases, be 3 days notice provided to the service of pre-emptive closure with confirmation by no later than 12 midday on the day before.
2. The service will not provide education and care on these days and staff are not to be in this service on these days. Educators/staff shall be reallocated to other services for the day.
3. Once the decision to close a service has been made this will not be changed, regardless of changes to the weather forecast.
4. All warnings of potential and actual closure of facilities will be posted by Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) www.education.vic.gov.au/bushfires by 10.30am daily during bushfire season.

Closure of other early childhood services may be considered on Code RED days dependent upon the bushfire risk. In that case the above procedures shall be followed.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES:

Emergency evacuation drills will be undertaken in accordance with the schedule of practice of evacuation and lockdown procedures below and recorded on the Emergency Evacuation Record.

1. An Evacuation Plan will be displayed prominently in the service.
2. Educators shall evacuate all children and adults from the service as per the service's Evacuation Plan. They will be evacuated to the designated primary assembly area on the premises where they shall wait for direction by emergency services.
3. Where a complete evacuation away from the service is necessary, an appropriate venue near the service will be available where toilets and running water are provided and safety of the children can be ensured (secondary evacuation site). This will normally be done under the direction and assistance of emergency services.
4. Secondary evacuation sites are to be noted on Evacuation Plans to ensure educators and other adults in the service are aware of their location.

Lockdown Emergency Procedures

A lockdown emergency can be as a result of a:

- Natural disaster – bushfire, severe storm

- Gas leak or chemical spill
- External threat e.g. threatening intruder, police emergency in the area

Lockdown emergency procedure drills will be undertaken in accordance with the schedule of practice of evacuation and lockdown procedures below and recorded on the Drill or Lockdown Report Checklist (Appendix 6.4)

1. Lockdown emergency procedures will be displayed prominently in the service.
2. Lockdown emergency procedures may require adults to keep all children indoors in one room or in the individual children's rooms until advised by emergency services staff.
3. All children and educators are to follow the services Lockdown Emergency Procedures and gather indoors at the designated assembly area.
4. Doors, windows and blinds shall be closed (or locked, if applicable e.g. threatening intruder) if safe to do so.
5. Educators shall await further instruction for emergency services.
6. Emergency kits are provided to all services for use in the situation of implementing lockdown emergency procedures.
7. Lockdown emergency procedure drills will be undertaken as per the schedule below and recorded on the Emergency Evacuation Record.

Schedule of Practice of Evacuation & Lockdown Procedures

Emergency evacuation of service to primary assembly area in service yards	Every 3 months (regulation 97)	To be followed twice a year by walking the route to secondary evacuation site by staff member only
Lockdown Procedures	Every 3 months	

As noted in the Facility Emergency Drills/Training schedule in the service Emergency Management Plan.

Services are encouraged when practicing evacuation and lockdown procedures to reflect on the type of emergency situations that they may be potentially faced with:

- Accident or illness of a child
- Critical injury or death of a child
- Accident or illness of educator
- Accident or illness of other adult
- Critical injury or death of staff member or other adult
- Fire at the premises
- Natural disaster – bushfire, flood, severe storm
- Gas leak/chemical spill
- Kidnapping/siege/hostage situation
- External threat
- Bomb threat

Emergency situations may be significant and result in post trauma distress for those involved. It is imperative that action is prompt and steps are taken to assist the emotional adjustment of those affected by the event.

Depending on the nature of the incident, it may be appropriate to arrange debriefing and/or counseling for those affected/involved (refer Debriefing policy).

Emergency Situations - FDC

Emergency Situation drills will be documented and sent into the coordination unit.

In the event of an emergency situation occurring out of business hours educators are to ring the On Call Coordinator out of hours emergency number on 0408 329 300.

In the event of injury or illness of a child:

- a) Assess the situation.
- b) If necessary call 000.
- c) If it is determined that an ambulance is not required the educator will phone the child's parent/guardian immediately, either at home or at work, to remove the child from care. Emergency contacts will be called if the parent/guardian cannot be contacted.
- d) The child will be kept warm and comfortable and under observation at all times until parent/guardian/doctor/ambulance arrives. If necessary the educator will begin First Aid procedures. Regular checks will be made for deterioration of the child's condition.
- e) Details of the incident will be entered on an Incident, injury, trauma and illness report (Appendix 6.1) and signed and dated by the parent/guardian upon collection of the child, or as soon as possible after the event. This form must be returned to the Family Day Care office within 14 days.
- f) If an injury requires medical or dental treatment, educators will forward the relevant insurance forms to the coordination unit as soon as possible.
- g) In the case of a **serious injury or illness**, the co-ordination unit and Management of Children and Youth Services, Greater Shepparton City Council must be notified as soon as possible. Educators will be required to complete an incident, injury, trauma and illness form (Appendix 6.1) and an ACECQA Notification of serious incident form within 24 hours of the incident (Appendix 6.3) and forward to the coordination unit.
- h) The DEECD will be notified by phone or email within 24 hours of the incident by coordination unit staff.
- i) Coordination unit staff will notify and provide copies of all documentation to the Children's and Youth Services management at Council.

- j) Educators will be provided with an Emergency Procedures flowchart (Appendix 6.5)

In cases where the educator needs to be free to deal with the emergency, Family Day Care staff will contact parent /guardians or emergency contacts and also parents of the other children in care and attend if required.

2. In the event of Hospitalisation of a Child

- a) If a child/ren in care or an educator's own child/ren requires care, Family Day Care staff will provide that care, and/or be available to accompany injured child/ren to hospital, transport parents to hospital or provide any other support necessary.
- b) If necessary the injured child may need to go the hospital unaccompanied by the educator.

3. In the event of critical injury or death of a child educators will;

- a) It is essential to commence resuscitation **IMMEDIATELY**.
- b) Call an ambulance. Continue resuscitation until the ambulance arrives and paramedics take over.
- c) Contact the Family Day Care coordination unit by calling the landline or mobile numbers. If after hours contact the on call coordinator on 0408 329 300.
- d) If assistance is available take children (including siblings of the victim, if appropriate) to another part of the house.
- e) Police will arrive and question the educator and other adults present. This is a necessary routine procedure.
- f) The educator and other adults present must respect the confidentiality regarding the death of a child, and they are not to make public the fact of a child's death. **THIS IS THE FAMILY'S RIGHT.**
- g) In the case of a serious injury or illness the co-ordination unit must be notified as soon as possible.
- h) The DEECD will be notified by phone or email within 24 hours of the incident by coordination unit staff.
- i) Educators will complete an Incident, injury, trauma and illness form (Appendix 6.1) and an ACECQA notification of a Serious Incident form (Appendix 6.3).
- j) Coordination unit staff will notify and provide copies of all documentation to the Children's and Youth Services management at Council.

Coordination Unit Staff or Council Staff:

- a) Obtain relevant information – Educators name, child's name, and details of emergency and check that ambulance has been called and appropriate First Aid procedures have commenced.
- b) Contact Police and negotiate with the police as to who shall contact parents/guardians.

- c) If contacting parent/guardian advise of emergency and offer to transport them to educator's home or hospital if child has been transferred (if appropriate).
- d) Go to educator's home to offer support/assistance.
- e) If possible contact another staff member to assist e.g. from Family Day Care Coordination Unit, Children and Youth Services at Council.
- f) Contact parents of any other children in the educator's home. Inform them that there has been an emergency with another child in the educator's home and ask them to come and collect their child.
- g) Ask ambulance to wait with the child until parents arrive and have opportunity to be with their child.
- h) Check with ambulance and/or police if S.I.D.S. has been contacted (if appropriate).
- i) Ensure that the Educator and parents/guardians are aware of medical and legal procedures following the death of a child.
- j) Ensure that the educator and parents/guardians have someone to stay with them to provide support. This may require staff contacting other people/agencies as required.
- k) Ensure that the educator and/or any other person involved respect confidentiality regarding the death of the child and that they are not to make public the death of the child. THIS IS THE FAMILY'S RIGHT.
- l) Complete record of details and actions taken during emergency.
- m) It is essential that the Manager, Children and Youth Services, Greater Shepparton City Council is notified about the incident as soon as circumstances allow and within the working day.
- n) Provide information regarding the E.A.P to the educator.

In the event of accident or illness of Educator

- a) Medical assistance will be sought, as appropriate.
- b) Emergency contact for the person shall be notified if appropriate.
- c) The co-ordination unit will be notified to arrange for children to be collected by the parents or persons nominated on the enrolment form. Coordination unit will attend immediately to relieve adult until families arrive.
- d) Council will be notified immediately and Work cover procedures initiated, if relevant.
- e) Details of the incident will be documented on the OHS Incident/Near Miss/ Hazard form(Appendix 6.2)
- f) For FDC educators – where possible in the event of injury to the educator and an ambulance is required, children can be looked after by the most suitable available adult until the coordination unit or parents arrive.

4. In the event of accident/illness of adult, volunteer or student placement

- a) Medical assistance will be sought, as appropriate.

- b) Emergency contact for the person shall be notified if appropriate and such information is available.
- c) Children and Youth services Management will be notified immediately.
- d) Details of the incident will be documented on the OHS Incident/Near Miss/ Hazard form (Appendix 6.2).

5. In the event of the critical injury or death of an educator or other adult in the home.

- a) It is essential to commence resuscitation **IMMEDIATELY**.
- b) Call an ambulance. Resuscitation to continue until ambulance arrives.
- c) Notify co-ordination unit to:
 - Attend the environment immediately
 - Phone Police and notify them of emergency. Negotiate with Police as to who shall contact next of kin or emergency contact if information available.
 - Phone next of kin or emergency contact, if information available, and advise emergency if requested by emergency services to do so.
 - Contact Greater Shepparton City Council Manager, Children and Youth Services or an Children and Youth Services staff member at the Council offices and notify of details.
- d) The co-ordination unit will arrange for children to be collected by the parents or persons nominated on the enrolment form.
- e) Police will arrive and question all adults present. This is a necessary routine procedure.
- f) Educator and other adults present must respect the confidentiality regarding the death of any person, and they are not to make public the fact of any person's death. **THIS IS THE FAMILY'S RIGHT.**

In the event of kidnapping/siege/hostage situation:

- a) Educators should attempt to engage the person's attention by keeping up a conversation if possible.
- b) Educators need to keep moving casually, if possible and not stopping physically, unless it is necessary.
- c) Educators need to get the attention of another adult if possible and alert them to the situation.
- d) If alerted, the other adult must contact 000 and give details of the situation.
- e) If alerted, the other adult must contact the Co-ordination Unit and give details of the situation.
- f) Educators should not refuse to hand over a child or defy a direct request/order from the person/offender if it may endanger personal safety and/or safety of others.
- g) Educators must consider their own safety and that of all children and other adults in the care premises.

- h) Council's Children and Youth Services management must be contacted as soon as possible with details of the situation.
- i) Parents/guardians should be contacted as soon as possible.

6. In the event of fire:

Evacuation procedures will be followed as outlined in the Evacuation Diagram displayed in the care premises.

Fire Extinguishers/Smoke Alarms

- a) All Educators' homes must be fitted with smoke alarms/detectors and the educator is responsible for maintaining them in working order at all times. (The smoke alarm check must be conducted at the start of daylight savings each year.)
- b) All educators must have an operable fire extinguisher and/or fire blanket in an accessible position.
- c) Family Day Care staff will check on visits and annual safety checks that an evacuation diagram is displayed.

Evacuation Procedures:

- a) Educators and children need to assemble at the designated evacuation point and shall remain there until otherwise directed by co-ordination unit staff or emergency services personnel.
- b) All Educators must show and explain the evacuation diagram and procedures to all members of their household and the Family Day Care parents.

Where a complete evacuation away from the service is necessary, an appropriate venue near the premises should be sort where toilets and running water are provided and safety of the children, educators and staff can be ensured. This will usually be done under the direction and assistance of emergency services.

Lockdown Emergency Procedures:

A lockdown emergency can be as a result of a:

- Natural disaster – bushfire, severe storm, flood
- Gas Leak or Chemical spill
- External threat e.g. threatening intruder, police emergency in the area

1. The identified Lock Down area will be marked clearly on educators emergency procedures map.
2. Lockdown emergency procedures may require adults to keep all children indoors in one room until advised by emergency services staff.
3. All children and educators are to follow the Lockdown Emergency Procedures.
4. Doors, windows and blinds shall be closed (or locked, if applicable e.g. threatening intruder) if safe to do so.
5. Educators will await further instructions from emergency services

Depending on the nature of the incident, it may be appropriate to arrange debriefing and/or counseling for those affected/involved (refer “Emergency situations” policy).

Debriefing

GUIDELINES

Critical incidents may include, but is not limited to:

- Serious injury to a child/adult
- The serious illness of a child/adult
- An abusive/aggressive adult in the Centre
- An emergency evacuation
- The mandatory reporting of child abuse
- Injury to many children and adults
- A hostage situation
- The death of a child/adult
- The sudden removal of a long term child from care.

PROCEDURES:

1. Depending on the nature of the incident and its consequences, Children and Youth Services Management will offer staff the help of the employee assistance program (EAP) or another external source if appropriate.
2. The employee Assistance Program (EAP) is offered through PPC Worldwide and can be contacted 24 hours of the day on 1300 361 008. This service is confidential and there is no charge for staff members.
3. In the case of children and/or adults (other than staff) being involved in the incident, an external source for appropriate debriefing will be investigated by Council and offered depending on the nature of the incident and its consequences. Associated costs will be negotiated.
4. Individual and/or group debriefing may be offered and all those involved will be encouraged to participate.

Related Policies

- Child Protection
- Dangerous Goods and Storage
- Work Requirements
- Occupational Health & Safety Wellbeing
- Sleep, Rest and Safe Sleeping
- First Aid
- Supervision

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD: Quality Standard 5.5

Sources and Reference Tools

- Emergency Procedures for Licensed Children’s Services: Practice Note 2. January 2010 www.eduweb.vic.gov.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- NCAC QIAS Factsheet #19: *Planning for Emergencies* www.ncac.aceqa.gov.au Viewed 14/10/2013

- DEECD – Children’s Services Adviser
- OH&S Officer – Human Resources Greater Shepparton City Council
- Customer Service Greater Shepparton City Council
- Employee Assistance Program www.greatershepparton.com.au
- People Performance Department - Greater Shepparton City Council December 2011
- CoGSAFE - Greater Shepparton City Council
- Country Fire Authority www.cfa.vic.gov.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- Fire Protection Association Australia www.fpa.com.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- Victoria Police – Shepparton (03) 58 205777
- Ambulance Victoria www.ambulance.vic.gov.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- www.au.ppcworldwide.com PPC Worldwide 1300 361 008 Viewed 14/10/2013
- NCAC Fact sheet #24 Planning for Emergency

Reviewed October 2013
Next Review: October 2014

ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY

"It is in the Early Childhood Years that the foundations are laid for the development of environmentally responsible adults". (Elliot and Davis, 2004)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton Children's and Youth Services believe in empowering children and adults to think and act in ways that meet their needs without impacting negatively on their environment. Environmental sustainable practices at the early childhood level needs to be focused on a holistic approach that integrates all aspects of the care and sustainability of our environment into our services.

Greater Shepparton City Council Education and Care Services will promote and support children's awareness of environmental sustainable practices by embedding it in program experiences, daily practices, interactions and resources. All educators, children and families will also be encouraged and supported to become advocates for a sustainable future.

DEFINITION

Environmental education can be defined as learning about the environment and how natural systems function; the interconnectedness of plants, animals, humans and the planet we inhabit. Environmental education promotes the growth of knowledge, skills and values about the environment, often with a focus on science and nature. In an early childhood setting, environmental education needs to be integrated into everyday decisions made as part of the curriculum.

Sustainability can be defined in a broader and more holistic context of education for the environment. The aim of sustainability education is to promote a sense of responsibility, respect, empowerment, active participation, enquiry and a desire for social change (adapted from ECA Environmental sustainability Policy 2005).

Guidelines:

1. Children will be encouraged and provided with opportunities to develop respect for and enjoyment of the natural environment.
2. Educators will incorporate natural and recycled materials into program activities.
3. Strategies/practices to reduce waste will be practiced in all services e.g. children will be encouraged to use separate containers for recycling, food scraps and waste, and learn about water saving practices ("reduce, re-use, repair and re-cycle").
4. When designing, renovating or replanting garden beds, consideration will be given to the water and fertiliser requirements of the plant/s.
5. Educators will role model energy and water conservation practices at all times, such as turning off lights and air-conditioning when a room is not in use, emptying water play containers onto garden areas.
6. Ideas and information will be shared between educators, children and families about sustainable ideas, implementation and resources at staff/parent/guardian meetings, through displays and/or emails, newsletters, fact sheets and conversations.

7. Educators will encourage families to use the sustainable practices that are implemented at the service in their home environments e.g. recycling, saving water and using environmentally sound cleaning products.
8. When purchasing resources, educators may include picture books, posters and other materials and resources which promote children's exploration of concepts such as the importance of plants and animals (biodiversity), water saving and energy reduction in our environmental balance.
9. Services will aim to purchase equipment that is eco-friendly where possible.
10. Educators will develop an understanding of the individual social and cultural factors which may impact on families' and children's views of sustainability.
11. Where possible, educators will celebrate aspects or events associated with environmental awareness such as National Tree Planting Day, National Recycling Week, Clean up Australia Day and Walk/Ride to Work Days.
12. Educators will keep up-to-date with current research and practice regarding environmental education through subscribing to relevant newsletters and journals, discussions at team meetings and professional development activities.
13. Educators will use local council, government departments and other recognised authorities as sources of information on sustainable practices.

Policies relating to this policy:

- Children's learning and programming
- Philosophy

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD: Quality Area 3

Sources and Reference Tools

- UWS Early Learning Ltd, University of Western Sydney, October 2014
- Balwyn East Kindergarten
- Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities – www.environment.gov.au
- Environmental Education in Early Childhood (EEEC): www.eeec.org.au
- Early Childhood Environmental Education Network – www.eceen.org.au
- www.sustainability.vic.gov.au
- National Quality Standard
- http://www.earlychildhoodvictoria.org.au/edit/special_interest_groups/energy_fact_sheet.pdf
- **EPA** Victoria: Environment Protection Authority. <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/> Viewed 8/10/2014

Developed: September 2012
Reviewed October 2014
Review date: October 2016

EQUIPMENT and RESOURCES (Family Day care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

“Materials enhance learning when they reflect what is natural and familiar and also introduce novelty to provoke interest and more complex and increasingly abstract thinking.”⁶

The Family Day Care coordination unit will purchase and loan appropriate equipment and resources to educators wherever possible.

Resources will be purchased after consultation with parents/guardians, educators and staff in consideration of the needs, abilities, ages and outcomes for children as derived from the approved Early Years Learning Frameworks and backgrounds of the children utilizing the service.

GUIDELINES

1. The educator will be responsible for the care and maintenance of all Family Day Care equipment borrowed from the scheme.
2. The Family Day Care coordination unit will ensure equipment such as car seats, prams and high chairs that are loaned to educators will meet Australian Standards (if Australian standards apply) and is risk assessed before being loaned.
3. The educator will be responsible for the care and maintenance of all equipment owned by them. The educator will ensure that they have the manufacturer equipment guidelines/instructions accessible for all of their own equipment otherwise the equipment is not to be used for family day care purposes. At the coordination unit/management discretion equipment may not be suitable for family day care use in particular circumstances, according to best practice, OHS, safety and developmental needs of the child.
4. Principles of inclusion will be considered when purchasing new resources.
5. All resources will be individually coded for identification and age appropriateness.
6. The equipment borrowed from Family Day Care must be returned; washed in warm soapy water and in good repair (unless otherwise agreed with Family Day Care staff). The coordination unit must be notified of any damage to equipment whilst on loan to the educator, and an assessment will be made as to the educator's financial responsibility for repairs or re-purchase.
7. Coordination unit staff will ask on each home visit about the condition of equipment and resources borrowed.
8. Coordination unit staff will observe and record that toys and equipment are used in accordance with the manufactures guidelines and FDC policies.
9. Equipment and resources **may not be exchanged between educators** without coordination unit permission. The correct borrowing and returning procedures must be

⁶ Belonging, Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009

observed, which are displayed in the Resource and Equipment library and provided to all new educators at orientation.

10. All equipment will have a risk assessment audit conducted when it is returned to the office. Equipment that no longer meets Greater Shepparton Family Day Care standards or manufacturers safety instructions will be destroyed and archived off the computer system.
11. Coordination unit staff will undertake six monthly equipment checks on all equipment that is borrowed in the educator's home.
12. Coordination unit staff will undertake an audit of the equipment and resource library yearly.
13. The coordination unit reserves the right to recall equipment to assist new educators in starting up.
14. After two years educators are encouraged to source their own equipment.
15. Resources are to be returned after 4 weeks.
16. It is the coordination unit's recommendation that educators do not purchase second hand equipment (porta cots, prams, cots). We strongly recommend that equipment used by educators for Family Day Care should have an accompanying instruction booklet (excluding car seats, please see car safety policy).
17. Greater Shepparton Family Day Care will not provide second hand equipment (car seats, prams and highchairs).

Policies relating to this policy are:

- Car Safety
- Safety and Hygiene Check

Sources and Reference Tools

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- AS/NZS 4360 – 1999 Risk Management
- Belonging, Being and Becoming 2009

Reviewed: September 2011
Next review due: March 2013

EXCURSIONS

PRINCIPLE

Excursions are planned to broaden the children's awareness of their surroundings, enrich their experiences through activities not available in the service and assist children in determining the similarity, differences and connections between people and the wider community.

DEFINITION

Non Routine Excursions

Non routine excursions involve a one off outing from the service that is undertaken as part of the education program. These may be within walking distance or require transport and involve all or some of the children from the service. Educators and other adults shall accompany the children in accordance with required routines and educator: child ratios.

Routine Excursions:

Routine excursions involve regular outings that the service visits as part of its education program. Some or all of the children may be taken on a routine excursion by educators and other adult's accordance with ratio requirements.

1. Permission for routine excursions can be completed upon enrolment and must be reviewed on a 12 monthly basis.
2. Routine excursions may include, but are not limited to:
 - Walking out to the letterbox to collect mail
 - Accompanying children and staff on a kinder walk
 - A walk to the local shop, post office or other business
 - A walk to the visiting mobile library
 - A walk to a local park
 - Other children's services and family day care educator homes
 - Supermarket
 - Schools
 - Kindergartens
3. Families/guardians must be given 5 days written notice if a cost will be incurred for any routine or non-routine excursion.

GUIDELINES

A risk assessment shall be completed as part of the Excursion Permission Form (Appendix 7.1) for each venue or outing, before each routine or non-routine excursion occurs. Risk assessments will consider the following:

- Potential hazards
- Toilet and nappy change facilities
- Effective supervision
- Any water hazards (Reg 101)

For excursions and routine outings that have been previously planned and conducted, the previous risk assessments will need to be reviewed and revised.

24 hours written notice will be given to all families before any non-routine excursion is conducted.

All outings and non-routine excursions must take place in a smoke-free environment

1. The decision to conduct an excursion will be made by the educator programmer, with regards to the following considerations:

- Risks identified and steps in place to manage these/potential hazards
- Children's interests
- Relevance to the program
- Health and safety of children
- Any water hazards
- Toilet and nappy change facilities
- Effective supervision
- Affordability for parents
- Budget considerations

NOTE: If the excursion involves a significant hazard (that is identified as "high" risk on the risk assessment) – including but not limited to unfenced water, close proximity to high speed traffic areas, over populated events (Shepparton Show, Bush Market), bus travel for children under the age of 2 years, Greater Shepparton City Council, requires educators to be mindful of the increased potential risks and increase the number of adults accompanying and supervising children during the excursion.

Educators will ensure that no child is taken outside the service without the written consent of the parent/guardian. Excursion Permission Forms (Appendix 7.1) are to be completed.

2. Educators will carry on excursions:

- A basic first aid kit
- A mobile telephone, or have access to one
- Emergency contact numbers of any person who are to be notified of any accident, injury, trauma or illness involving the child
- The child's doctor or medical service
- Emergency action plans e.g. anaphylaxis, asthma action plans and/or other relevant medical information
- Nappy change if required
- Educator Photo identification tag – LDC & Kinder will take their WWC card and FDC will wear their photo lanyard provided by coordination unit.
- Excursion tags for all children with child's name, service name & contact number.

3. Ratios must be maintained at all times.

4. Parents/students/volunteers are not to be left alone with a group of children on excursions. They are to be always under the direct supervision of an educator at all times (reg 70). Refer Working with Children Check and Criminal History Checks policies.

5. Educators must ensure that telephone contact is available at all times during the excursion.

6. If a child attends a service on the day of an excursion without appropriate written permission, the following procedures will be followed:

- Parent or an approved guardian will be contacted to come to the service and sign a permission form, or return a faxed copy.
- If the parent/guardian has authorized emergency contact person(s) to sign an excursion form, and a parent cannot be contacted, the emergency person can come to the service and sign a permission form, or return a faxed copy.

- If none of these options are viable, permission may be granted over the phone by the parent/guardian or authorised person and the excursion form signed upon collection at the end of the day. Contact details will be documented on the child's form.

“In - Service” Event:

Where an event is being held at the service educators are required to:

- Notify parents that it is being held – including 5 days written notice if a cost is involved
- Give parents the option for their child to participate
- Reflect on risks involved and, if needed, complete a risk assessment using the Excursion Permission form e.g. animals attending the service.

Once an excursion has been completed educators will reflect on and review the excursion for future planning. The excursion/event review form, as part of the excursion permission form needs to be completed (Appendix 7.1).

Long Day Care

Occasional Care

Kindergarten

Educators are advised to refer to the Excursions Flow Chart (Appendix 7.2) to meet the requirements of planning for excursions.

If a routine outing takes place spontaneously, a notice will be displayed for families. A notice is only required if the whole service is leaving the premises. The service will display a notice that details:

- Children who are on the outing
- Location of the routine outing
- Time the children are expected to return to the service premises

Signing children in and out with excursions:

- When all children from a service or a room leave the premises for an excursion notes will be added to the day's attendance sheet recording time of departure and time of return.
- When individual children leave/return to the service during the day e.g. walk to kinder, routine excursion, the individual child will be signed in and out on the attendance sheet by staff/authorized person.

1. If a child attends a service on the day of an excursion without appropriate written permission, the following procedures will be followed:

- Parent or an approved guardian will be contacted to come to the service and sign a permission form, or return a faxed copy.

- If the parent/guardian has authorized emergency contact person(s) to sign an excursion form, and a parent cannot be contacted, the emergency person can come to the service and sign a permission form, or return a faxed copy.
 - If none of these options are viable, permission may be granted over the phone by the parent/guardian or authorised person and the excursion form signed upon collection at the end of the day.
 - If it is possible to do so, the child shall remain at the service with the remaining educators and children.
3. If the above is not possible, the excursion shall be cancelled.
 4. Greater Shepparton City Council recommends an adult: child ratio of 1:5 or less depending on the nature of the excursion, children's ages and level of identified risk based on risk assessment.
 5. Educators must ensure that telephone contact is available at all times during the excursion. If the service does not have access to a service mobile phone educators may choose to take their personal mobile and any calls required to be made shall be reimbursed by council.
 6. Should the entire service attend an excursion the Team Leader – Children and Youth Services must be notified of the location of the excursion and be given a contact number which must also be left attached to the door of the service. The service phone number can be used as a contact number for parents if that number is then diverted to the mobile phone being used for the excursion.
 7. Should a parent wish that their child not attend an excursion, the parent may choose to keep the child home on that day or for the duration of the excursion.
 8. Once an excursion has been completed educators will reflect on and review the excursion for future planning. The excursion/event review form, as part of the excursion permission form needs to be completed. (Appendix 7.1)
 7. Services are required to maintain an excursion log. (Appendix 7.3)
 8. Approval for babies and toddlers to attend excursions will be determined by the service leader. This will be dependent on the venue, transport, activities, risk assessment and benefits of the planned event.

Family Day Care

In relation to routine outings;

- Expired routine excursion forms and risk assessments can be submitted to the office annually and updated as required.
- A copy of current routine excursion destinations will be submitted to the family day care office annually

In relation to non-routine excursions;

1. Educators will notify the family day care office of their intended destination before departing on the non-routine excursion.

2. Non-routine excursion forms and the accompanying risk assessment form will be sent to the coordination unit within 2 weeks of the excursion being held.
Should a parent wish that their child not attend an excursion, the parent may choose to keep their child home that day, or for the duration of the excursion. If the parent chooses to send their child, as per booked hour's forms, care must be available to the family.
3. Once an excursion has been completed educators will reflect on and review the excursion for future planning. The excursion/event review form, as part of the excursion permission form needs to be completed. (Appendix 7.1)

The coordination unit will keep a log of all non-routine excursions available in the office.

Related Policies

- Supervision
- Children's learning and programming
- Staffing and ratios
- Work Requirements
- Water Activities

National Quality Standards: Quality Standard 1,2, 4 and 6

Sources and Reference Tools

- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Education and Care Services National Law
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- Excursions and Routine Outings: Practice Note 14. May 2010. DEECD Viewed 25/11/2013
- National Quality Framework Excursions: Fact Sheets October 2012 Viewed 25/11/2013
- Supervision: Practice Note 12, May 2010. Updated 2012 DEECD. Viewed 25/11/2013
- Getting Out and About in Family Day Care: Factsheet # 27 FDCQA Viewed 25/11/2013
- Management – Children and Youth Services, Greater Shepparton City Council
- VicRoads
<http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/SafetyAndRules/RoadSafetyEducation/EarlyChildhood/> viewed 5.3.14

Reviewed March 2014
Next review March 2016

FAMILY LAW

PRINCIPLE

To ensure the safety, care and protection of children, educators and families attending the service at all times.

GUIDELINES

1. Educators and staff (administration) will undertake professional development in child protection training, through attendance at staff and educator meetings, professional development reading material, and at initial induction.
2. Parents/Guardians are required to provide the service upon enrolment, copies of any parenting plans, parenting orders or other court orders relating to powers, duties, responsibilities or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child and information relating to the child's residence or the child's contact with a parent or other person. (Reg 160) In this regulation- **parenting order** means 'a parenting order within the meaning of section 64B (1) of the *Family Law Act* 1975 of the Commonwealth', **parenting plan** means 'a parenting plan within the meaning of section 63C (1) of the *Family Law Act* 1975 of the Commonwealth and includes a registered parenting plan within the meaning of sections 63C (6) of that Act'.
3. Service leaders will inform the educators of the above mentioned plans so they are able to legally abide by these orders.
4. Where relevant, the date of expiry of such orders needs to be recorded, reviewed and updated prior to the expiry date by the service or program leader.
5. Parents/Guardians will provide a list of people who are allowed contact with the child.
6. Parents/Guardians will inform the service immediately they believe a court order/parenting plan may be violated.
7. If a person not entitled under any Family Law Act Orders arrives to collect the child (and the staff have a copy of the order), he/she will advise the person that they have a legal obligation to refuse to hand over the child to that person.
8. If that person insists on taking the child, the educator should:
 - Discourage the person and explain the service's policy and legal obligations.
 - Refer the person to other services for advice if appropriate.
 - Make every effort to contact the police for attendance before the child is removed, if safe to do so. Telephone - 000 or 112 (mobile)
 - If the person is still insistent on removing the child and the educator considers that their safety and/or the safety of children are at risk, the educator will:
 - Allow the child to depart with that person.
 - Telephone the police, then the parent who has parental responsibility immediately or any emergency contacts if parent is unavailable.
 - Record full details of the person, incident, including a description of any vehicle used, registration number of the vehicle, etc.

- Notify the Children and Youth Services department with all relevant details as soon as circumstances allow. In extreme circumstances educators may need to consider emergency procedures such as those for evacuation/hostage situations etc. (See Emergency Procedures Policy). Family Day Care educators are to call the coordination unit as soon as possible for support and advice

Related Policies

- Child Protection
- Confidentiality
- Records

National Quality Standards: Quality Standard 2 and 6

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Children's Services Adviser - DEECD
- Child Protection – Department of Human Services
- Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People. Child Protection, DHS, DEECD, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools. May 2010

Reviewed April 2014
Next Review due by April 2016

FEES

PRINCIPLE

Fees are set in order to balance affordability for families and the ongoing service sustainability. Fees for services are set within the limits of the Greater Shepparton City Council budget and funding authorities. Fees will be reviewed annually.

GUIDELINES

1. All families will receive a copy of the Fees Policy upon enrolment and will be required to sign on their child/ren's enrolment forms their commitment to pay in accordance with the policy.
2. Communication regarding to fees and accounts will be discussed in accordance with privacy requirements, cultural inclusiveness and support of family's individual requirements.
3. Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to ensuring there are no financial barriers for family's access to an early childhood program for their child/children. Families having difficulty meeting fee requirements are to inform the Service Leader who will endeavor to establish a suitable arrangement for payment of fees (via a payment plan Appendix 8.1) particularly in relation to outstanding accounts.
4. Unpaid debts will be referred to the Council's Debt Collection Agency. All fees incurred will be the responsibility of the debtor.
5. If fees are not paid by the due date and no payment plan has been established, care will be ceased for all Council Children's Services that the family is using (Long Day Care, Occasional Care, Family Day Care, Fun Group and Kindergarten).
6. In the instance where payment is made by cheque and the cheque has been dishonored, parents are required to pay all costs associated with this process.
7. Statement of accounts will be placed in family pockets at the service or posted on a monthly (Long Day Care), each term (Kindergarten/Fun Group) or as agreed (Family Day Care).
8. All accounts not paid by the due date will be deemed outstanding and the Council debt collection process will be followed.
9. Where there is a second incidence of cease of care letter (Appendix 8.5 – this letter will be amended to state, "As this is your second cease of care letter") to a family, care cannot be re-instated unless automatic payments are put in place.

Payment Plans

Payment plans will operate in accordance with the following terms:

1. Kindergarten Leaders who identify a family requires fee assistance via a payment plan will direct them to contact the Children's Services Administration Officer.
2. Service Leaders (Long Day Care, Occasional Care and Family Day Care) set up initial payment plans.

3. Are in writing and the terms must be acceptable to the family and Greater Shepparton City Council.
4. Set out the debt, payments to be made and due dates which will cover the current debt plus the weekly/term fees.
5. Are set up as an automatic transfer where agreed and available.
6. Changes or defaults on payment plans will be documented by the Children's Services Administration Officer.
7. Amendments to payment plans will be in discussion with the Children's Services Administration Officer who is responsible for debt collection.

Referral To Debt Collection Agency

1. Costs incurred by Council for referral to Debt Collection Agency shall be charged to the parent/guardian and must be paid in full before care can be resumed at Councils Children's Services.
2. Prior to accounts being sent to debt collection, Service Leaders/Kindergarten Administration Officers are to complete the debtors tracking sheet (M13/12994) and forward the information to the Team Leader, Children Services.

Late Fees

1. A late fee of \$2.00 per minute per child can be charged to parent/guardians who arrive to collect their child/ren after the service closing time.
2. Educators are to ensure the late book is signed by the parent and the correct departure time is written on the child's attendance sheet.
3. Late fees may be applied after reminders and discussions have been had with families.
4. The decision to charge a late fee will be made by the Service Leader.
5. The Service Leader (all services) is to complete a late fee letter (Appendix 8.2) that will be issued to the family and a copy forwarded to the Children's Services Administration Officer.
6. Payment of the late fee will be required within fourteen days. Nonpayment will incur the same penalty as non-payment of the usual childcare fee. CCB is not applicable to late fees.

Long Day Care

Nancy Vibert Occasional Care

GUIDELINES

1. Payment for Long Day Care will be monthly in arrears for long day care places. Accounts with details of the amount owing will be distributed via parent pockets at the service. All

accounts include the following details: Service provider number, debtor number, child's name, date ending, date payment is due, arrears and the total amount owing.

2. Fees are required to be paid within five (5) working days of issue of account. All fees not paid within this timeframe will be deemed outstanding.
3. Payment for occasional care must be made on arrival on the day care is provided or can be paid in advance. Fees will be charged for all late cancellations.
4. Council retains the right to cease care at the service if the account remains unpaid. The decision to withdraw care will be made in consultation between the Service Leader and the Team Leader Children's Services, and will take into consideration the individual circumstances of the family involved.
5. A child's place will be terminated across all of Council's Children's Services in the event an approved payment plan has not been put in place by the due date or outstanding amount paid.
6. Arthur Dickmann, Nancy Vibert and Frank R. Pullar Childcare Centre's accept Bpay, Centrelink Centre Pay, Cheque, Eftpos and Centrelink Basic Card. Cash payments for these services will only be accepted at Council offices, 90 Welsford Street Shepparton (8.15am – 5pm Monday – Friday).
7. Additional absence days can be claimed in shared care situations with relevant documentation. In situations where both parties use the service they will have individual service agreements. Shared care arrangements will be clearly documented by the Service Leader including who is responsible for the account.
8. Where agencies pay the fee for a client, the Child Care Benefit is not available and the full childcare fee will be charged. An Agency Payment Agreement letter (Appendix 8.3) needs to be completed, prior to the commencement or continuation of care.

Fees during Absences

Casual Occasional Care Bookings (Nancy Vibert CCC only)

If a child is absent eg. Illness, holiday's etc. parents/guardian must notify the service **by 8.00am on the day of booked care** or the fees for the booked hours will be charged. Cancellations can be made between the hours of 7.30am – 5.30pm.

Permanent Occasional Care Bookings (Nancy Vibert CCC only)

If a child is absent eg. Illness, holidays etc. parents/guardian must notify the service **by 4.00pm the day prior** to the booked care or the fees for the booked hours will be charged. Cancellations can be made between the hours of 7.30am – 5.30pm. An allowance of 20 cancellations a year applies to all permanent occasional bookings. Anything over this amount will be charged as an absence. Any temporary change to hours for permanent bookings will be deemed a cancellation. New hours for that booking will be considered a new booking and families will go on the waiting list for that day.

Long Day Care

Full fees will be charged during absences including illness, holidays and gazetted public holidays.

Exceptions:

- when the service is closed over the Christmas/New Year period
- Council children services training days
- Good Friday and Easter Monday

Family Leave: families are eligible to apply for family leave within the following guidelines:

- Two(2)weeks' notice must be given prior to commencing leave

- One(1) week family leave charged at 50% full daily fee (pro-rata)
- Leave can only be taken in one block (Monday to Friday pro- rata) and must be applied for using the Family Leave Form (Appendix 8.4)
- Care will not be available during the week of reduced fees
- Financial Year.

Outstanding Fees

1. Long Day Care fees that are not paid within five (5) working days of issue of the account statement are deemed to be 'outstanding'.
2. Occasional care fees that are not paid on arrival are deemed to be 'outstanding'.
3. Parents/guardians with outstanding fees will be issued a cease of care letter (Appendix 8.5). Full payment of the account is required within five (5) working days of issue of the cease of care letter with the option of a payment plan.
4. The cease of care letter will state the date that care will cease if account is not paid.
5. If no payment is received by the date specified on the cease of care letter the service leader will inform Council and Council will then contact the parent/guardian.
6. Once care has ceased the debt must be paid in full before care can re-commence. (Recommencement of care will be subject to availability of a place).
7. When a child no longer attends a children's service and there is an outstanding account, parents/guardians will receive an Outstanding Fee Letter (Appendix 8.6).

Rural Occasional Care

GUIDELINES

1. A Rural Occasional Care session can only be booked one (1) week in advance.
2. Payments for sessions must be made on the day of attendance.
3. Receipts will be issued regularly in accordance with government rebate guidelines. For some families it may be possible to claim a refund for a portion of their occasional care fees. Further information is provided in the Early Years Rural Occasional Care Handbook.
4. **Cancellations**
 - The educator at the program needs to be notified by 8.30 a.m. on the day that care is booked if care is to be cancelled for that day, otherwise parents will be charged the full fee.
 - If payment has been made in advance no refund is available. Advanced payment cannot exceed one (1) week.

Kindergarten

Fun Group

GUIDELINES

1. The total annual fee is prescribed in the service handbook and is payable in four (4) equal installments on a school term basis.
2. Kindergarten and Fun Group term fees are due by the third week of each term. Any fees not paid by the due date will be deemed outstanding and an outstanding account letter (Appendix 8.7) will be issued.
3. The Service Leader will sight the relevant concession card, visa, travel document or letter of visa status and record the expiry date if it falls within the current term.
4. Eligibility for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) will be recorded on individual card holder forms and must be checked every term by the Kindergarten Leader.
5. The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) details will be treated within the guidelines of the Confidentiality Policy.
6. Fees are to be paid either by Bpay, Cheque or Eftpos at the service. Payment and dates at each service will be advertised in the last week of each term relevant to payment of the following terms fees. Cash payments will only be accepted at Council offices, 90 Welsford Street Shepparton (8.15am – 5pm Monday to Friday). Families are to ensure they state the name of the service attending and family debtor number where known.
7. No refund will be issued for withdrawal or long term absence of child/children unless approved by the Team Leader Children's Services. Fees can be transferred between Council Kindergartens.
8. Where more than one child from a family attends the Kindergarten/Fun Group program in the same year, fee exemptions may be made at the discretion of the Team Leader Children's Services and in consideration of budget requirements.
9. Unfunded children may be charged the relevant Department of Education and Training (DET) per capita subsidy, the service fees and no Kinder Fee Subsidy (KFS) will be offered. This will be determined by Team Leader Children's Services.
10. Parents/guardians who utilize the kindergarten walking bus where a fee is charged for the bus walk,
The fee is:
 - A per term fee calculated on the number of booked walks per week
 - Unable to be calculated casually
 - Not able to attract CCB or fee subsidies (full fee)
11. Children commencing a program within the first five (5) weeks of term will be charged full term fees.
12. Children commencing from week six (6) of term will be charged a half term fee.

13. Families experiencing temporary hardship should contact the Team Leader Children's Services. Team Leader Children's Services can waiver/amend kindergarten fees under special circumstances on a case by case basis.

Long Day Care Children Attending Kindergarten

Parents/Guardians of children attending the funded kindergarten program in a Greater Shepparton City Council Long Day Care Service will pay fees according to their total utilisation of the services available. This policy applies to Arthur Dickmann Child Care Centre and Arthur Dickmann Kindergarten, Frank R Pullar Child Care Centre and Echuca Road Kindergarten.

1. A child attending the kindergarten program and long day care on the same day (before and/or after kindergarten care), the relevant daily long day care fee is payable. The kindergarten term fee will then be calculated on a pro-rata basis in this instance.
2. In the event a casual long day care place is utilised on a child's kindergarten day, the Long Day Care fee is charged and there is no refund on the Kindergarten term fee for that day.

Family Day Care

1. Family Day Care Service Leader will determine in conjunction with contractors the appropriate fee schedule in consideration of but not limited to the following;
 - Qualifications
 - Years of experience
 - Professional development
 - Physical environment
 - Location
 - Mentoring capacity
 - Meals/travel arrangements
 - Programming contributions
 - Professional environment
 - Demand of service
2. As contractors are not employed by Council during orientation and induction the coordination unit will provide resources and further information on
 - Superannuation
 - Taxation
 - Income Protection Insurance
3. Fees and levies will be reviewed in May each year for implementation in July.
4. Educators will require families to initial a record of payment for cash payments.
5. Coordination unit staff will provide payment summaries to contractors once the Child Care Management System (CCMS) processing is complete. These will detail the amounts responsible for collection.
6. Timing of contractor payments is reliant on CCMS processing of timesheets. The Contractor Agreement provides full information about delays by CCMS which will impact your payment dates.

7. In the event processing is delayed due to CCMS educators will be paid once the system is able to process the payments.
8. In the event processing is delayed due to Council error, payments will be made to educators based on the previous fortnight calculations by week end of timesheets being due. In this instance payments will be reconciled in the next fortnight; all monies paid in advance will be collected from contractors and monies due will be forwarded to the contractor.

Implementation Guidelines

- a. The coordination unit staff will provide families with a fee schedule and fee estimate.
- b. Services will not commence for families until all signed placement agreements are returned to the coordination unit office.
- c. Parents/guardians are to make payments in accordance with their placement agreements.
- d. Contractors will advise coordination unit staff immediately once it is identified payments have not been received.
- e. A cease of care letter to families for outstanding accounts not paid will be issued by Greater Shepparton City Council.
- f. In the event payment is not received by the due date stated in the Cease of Care letter, services will be immediately ceased at all Council Children's Services.
- g. Educators will provide families with a reference for payment (internet payments and bank deposits require no further documentation).

Debt Recovery

- The coordination unit will pursue all debts from contractors in relation to overpayment of contract payments associated with government funds, such as Child Care Benefit.
- Greater Shepparton Family Day Care will cease care of families in family day care who incur an outstanding debt at any other of Council's Children's Services which include long day care or occasional care and other family day care educators until such time that the debt is repaid or a payment plan has been agreed to.
- Families will not be able to transfer care to other educators unless all outstanding amounts are paid.
- Outstanding payments not recovered prior to cease of care will be forwarded to Council's debt collection agency. Debt recovery charges will be added to the family account.
- If a recommendation to cease chasing the debt by Council's debt collection agency is made the service will discuss this with the contractor.
- Contractors wanting Council to pursue debt outside of the recommendation of Council's finance department and debt collection agency will have future costs of debt collection, invoiced to them directly.

Additional Charges and Levies

1. Parents are required to pay the full fee including the levy (less the amount of Child Care Benefit they are entitled to receive) to the educator. The parent levy is deducted from the Child

Care Benefit paid directly to the educator by the coordination unit. This levy is reviewed annually.

2. An educator levy is charged weekly to the contractor and collected fortnightly through deductions.

Educator refundable Parent Enrolment Levy

Individual educators may request a refundable parent enrolment levy from families.

If a refundable parent enrolment levy is requested the following guidelines will be followed;

- Individual educators will have a parent enrolment levy agreement which will clearly state that a refundable enrolment levy is being held, the amount, the circumstances under which the amount will be refunded, circumstances of the levy not being returned, and the timeframe and processes in which the levy will be returned after care ceases.
- The educators will provide a copy of the refundable enrolment levy agreement to families before care commences.
- Families will sign to confirm they have received this information.

This levy is not subject to Child Care Benefit and is not facilitated through Greater Shepparton Family Day Care and therefore is not subject to Council's debt collection parameters.

In the event of a dispute regarding the parent enrolment levy the grievance procedure will be enacted.

Grievances

The Grievance Procedure of the service will be followed in all instances of dispute or dissatisfaction between educators and parents concerning the setting of fees. Refer to the Concerns and Grievances Policy.

Related Policies

- Access in children's services
- Discontinue Education and Care
- Concerns and Grievances

NQS –7.3 (Administration systems enable the effective management of quality service)

Education and Care Services National Regulations – 168,172

Sources and Reference Tools

- Management – Children and Youth Services, Greater Shepparton City Council
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Department of Education Department of Employment
- Department of Education and Training
- Kindergarten Guide 2015
- CCMS Handbook

HOME VISITS (Family day care – original)

Principle

Home visits are conducted to ensure that all educators in the Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Service are fully supported and monitored in their role. This will enable the Coordination Unit to monitor the quality of care, resource and provide support for the educator, observe the children in care, discuss scheme issues, provide ongoing professional development and assist educators with National Quality Framework and Implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework.

Guidelines

1. The coordination unit will maintain regular contact with each educator using a variety of methods which will be recorded on the contact record to enable channels of communication between staff and educators to be kept open.
2. In circumstances where home visits have been attempted but not completed due to educator absence, contact will be made between the educator and coordination unit and recorded on the contact summary record.
3. Coordination unit staff will conduct a minimum of one home visit within each four week period per educator and complete a home visit schedule form (Appendix 9.1)
4. Every second home visit shall be unscheduled so that the field leader can observe care in progress, identify the needs of the educator/children and offer support. This visit will be documented on an home visit , unscheduled form (Appendix 9.2)
5. Every second home visit will be a scheduled visit at a time which is convenient for the educator. The purpose of these visits is to provide individual professional development for the educator and to assist with each educator's continuing improvement plan, provide opportunity for success and fulfill the home visit sheet requirements.
6. Home visits will be scheduled to enable field leaders to observe new children in care within four weeks of their commencement. Field leaders will then resource the educator appropriately and provide feedback to the parent/guardian via phone call or email and with a learning story.
7. Educators and field leaders will work collaboratively on home visits and treat each other respectfully.
8. All coordination unit staff will observe confidentiality in regards to any aspect of the educator's home life that becomes apparent on visits that does not relate to Family Day Care.
9. The following areas will be covered by coordination unit staff during visits:
 - **Monitoring the quality of care**
The quality of care will be determined by the safety standards, the availability of age appropriate, stimulating, educational experiences provided for the children reflecting all areas relating to the national quality framework, the state of hygiene, nutritional quality of meals provided by the educator, standard of educator/child interactions and appropriateness of interaction and communication techniques.
 - **Resourcing and Supporting the Educator**
The field leader or educator may discuss issues and plan strategies surrounding children's needs and experiences, parental needs and requests, community perceptions, professional development, national quality framework and administrative requirements. As a result of these discussions the field leader may provide appropriate community contacts and/or additional resources for the educator.

- **Observing the children**

Field leaders will aim to observe and interact with the children in care on average six times per year. They will identify and discuss children's developmental needs, activities to extend learning and behavior management issues with educators and parents if required and provide information regarding Inclusion Support and the national quality framework.

- **Maintaining records**

Field leaders will complete Home Visit Records for each home visit to ensure records are current. These records will cover the issues discussed and observed during the visit and will be co-signed by the educator, field leader and then read and signed off by the service leader after the visit is completed.

- **Items pertaining to the service**

Field leaders will discuss issues such as policy changes, insurance, training, meetings, administration requirements and placements.

- **Continuing Improvement**

Field leaders will use scheduled and unscheduled home visits to assist educators to meet indicators of quality care, to implement a continuing improvement plan and to achieve indicators of high quality care.

- **Safety of the environment**

Field leaders will at all times review the safety of the family day care environment for children and educators and offer support in the way of resources, policies and procedures.

Implementation

1. Visits will occur at different times of the day and week to enable the field leader to observe all the children in care.
2. When it is not possible for a visit to occur, some form of contact will occur through telephone calls, email, or by the educator visiting the office. However, regular home visits must take place in the individual educator's home to ensure that the care is monitored in the environment in which it takes place.
3. All relevant issues will be discussed with the educator at the time of the visit. Educators shall read the home visit record. Each home visit record shall be signed by the educator and field leader and a copy of the visit will be given to the educator.
4. A parent/guardian will be contacted after each visit to discuss their child's family day care experience.
5. Field leaders will wear a SAFE T CARD personal duress alarm and carry the accompanying mobile phone with them on all home visits and safety checks. Training on how to use these duress alarms will be given by a member of the coordination unit prior to the field leader's first use.

Procedure Guidelines for Home Visits

Visits are to be conducted in a professional manner and all official documentation resulting from visits is to be objective and free from bias associated with previous visits or conversations with colleagues prior to notes being taken.

Children's safety and wellbeing is to be the highest priority in all circumstances. This is to be reflected in practice at all times.

1. Home visits will be allocated approximately one hour and 45 minutes. Approximately one and a half hours to visit and approximately 15 minutes following up any resourcing requirements for the educators at the office.
2. Field leaders will complete their visit record at the educator's home and have them sign each sheet.
3. Non-compliance issues identified should be noted and if relevant to the immediate safety of children the Service Leader – Family Day Care is to be consulted immediately. If the Service Leader is not available a member of the Greater Shepparton City Council Children & Youth Services management group will be consulted.
4. In the event of emergency or exceptional circumstances where the visit ends prior to notes being taken, the field leader will endeavor to complete the visit sheet prior to attending another educator's home or discussing the visit with colleagues.
5. All follow-up to the visit is to be completed as soon as possible on returning to the office. Resource material should be gathered and follow up required should be noted on the visit sheet.
6. The home visit folder is then placed on the Service Leader's desk for review and to be signed. A copy is then placed electronically on the educator's file and the original copy sent to them. The home visit folder is then placed back in the cabinet. Any issues identified will be discussed with the field leader and followed up immediately with the educator and documented in the relevant file.

Unit procedure when there is an educator breach:

- If the breach is life threatening, the safety of the children will be secured immediately. The visit will then stop and the Service Leader will be contacted. If she is unavailable, the Team Leader Children's Services will be contacted
- A photo of the breach (if relevant) will be taken
- The breach/concern will be raised with the educator and identified on the home visit sheet.
- On return to the office, the field leader will give the home visit notes to the service leader
- The Service Leader will read through the visit notes and debrief the issues presented.
- The Service Leader will follow up with the educator and decide a course of action.
- In each instance the Service Leader deems a breach has occurred the Team Leader Children's Services will be notified.
- When a warning has been issued the Service Leader will brief the Coordination Unit team regarding the warning and the required actions to ensure that professional support is provided.
- Confidential information should not be disclosed in depth in an email. If more information is required, this should be discussed with the Service Leader.
- If formal disciplinary action is taken, the next two home visits will be conducted with two coordination unit staff.

Under no circumstances is a unit member to visit an educator for a home visit directly after a warning or such documentation has been issued, without the unit member first being informed of the breach and another coordination unit staff member is accompanying them.

We remain a fair and equitable service. All stakeholders are entitled to a process that encourages and supports equality. If after a breach, strategies have been implemented and opportunities to succeed have not been met, the de-registration policy will be implemented.

Related Policies:

- De registration of an educator
- Confidentiality

Sources and Reference Tools

- National Quality Standards
- Beverley Allen – Good Documentation work shop notes 2009

Reviewed: October 2012

Next review: April 2014

HOURS OF WORK (Family day care – original)

PRINCIPLE

Educators are in a work environment that is flexible and they have the opportunity to choose their own working hours within the coordination unit's guidelines as per the educator agreement.

GUIDELINES

1. Educators are encouraged to ensure that they work within reasonable Occupational Health and Safety practices in the number of hours that they educate and care for children within any period.

This may include:

- Ensuring a break of 24 hours a week, reducing hours back to normal after a busy seasonal period, monitoring long periods of 24 hour care, balancing families' childcare needs with the educator's own Occupational Health and Safety and the welfare of the educator's family.
- Educators who have been identified by the coordination unit staff of being a 'burn out risk', not observing Occupational Health and Safety measures or whose work practices may be affected by working too many hours.
- Working consistently without an appropriate break.

Educators may have their hours of work restricted by the service coordinator or a representative of the Greater Shepparton Aged and Children's Services Management team.

2. To meet the varied needs of families within Greater Shepparton educators are required to be available across a minimum of 38 hours per week over a minimum of three days. A reduction of work pattern below three days will be followed up by coordination unit staff. The same amount of resourcing time by the coordination unit applies to all educators regardless of hours worked.

Exceptions to this may be granted by the coordination unit on a case by case basis. For example:

- Where an educator wants to offer specialised care that may be under this minimum e.g. Before/after school care only, weekend care only, 24 hour or emergency care
- Where supply does not meet demand
- The hours of care offered meet the needs of particular families, a community or seasonal demands
- Where an educator needs to reduce their hours of work under the direction of registered health practitioner

3. In accordance with Occupational Health and Safety requirements, educators are encouraged to ensure that they take an appropriate break from educating/caring children in order to protect their well being.

Sources and Reference Tools

- Greater Shepparton Human Resources Dept. 2012
- Worksafe Victoria – www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Policies relating to this policy are;

- Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Reviewed: April 2012

Next review due: October 2013

HYGIENE and INFECTION CONTROL

Infection control is the process of minimizing the risks of spreading infectious disease while providing care. Infection is transmitted through certain body functions such as coughing and sneezing, and bodily secretions e.g. blood, urine, and faeces. If a young child is infected the risks to other children can be greatly reduced if infection control and hygiene practices are followed at all times.

PRINCIPLE

Educators will attend to the basic hygiene needs of children as soon as they occur, thereby reducing the risk of infection in children and adults in children's services. They will adhere to recommended hygiene principles that minimize the spread of infectious diseases and also encourage children and families to follow those principles.

GUIDELINES

1. Educators will understand and follow accepted health precautions, model basic hygiene and encourage other adults and children to do likewise.

The hygiene process needs to be positive and culturally appropriate.

2. Hand washing

Hand washing is the single most effective infection control measure. Educators will wash their hands:

Before:

- Starting work
- Eating or handling food
- Giving medication
- Putting on gloves before you change a child
- Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children
- Transitions between rooms
- Going home

After:

- Taking off gloves
- Changing nappy
- Cleaning the nappy change areas
- Using the toilet
- Helping children use the toilet
- Coming in from outside play
- Wiping a child's nose or your own nose
- Eating or handling food/handling garbage
- Cleaning up faeces, vomit or blood
- Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children
- Touching animals
- After giving first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

The following procedures will be used to wash hands:

- Where possible educators will use liquid soap and running water. Non-water cleansers or antiseptics e.g. alcohol based hand rub, gel or foam are adequate alternatives only where liquid soap and running water are not accessible.
 - For approximately 10-15 seconds hands will be rubbed all over vigorously as they are washed, including:
 - backs of hands
 - wrists
 - between fingers
 - under fingernails
 - Rinse all over, including:
 - backs of hands
 - wrists
 - between fingers
 - under fingernails
 - Taps will be turned off.
 - Hands will be dried with paper or cloth towels or hand dryers. Educators will encourage the children to wash their hands according to the above procedures.
 - The process of thoroughly washing, rinsing and drying your hands or a child's hands should take around 20 - 30 seconds.
3. Children will be encouraged to follow simple hygiene guidelines as modeled by the educators: i.e.
- Washing hands after toilet
 - Washing hands after wiping noses
 - Washing hands after playing outside
 - Washing hands before preparing/handling/eating food
 - Wash hands before putting gloves on
 - Washing hands after handling animals or pets (including fish, birds & reptiles)
 - Not eating food that has fallen on the floor or been otherwise contaminated
 - Not sharing, drinking or eating utensils
 - Not sharing hairbrushes, combs, clips, tooth brushes, etc.
 - Washing hands after applying sunscreen
4. Children will have access to soap and running water (or suitable alternative) at all times.
5. Educators will have a supply of paper towels available in the service at all times for general or emergency use.
6. A supply of facial tissues will be easily accessible to the educators and the children in the care environment at all times.

CONTROL PROCEDURES:

1. Educators will follow appropriate hygiene procedures at all times to prevent cross infection. Refer to Infectious Diseases and Immunisation policy for more detailed information.
2. Gloves
 Disposable gloves will be worn at all times when contact with body fluids is unavoidable e.g. dealing with blood and other bodily fluids such as vomit, pus, urine, faeces, discharge etc. Gloves will be worn to clean spills of body fluids. The substance will be removed with paper towel or other paper and disposed of into a sealable waste bag. The area will be washed with detergent and water. A bleach type disinfectant will then be used e.g. White King 1:10 dilution,

left to soak for 10 minutes, if possible. These processes may need to be repeated. Soiled cots will be treated as above.

- All educators are to wear clean plastic disposable gloves when preparing the following foods: sandwiches, cooked meats and cheeses.

It's not a requirement to wear gloves whilst handling food. However gloves may be worn to protect the food. Fresh gloves must be used regularly and/or changed after each separate food preparation task. Gloves will be removed by peeling back from wrist and dropping into waste bag. Disposable gloves will not be reused. Hands will be washed thoroughly after removing gloves.

3. Cleaning and Disinfecting

Educators will ensure the building, equipment and furnishings are maintained in a clean, hygienic condition at all times.

Cleaning is important in the prevention of infection. In most cases this can be achieved with detergent and warm water or a suitable commercial cleaner e.g. Viraclean. In some instances disinfectant should be used, **after cleaning with soap and water.**

NOTE: Disinfectants are only necessary if a surface is known to be contaminated with potentially infectious material. Remember, if the surface is not clean, the disinfectants cannot kill germs, so you should always clean first, then disinfect.

- Toilets/sinks will be checked and cleaned regularly and when soiled.
- Change tables/mats will be waterproof and must be wiped with suitable disinfectant after each nappy change. (Refer to Appendix 10.1)
- Showers and baths will be cleaned with detergent and disinfected after each child uses them.
- Toys shared by babies/toddlers will be washed daily.
- Mouthing toys shall be cleaned as soon as practical after a child has put it in their mouth.
- Children's cups/drink bottles used for water must be washed daily.

4. Linen

Each child will have individual bedding laundered at least weekly and face cloths and/or towels laundered when soiled. Educators will store clothing and linen safely and hygienically pending laundering or disposal.

Treat soiled linen as you would a soiled nappy, and wear gloves.

5. Soiled clothing

- In the case of soiled clothing (due to toileting accidents) the solids shall be disposed into the toilet and soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag for parents to take home. If necessary the item may need to be double bagged.
- Blood stained clothing will be secured in a plastic bag and sent home with the child.

6. Waste Disposal

All soiled articles such as disposable nappies and tissues will be placed in bags, which can be tied or sealed and disposed of in line with local by-laws. A separate covered or enclosed bin or bucket is to be used for storage of wet/soiled nappies until they can be moved to the outdoor bin.

7. Cleaning of Floors

Floors will be washed according to the service cleaning schedule with detergent and water. Carpeted areas will be vacuumed according to the service cleaning schedule. Spills of bodily fluid shall be cleaned immediately with hot, soapy water and/or mild disinfectant. Bleach should not be used on carpet.

8. Outdoor Environment

- Sandpits will be kept clean, raked over regularly and kept covered when not in use to protect from animals.
- Inspection throughout the day ensures that the outdoor environment is as clean and hygienic as possible at all times
- Promptly remove the blood, urine and faeces using appropriate cleaning procedures
- Cover the sandpit when the service is unattended, to prevent contamination by animal faeces or inappropriately discarded sharp or dangerous objects such as syringes or broken bottles
- Remove any animal faeces or dead creatures found promptly. Dispose of it in an appropriate manner. Use a shovel and dispose of the object into a plastic bag then remove it from the outside play environment. If the sandpit is contaminated, remove the sand that was exposed and shovel it into a plastic bag. If the sandpit is extensively contaminated, replace all of the sand.
Or as alternative option, call the local law office to report the dead creature, and they will remove it. (Local law phone number **5832 9470**)
- Don't allow containers that are holding water to become stagnant, empty and refill daily.

Potties

Potties will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use.

9. Ventilation

Spaces used by the children will be adequately ventilated.
Recommended temperature 18-21degrees

10. Cots

Clean with warm soapy water or with a suitable cleaning product. Provide clean linen for the cot.

11. Dummies

Never let children share dummies. When not in use, dummies should be stored in individual plastic containers labeled with the child's name.

12. Play dough

Play dough has a high salt content, which discourages germs from living and multiplying. A new batch of play dough should be made regularly and stored in an airtight container.

13. Animals

Ensure educators and children wash their hands with soap and water after touching animals or cleaning an animal's bedding, cage or tank.

14. Celebrations

When celebrating special events with food e.g birthday cakes with candles ,the spread of germs should be minimized/prevented by:

- Parents providing a separate cupcake (with a candle if they wish) for the birthday child and enough cupcakes for all the other children
- Parents providing a separate cupcake (with a candle if they wish) for the birthday child and a large cake that can be cut and shared

OR

- The service providing a replica of a birthday cake for the birthday child and the parents provide enough real cake to share with all the other children.

15. Safe handling of body fluids or materials

Avoid direct contact with blood or other fluids. Wear gloves whenever possible. Cover any cuts/abrasions with a dressing/band aid.

Families are responsible for:

- Keeping their child/ren home if they are unwell or have infectious diseases
- Informing the service if their child has an infectious disease
- Encouraging their children to develop and follow effective hygiene practices at all times

16. Drink Bottles

Drink bottles supplied or stored at a centre must be cleaned daily in hot soapy water or cleaned by the service dishwasher.

NAPPY CHANGING

GUIDELINES

Strategies for ensuring good hygiene:

1. Educators will have an area specifically set aside for changing nappies. This is to be away from the food preparation and the children's eating area.
2. Before changing a nappy the educators will ensure that all the necessary supplies are ready.
3. Before changing a nappy the educators will ensure that all other children in care are safe and able to be supervised during the nappy change.
4. Appropriate safe working practices will be undertaken by educators for children to access the nappy change area. This may include using steps (where available), safe lifting practices, changing children on a change mat on the floor. A risk assessment maybe required to be undertaken to ensure best practices are implemented.
5. Disposable gloves will be worn on both hands when changing nappies, both wet and soiled.
6. Paper will be placed under children on the change table before the child is placed on the mat.
7. The child's nappy will be removed and put in a plastic bag or a plastic lined bin for laundering or disposal. Contents of the bins will be inaccessible to children.
8. If soiled or wet, the child's clothes will be removed and put in a plastic bag for laundering by parent. Items may need to be double bagged.
9. The child's bottom will be wiped using disposable wipes, wiping from front to back. Disposable wipes will be put in a plastic bag for disposal.
10. Educators will remove gloves and paper towel before touching the child's clean clothes. Gloves will be removed by peeling them back from the wrists without letting the skin touch the outer contaminated surface of the glove. Gloves will be put in a plastic bag with the paper for disposal.
11. The child will be dressed and their hands washed. Older children will be encouraged to wash their own hands.
12. The child will be taken away from the change table/mat.
13. The change mat/table will be cleaned with disinfectant.
14. Staff will wash their own hands before and after changing the nappy.

15. At the end of the day the change mat/table will be washed down with warm soapy water and dried with a paper towel. It will then be sanitised and air dried.

Refer to Nappy Change Routine (Appendix 10.1).

If using a change table educators will:

1. Ensure that one hand is on the child at all times to prevent the child falling off the table.
2. Ensure that covers on the nappy change table/mat are smooth and free of cracks, creases or seams.
3. Ensure that at the end of the day change mats are washed with warm soapy water and dried with a paper towel, then sanitised and air dried.

Where a bath, basin or laundry sink is used to wash a child as part of the nappy change process, the bath/basin/sink will to be washed and disinfected afterwards (refer to Water activities Policy - bathing).

Strategies for ensuring the nappy change routine are a positive experience for the child:

Early childhood educators will ensure that:

- All children are treated respectfully during the nappy change procedure.
- Nappy changes are used as opportunities for positive interactions with the child.
- A child's privacy will be respected during the nappy changing procedure as appropriate to the child's culture/religion.

TOILET TRAINING/TOILETING

GUIDELINES

1. Parents/guardians will be asked to provide sufficient changes of clean clothes for a child who has not fully learned toileting.
2. Children will be given assistance to use the toilet if necessary.
3. Older children will be given privacy in the toilet, but appropriate supervision will be given.
4. Children will be encouraged to flush the toilet after use.
5. Younger children will be given assistance to wash their hands.
6. Older children will be reminded to wash their hands with soap for up to a count of ten, then count to 10 whilst rinsing under running water.
7. Educators will explain to the child why they are to wash hands.
8. Paper towels, individual hand towels or hand dryers will be provided for children to dry their hands.
9. Cloth towels should be laundered regularly to reduce risks of re-contaminating or cross contamination.
10. Children will be encouraged to use the toilet, but may opt for a potty. If a potty is used, the contents will be emptied into the toilet and the potty cleaned with soap and water and disinfected by the educators. Potties will not be washed in a sink used for hand washing.

11. Educators will use gloves on both hands if handling soiled clothes and when wiping a child's bottom.
12. Gloves will be disposed of in a plastic bag or rubbish bin.
13. Educators will wash their own hands after each change.
14. Where clothing is soiled due to a toileting accident the solids shall be disposed into the toiler and soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag for parents to take home. If necessary the item may need to be double bagged. Soiled clothing/underwear will not be thrown out unless authorized by the parents/guardians.

Educators will clean the toilet and bathroom area as needed during the day. This will include: mopping floors, particularly around base of toilets; washing the flush button, toilet door handle and taps on the hand washing sink; nappy change area etc.

Ensuring that toilet training is a positive experience for the children.

Toilet training usually begins when the child shows signs that he/she is ready e.g. is able to indicate that he/she has a wet or soiled nappy and shows some signs of bladder control and/or when culturally appropriate for the child's family.

1. Prior to the beginning of toilet training early childhood educators will discuss strategies with the family so that there is a consistency between the service and home.
2. Educators will regularly remind the child to use the toilet, and assist the child if the child indicates that he/she needs to use the toilet.
3. The child will never be pressured into using the toilet.
4. Successful attempts will be praised but the educators will not express disapproval at unsuccessful toileting. Positive language will be used at all times.
5. Educators will respond positively to toileting accidents.
6. Educators are to be aware of the diverse styles of toileting children due to cultural or religious practices (e.g. washing or douching instead of toilet paper) and ask families to inform them of any cultural or religious issues relating to toileting that they may need to be aware of.
7. Educators will regularly discuss a child's toileting progress with the child's family during the toilet training process.

DISPOSAL OF NEEDLES, SYRINGES & CONDOMS

GUIDELINES

1. Early childhood educators will do inspections of yards and premises on a regular basis to ensure early detection and disposal of any dangerous articles.
2. Educators will ensure that children are kept safely away from the dangerous articles until removal is arranged.
3. Educators will access the Service's Disposal of Needles, Syringes and Condoms Kit to remove needles/syringes/condoms etc.

4. Educators will wear vinyl gloves for protection.
5. Educators will use long tongs to pick up item/s.
6. Educators will use an approved disposable container and take to the location of the dangerous article. If an approved container is not available an empty hard, plastic (not glass), puncture proof container will be used e.g. detergent bottle.
7. If the needle/syringe/condom is difficult to reach, rubbish will be carefully removed from around it using tongs.
8. If there is more than one needle/syringe/condom, educators will use tongs or a stick to separate items so they can be picked up individually.
9. Needles/syringes will be picked up by the barrel (PLASTIC END), not the needle end.
10. A needle/syringe will never be recapped even if cap is discarded. These items will be picked up separately and placed in container.
11. The needles/syringes will be placed needle end first into the container which will be placed on a stable surface and NOT HELD BY HAND while inserting the needle/item.
12. The lid on the container will be made secure.
13. Hands will be thoroughly washed with soap and water for a least one (1) minute afterwards.
14. Needles/syringes/condoms will not be placed in local rubbish bins, drains or toilets.
15. The needles/syringes/condoms container will be disposed of by contacting:

Customer Service
Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton
Phone: 5832 9700

Related Policies

- Tobacco, Drugs, Alcohol and Other Substances
- Dangerous Goods and Storage
- Infectious Diseases and Immunisation
- Supervision
- Medical conditions
- Water Activities

Sources and Reference Tools

- Safe Retrieval and Disposal of Needles and Syringes: Fact Sheet DHS. www.docs.health.vic.gov.au Viewed 05/08/2013
- Safe Handling and Disposal of Needles and Syringes Fact sheet. Queensland Government. www.education.qld.gov Viewed 05/08/2013
- Safe Retrieval and Disposal of Needles and Syringes: Child Safety Handbook. Royal Children's Hospital www.rch.org.au viewed 05/08/2013

- Environmental Health – Greater Shepparton City Council
- Customer Service - Greater Shepparton City Council
- Needle Stick and Bodily Fluids Safety. Policy No 46.PRO3.22. Greater Shepparton City Council CoGSAFE.
- Staying Healthy in Childcare – National Health and Medical Research Council. 2006. Only available in PDF www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ Viewed 05/08/2013
- Department of Health Victoria: <http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/bluebook.asp> Viewed 05/08/2013
- A Guide for the Management and Control of Gastroenteritis in Children's Centres. Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control Unit – Department of Health. 2010 <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au> Viewed 12/08/2013
- Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing 2010, Australian guidelines for the prevention and control of infection in healthcare. Viewed 12/08/2013
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand www.foodstandards.gov.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian immunization handbook, 10th Edition.
<http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunize/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook10-home>
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011 and National Regulations viewed 12/08/2013
- Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended) and Children's Services Regulations 2009
- www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- www.raisingchildren.net.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 5th edition, 2012 Viewed 12/08/2013

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD: Quality Areas 2, 3

Reviewed: June 2013
Next Review: June 2014

INFECTIOUS DISEASES and IMMUNISATIONS

PRINCIPLE

Effective infection control procedures will be in place in all council managed children's services to minimize and/or prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

GUIDELINES

1. At all times the service will follow appropriate hygiene practices and infection control procedures, as outlined below, to minimize the risk of transmission of infectious diseases.
2. Where applicable, the service will ensure that First Aid equipment is available and up to date (in stock, within use-by dates) at all times e.g. quarterly checks. For FDC educators the First Aid equipment will be checked during an annual safety check, excursion or home visit.
3. All educators will receive basic education on infectious diseases and preventative strategies and will have access to further information and support service as required.
4. Each service will provide opportunities for educators and families to be involved in the review of the policies and procedures regarding children's health and safety.
5. Services will maintain current details on children's enrolment records with regards to immunization ensuring that it occurs at least twice a year (i.e as children reach age milestones for immunization during that time).

Families will be encouraged to advise the educator when their child's immunization/medical condition is updated and provide this information to the service to ensure that enrolment records are up to date.

6. Families are to notify the service educator of any infectious disease nominated on the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Communicable Infectious Disease Exclusion Chart as displayed in each service (Appendix 11.1).
7. Educators will inform all families of the occurrence of such an infectious disease. A note will be displayed in a prominent position outlining which group the child is in and some details about the signs/symptoms and the incubation period of the disease. Further information about the disease will be available. Information regarding specific cases and names will remain confidential at all times.
8. Babies, children and adults suffering from any of the Infectious Diseases listed on the Communicable Infectious Disease chart (Appendix 11) must not attend the service for the period specified under the heading "Exclusion of Cases". Contacts (those who have had contact with the infected person) will be excluded only if specified under the "Exclusion of Contacts" column on the Infectious Diseases chart. (Appendix 11.1)
9. An outbreak of an infectious disease is defined as two or more affected individuals within the service in a 48 hour period. All cases need to have had contact with each other within this period to be classified as an outbreak e.g.
 - In the same room
 - Have shared an educator
 - Are from the same family or have participated in family grouping during the day.

10. Where an outbreak of an infectious disease occurs within the service, the service will contact Children and Youth Services management on 5832 9783 and report to Environmental Health Department at Council on 5832 9731 (Appendix 11.2 - Outbreak Case List Form – DHS). The Environmental Health Department will then contact the Communicable Diseases Control Unit. Children and Youth Services shall then take direction from these Departments as to further action.
- In the case of an infectious disease outbreak, family details will be released to the relevant authority in line with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001. <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas/notifying/privacy>.

Gastroenteritis Outbreak

- An outbreak of gastroenteritis is defined as two or more linked cases of vomiting and/or diarrhoea occurring among children and/or staff with 48 hours of each other (as per guidelines in above point).
 - In the case of an outbreak of gastroenteritis the service shall report this to Children and Youth Services Management on 5832 9783 and Environmental Health Department at Council on 5832 9731 (Appendix 11.2 - Outbreak Case List Form – DHS). The Environmental Health Department will then contact the Communicable Diseases Control Unit and advise the service on action to take according to the Guide for the Management and Control of Gastroenteritis in Children's Centres.
11. Educators will ensure children who are suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs are supported.
12. Children found to be sick during the day will be isolated from other children, kitchen, food storage area and food preparation areas to prevent air borne bacteria/viruses from coming into contact with any of the above. Parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child as soon as practicable. Educators will observe and ensure the child's comfort as they wait for families. All details will be recorded on the Illness Record that must be signed, timed and dated when the child is collected.
13. Families need to be aware of the importance of alerting the service if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness.
14. Children with HIV/AIDS will not be excluded.
15. Families are requested not to send their child if he/she has any of the following illnesses. Families may be required to provide a medical certificate at the coordinator/program leader's discretion, before that child returns to the service:

Please refer to the exclusion table Appendix 11.1

Family Day Care

PRINCIPLE

Educators will not provide care to children when they or other family members are home sick, in turn families are asked not to bring children into the care environment when they are sick.

GUIDELINES

1. Parents are required to telephone the educator, to notify him/her that the child is unwell and cancel care.
2. Educators will notify families as soon as possible if care is to be cancelled due to an illness of themselves or family members.
3. Educators will notify all parents/guardians of the occurrence of an infectious disease. Staying Healthy in Childcare fact sheets will be made available for parents/guardians that relate to the occurrence.
4. Educators may refuse care to a child who has symptoms of illness or is informed on arrival the child is unwell.
5. Should a child become sick in care, the educator will notify the parent (or the emergency contact if necessary) and ask for the child to be removed from care. It is expected that parents will arrive promptly to pick up their child. Children who present with symptoms of an illness will be kept comfortable away from the other children and food preparation areas but still in direct supervision.
6. If a child becomes ill while at Family Day Care the educator will complete an Illness report which will specify;
 - The child's name
 - Parent/Guardian name
 - Educators name
 - Details of the illness including times, date, temperature, temperament and intervals of vomiting or diarrhoea.
7. Educators should consult with the Family Day Care coordination unit prior to children being excluded for a determination on exclusion requirements if able or appropriate.
8. Coordination Unit staff will record details of infectious diseases, confirmation of notification and action taken in the infectious disease log book.
9. Educators who are ill or family are ill are to notify families and service leader of no care.

Hepatitis A

If Hepatitis A is contracted by a Family Day Care educator, a parent or a child, or member of the Family Day Care educators household the local public health staff must be notified as soon as possible and the following procedures adhered to:

- The infection will be reported to the service leader who will notify and seek help from the local public health unit.
- The ill child or educator will be excluded from care/caring for seven (7) days from the onset of jaundice or illness.
- The parent will be advised to keep the child away from other children for the period of the exclusion.
- If the parent is affected they must not attend the Educators home during the exclusion period.

Immunisations

PRINCIPLE

In an effort to improve childhood immunisation rates the Victorian Government has amended the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. The amendments 'No Jab, No Play' legislation came into effect from 1st January 2016 and means that early childhood education and cares services cannot confirm enrolment of a child unless the parent/guardian has provided documentation that shows the child:

- Is fully vaccinated for their age; or
- Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations; or
- Has a medical reason not be vaccinated.

'Conscientious objection' to vaccination is not an exemption under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation.

DEFINITIONS

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) – is a national register administered by Medicare that records details of vaccinations given to children in Australia.

Immunisation Status Certificate - is a statement showing the vaccines a child has received. The most common type of immunisation status certificate is an Immunisation History Statement from ACIR.

16 week 'grace period' – Some families may be experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage and who may face difficulties accessing immunisation services and documentation. The law recognises that these families need additional time and help and provides a 'grace period' which allows the child to enrol and attend the service.

Medical contraindication to vaccines – is when a medical doctor determines if a child has a medical reason (for example, an anaphylactic reaction to a vaccine ingredient) for not receiving a specific vaccine/s. A doctor completes signs and supplies an ACIR Medical Contraindication Form to ACIR.

GUIDELINES

1. Enrolments for a place at Greater Shepparton Children's Services commencing from beginning of 2016 that are confirmed in writing by the service before the legislation came into effect will not be impacted by the legislation.
2. Children registered on a waiting list for a place at a children's service is not a confirmed enrolment, therefore are not exempt from the legislation.
3. 'Homeopathic immunisation' – is not a recognised form of immunisation so therefore is not an exemption under the 'NO Jab No Play' legislation.

4. Overseas immunisation records **must not be** accepted as overseas vaccination schedules may differ from the Australian schedule. They need to be checked by a doctor/nurse who will transfer the information to ACIR.
5. If a child has not been fully immunised, it is the parent's responsibility to have the immunisations up-to-date. Parents/guardians must provide the service with an Immunisations Status Certificate before the child can commence education and care.
6. The Immunisation Status Certificate provided by parents/guardians should show if the child:
 - is up to date with vaccinations for their age; or
 - is on a vaccine catch-up schedule; or
 - has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.
7. Children's services will assist families to obtain acceptable immunisation documentation for enrolment by directing them to immunisation information and services, ie ACIR contact – 1800 653 809.
8. If parents/guardians are having difficulty updating the reissuing of an ACIR Immunisation History Statement for enrolment to be finalised they can access an immunisation provider (a GP or immunisation nurse) who can provide an immunisation status certificate that can be used to prove a child's immunisation status. This document/s need to:
 - Include the child's full name, date of birth and address
 - List vaccines the child has received and when the vaccine was given (can be an attachment)
 - Show the date of the child's next due vaccine OR include a statement saying the child has completed all their childhood vaccination
 - If relevant, list any vaccines the child cannot receive for medical reasons
 - Include the immunisation provider's name, organisation name and Medicare provider number or ACIR number
 - Be signed and dated by the immunisation provider.
9. If a child has a medical reason they cannot be vaccinated, a medical doctor needs to complete and sign a Medicare Immunisation Exemption Medical Contraindication Form, and send it to ACIR.
10. The parent/guardian needs to obtain an updated Immunisation History Statement from the ACIR that indicates the child is up-to-date with all the vaccines that they can have, and listed the vaccines that they cannot have due to a medical contraindication. This statement needs to be provided by the parent to the service to finalise enrolment for the child to commence education and care.
11. Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, vulnerable and disadvantaged children will be eligible to enrol in a service under a grace period, without having provided proof of up to date immunisation
12. Children eligible to be enrolled under the 'grace period' include:
 - Children evacuated from their place of residence due to an emergency such as a flood or bushfire;
 - Children in emergency care within the meaning of section 3(1) of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

- Children in the care of an adult who are not the child's parent due to exceptional circumstances such as illness or incapacity;
 - Children identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
 - Children whose parents hold a health care card, a pensioner concession card, a Veterans Affairs Gold or White card;
 - Children from a multiple birth of triplets or more
 - Any other circumstance specified in the guidelines made by the Secretary to the Department of Health and Human Services.
13. The 'grace period' is for 16 weeks commencing from the date that the child first attends the service.
14. During the 16 week grace period, Children's Services are required to take reasonable steps to obtain the required immunisation documentation and parents should endeavour to have their child vaccinated if required, and/or obtain the necessary immunisation documentation and provide it to the service
15. Children' Services must have one or more of the following documents kept with children's enrolment records:
- The ACIR Immunisation History statement or
 - Another acceptable immunisation status certificate from an immunisation provider or
 - A completed grace period eligibility assessment form (Appendix 11.3)
16. Should a child transfer to or from another early childhood education and care service, a copy of the child's immunisation documentation must be provided by the parent/guardian for enrolment at the new service.
17. Immunisation shall be updated regularly with the annual review of enrolment forms or as required for younger children. Parents will be reminded to keep the service informed of immunisation updates on individual children.

Sources and Reference Tools:

- National Immunisation Program Schedule – Victoria State Government www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation Viewed 12/08/2013
- Education and Care Services Regulations 2011
- www.immunise.health.gov.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- www.health.vic.gov.au viewed 12/08/2013
- *Staying Healthy in Childcare* 5th Edition - National Health & Medical Research Council 2012 www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications Viewed 12/08/2013
- Communicable Infectious Diseases Exclusion Table – Department of Education and Training health.vic.gov.au/guidelines-exclusion-table Viewed 12/08/2013
- *A Guide for the Management and Control of Gastroenteritis in Children's Centres*. Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control Unit – Department of Health. 2010 www.health.vic.gov.au/guideleines/schoolexclusionontable Viewed 12/08/2013
- *The Blue Book: Guidelines for the Control of Infectious Diseases*. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development www.bluebook.health.vic.gov.au Viewed 23/08/13
- Environmental Health Department - Greater Shepparton City Council
- Royal Children's Hospital www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo Viewed 12/08/2013

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD: Quality Area/s 2, 4

Reviewed: August 2013
Next review due: August 2013

Please note: Immunisations section of policy
Reviewed January 2016

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY and EQUITY

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton Children's and Youth Services are committed to providing all children, families, educators and staff with the right to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging regardless of gender, age, socio-economic status, race, language, beliefs, additional needs and family structure or lifestyle.

All children, families, educators, staff, students, volunteers and visitors are treated with respect, and appreciated as individuals with unique abilities, skills and knowledge.

"Early childhood service providers understand that the opportunities and supports they offer children and their families make a significant difference, especially for those who experience disadvantage. Some families may face many obstacles in approaching services, or engaging fully in the service program."^{1}

GUIDELINES

Greater Shepparton City Council Children's Services are committed to:

1. Acknowledging and respecting the rights of all children to be provided with and participate in quality early childhood education and care programs.
2. Ensuring that no employee, prospective employee, educators, parent/guardian, child, volunteer, or student at services is discriminated against.
3. Ensuring that educators and staff have access to appropriate and accredited professional development that promotes a positive understanding of inclusion, diversity and equity.
4. Seeking engagement from families, children educators and communities to provide feedback regarding the service.
5. Supporting the individual needs of children, families and educators to participate in the program, when additional support is not available through formal agencies.
6. Applying equity to recruitment and contracting of all staff and educators.
7. Providing information that is translated into main community languages, where appropriate/possible.
8. Using interpreters when required.
9. Seeking advice from other community services when required.
10. Considering options to provide appropriate physical infrastructure, and resources to facilitate the inclusion of all children, families, educators and staff at the service.
11. Providing families with information about the role of inclusive practice in achieving positive outcomes for all children, the key values underpinning inclusive practice and the support options available for children attending services.

12. Reviewing and developing materials and templates with consideration of the whole community's needs, reflecting all types of families.

{1} Inclusive Early Childhood Services – A practical guide for professionals, Department of Education and Childhood Development 2010.

Staff and Educators will:

1. Ensure the educational programs are based on the developmental needs, interests and abilities of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child.
2. Work with individual families to determine the needs of their child and facilitate the inclusion of both the child and the family into the service.
3. Model anti-bias and gender equity attitudes and behaviours.
4. Discuss with children options for anti-bias play and promote inclusion in all areas of the program for all children.
5. Ensure resources provided for children, families and educators reflect the diversity within the community.
6. Encourage the participation of parents/guardians to monitor their child's progress and develop strategies for the child on a continuing basis.
7. Liaise with other agencies as appropriate to ensure positive outcomes for each child.
8. Ensure additional needs identified by a recognised professional in the early childhood area are respected and supported (e.g. Specialist Children's Services, Paediatrician).
9. Ensure for children with additional needs, that all persons involved, including parents/guardians, child (if appropriate) educators, and appropriate specialist support, shall be consulted and included in decision making.
10. Use their diverse life experiences to contribute to and enhance the program and environment, and support and encourage children to be fair and respectful of others.
11. Engage with the community to access and make available resources and information supporting inclusion, diversity and equity for all educators/staff, families and children within the service.

Long Day Care

Family Day Care

1. Where the additional needs are identified by Specialist Children's Services, a Paediatrician or other appropriate professional, Inclusion Support Subsidy will be applied for in recognition of extra duties required in the care of the child. Eligibility for and the availability of Inclusion Support Subsidy will be determined by the Inclusion Support Facilitator in consultation with service leader/program leader.

2. The Service will inform families of their ability to claim child care rebate, child care benefit and grandparent child care benefit entitlements and make available special child care benefit if eligible to assist with affordability.

Kindergarten

1. Kindergarten Inclusion Support funding can be applied for and used where approved by the funding body.
2. Coordination unit and educators will be flexible in meeting families' needs and schedule appointments outside standard hours, by phone or facilitate email communication and meetings in the home environment if appropriate/applicable.

Family Day Care

1. Coordinator unit and educators will be flexible in meeting families' needs and schedule appointments outside standard hours, by phone or facilitate email communication and meetings in the home environment if appropriate/applicable.

Related Policies

- Access in Children's Services
- Children's Learning and programming
- Confidentiality
- Equipment and resources
- Fees
- Medical Conditions
- Recruitment, selection & orientation of staff
- Students, volunteers & visitors

National Quality Standard Areas 1, 4 & 6 Education and Care Services National Regulations - 155

Sources and Reference Tools

- Multicultural Victoria Act 2011
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA) The Code of Ethics
- UNICEF –Conventions on the Rights of the child
- NQSPLP –no 38 – Curriculum decision making of inclusive practice.
- 'Inclusive Early Childhood Services – DEECD, 2010.'A practical guide for professionals
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

INSURANCE (Family day care – original)

PRINCIPLE

Educators are required to have and maintain adequate public liability insurance up to 10 million dollars.

GUIDELINES

- It is a regulation and condition of registration that educators provide their own public liability insurance covering up to 10 million dollars which is to be kept current at all times. This may be purchased through Family Day Care Australia's National Insurance Scheme or another approved insurer.
- Educators are encouraged to consider other insurance options such as legal advice, statutory liability insurance and income protection.
- It is recommended that educators ensure that their insurance will cover their home contents and car for Family Day Care business activities by asking for written confirmation from the insurance company/s involved.
- Educators will be suspended from Greater Shepparton Family Day Care if insurance lapses and will not be permitted to practice under Greater Shepparton Family Day Care until confirmation is received from the insurance provider that the premium is current, this can be verbally over the phone.

Sources and Reference Tools

- Family Day Care Australia 2011
- 2011 National Regulations

Reviewed: December 2011
Next Review: May 2013

INTERACTIONS, COMMUNICATIONS WITH CHILDREN AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

“All children need to know that others care about them, know them well and are interested in what they do, think and feel. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self esteem and sense of security.”⁷

GUIDELINES

1. Educators will monitor, support and guide children’s interaction with others to assist in developing social skills and forming complex relationships.
2. Children will be encouraged to express themselves, work through challenges and take risks.
3. Educator’s interactions will convey mutual respect and acknowledge individual children’s traits, maintaining at all times the dignity and rights of the child. (Regulation 155)
4. Educators will participate, engage and respond in children’s learning and guide sustaining relationships.
5. Educators will interact one to one with children and in groups, meeting individual needs for interaction based on development.
6. Educators will develop positive guidance strategies that promote understanding why children behave in certain ways and collaborate with parents/guardians as the child’s primary teacher in developing strategies and techniques.
7. Educators will source and identify individual needs and seek support to assist in supporting the maintenance of the home language.
8. Routines will be relaxed and children will be given opportunity to prepare for transitions.
9. Professional development will be offered to educators in regard to interactions with children.
10. Educators will strive to create a positive image of the child to maximise self esteem allowing children to undertake experiences that develop self reliance and self esteem. (Regulation 155)

BEHAVIOUR MANGAGEMENT

GUIDELINES

Behaviour guidance will always encourage the individuality, confidence and self-esteem of the child and incorporate a holistic approach to encouraging positive behaviour. Consistent clear guidelines, limits and rules will be developed in consultation with children and parents where appropriate. These will be:

- Known and understood by early childhood educators
- Shared with parents
- Explained to children

1. Educators will recognise that for guidance to be effective, children need:
 - A genuine sense of loving care
 - A non-judgmental and secure atmosphere
 - A positive sense of self
 - A sense of trust in educators
 - Empathic understanding
 - An environment that provides opportunities for rest and rejuvenation

⁷ Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011

2. Educators will consult with parents regularly on guidance matters and will seek constructive solutions to any difference in values.
3. External professional help may be sought by educators with parental permission and the parent/child referred as appropriate.
4. Educators' expectations of children's behaviour will be developmentally appropriate and realistic for the situation.
5. Guidance will be seen as helping a child know what to do (in a positive way), e.g. "The blocks are for building, balls are for throwing". Adults will only say 'STOP' and 'NO' when an immediate response is required to prevent hurt/injury, danger or damage.
6. Children will not be subjected to any form of physical punishment, immobilisation, or any other humiliating or frightening techniques. Educators will not use competition, comparison, blackmail or criticism.
7. If physical restraint is necessary, educators should be as gentle as possible but firm enough that the child cannot slip away. Parents will be notified if physical restraint is/has been required and agreement of such a measure agreed to.
8. Educators will acknowledge and accept a child's feeling of anger, frustration and jealousy. Educators shall distinguish the feeling from the behaviour so that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable rather than the feeling e.g. "I can see you are angry, but people are touched gently here, as I am touching you now".
9. Educators will work with children in a helpful and supportive way rather than seeing non-confirming behaviour as an attack upon the educators' authority (i.e. avoid power struggles).
10. While older children may be moved across to the younger room as a form of distraction/or diversion, it shall not be used as a form of punishment.
11. Educators will help children develop empathy for others rather than forcing them to apologise.
12. Educators will use differential attention:
 - a) To reinforce acceptable behaviour
 - Educators will acknowledge children behaving in a desirable way and give attention that is rewarding for that child (e.g. cuddle, encouragement, special job, sticker, attention)
 - The attention given should be immediate, obvious, consistent and frequent (especially in the early stages).
 - b) To deal with unacceptable behaviour:
 - Educators will, whenever possible, ignore undesirable behaviour as attention given may reinforce the poor behaviour.
 - Ignoring is not appropriate if any person's welfare is threatened or if there is the likelihood of damage to property.
 - Ignoring will be a total withholding of attention (educators will be aware of body language), and should be immediate, obvious and consistent.
 - Educators must avoid letting undesirable behaviour be the best way of getting attention.
13. Educators will recognize that testing limits and expressing opposition to adults is part of developing a healthy sense of self as a separate autonomous individual.
14. Other methods of guidance will include:
 - Redirection to keep a disruptive child occupied
 - Anticipating and eliminating potential problems
 - Encouragement using actions and words to guide a child
 - Adapting the environment to eliminate the misbehaviour
 - Giving choices, but only when it is appropriate and intended that the child truly has a choice
 - Using natural/logical consequences (e.g. if a child doesn't come for story, the child misses out)

- Using artificial/arbitrary consequences (e.g. being deprived of something, being isolated from the group)

Ongoing Behaviour Issues:

Where educators are having difficulties with a child:

- A meeting shall be arranged between the educator and the parent(s) where behaviour management strategies shall be discussed with the parent and a behaviour guidance plan set out. This will include:
 - Documentation of discussion points between parent and educator
 - Setting goals for the child
 - Developing strategies to manage the child's behaviour
 - Recording any discussion (any documentation, if relevant) with other professionals and support agencies, including any information passed onto educator by the parent
 - Minutes of meetings

The behaviour guidance plan is to be documented and signed by the parent and educator.

An individual behaviour guidance plan will be developed for children with specifically diagnosed behavioural and social difficulties. This will be developed in consultation with families, other professionals and support agencies.

- A follow up meeting shall take place in 2-4 weeks time involving the parent, Coordinator/Program Leader (and educator – if appropriate) to assess how the behaviour guidance plan is going and what further action is needed.
- If the above measures are unsuccessful in limiting behaviour, which is inappropriate, or endangering the safety of other children and/or educators, a meeting will be held between coordinator/program leader/educator/parents/Council representatives. As a final option Greater Shepparton City Council reserves the right to withdraw service for a set period of time.

Use of Time Out

Should 'time-out' be decided as an appropriate strategy the following are to be implemented:

- The child is to be separated from the other activities, in an activity on their own in direct supervision of the educator
- The child is not to be isolated with nothing to do e.g. in a corner, on a windowsill, chair or stool
- There will not to be a designated 'time out' area.
- Activities should be varied in nature to discourage the perception any specific activity is linked to a behaviour

Biting

Where a child has been bitten, the circumstances will be written up in the accident/illness book (as per regulation requirements) and both parents notified of the incident.

The names of children and parents of both parties will remain confidential.

Behaviour problems, consultations and referrals will be treated within guidelines of the Confidentiality policy.

Related policies:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Confidentiality | • Occupational Health and safety |
| • Supervision | • Program |
| • Code of Conduct | • Toilet Training/Toileting |
| • Concerns and Complaints | • Child protection |
| • Inclusion, Diversity and Equity | • Emergency Situations |

Sources and Reference Tools:

- Effective Supervision: What to Remember at the End of the Day. NCAC
- National Quality Standard 2011
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Reviewed April 2012

Review by November 2013

INTERACTIONS and COMMUNICATIONS WITH CHILDREN (Family day care – original)

PRINCIPLE

“All children need to know that others care about them, know them well and are interested in what they do, think and feel. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self esteem and sense of security.⁸”

GUIDELINES

- Educators will monitor, support and guide children’s interaction’s with others to assist in developing social skills and forming complex relationships
- Children will be encouraged to express themselves, work through challenges and take risks.
- Educators interactions will convey mutual respect and acknowledge individual children’s traits
- Educators will participate, engage and respond in children’s learning and guide sustaining relationships.
- Educators will interact 1:1 and in groups meeting individual needs for interaction based on age and development.
- Educators will develop guidance strategies that promote understanding why children behave in certain ways, and collaborate with parents/guardians as the child’s primary teacher in developing strategies and techniques.
- Educators will source and identify individual needs and seek support to assist in supporting the maintenance of the home language.
- Routines will be relaxed and children will be given the opportunity to prepare for transitions
- Professional development will be offered to educators in regard to interactions with children
- Educators will strive to create a positive image of the child to maximise self esteem.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

Guidelines

Behaviour guidance will always encourage the individuality, confidence and self esteem of the child and incorporate a holistic approach to encouraging positive behaviour. Consistent clear guidelines, limits and rules will be developed in consultation with families and will be;

- Shared with families
- Explained to the children

15. Educators will recognise that for guidance to be effective, children need:

- A genuine sense of loving care
- A non-judgmental and secure atmosphere
- A positive sense of self
- A sense of trust in educators
- Empathic understanding

⁸ Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011

16. Educators will consult with parent's/guardians regularly on guidance matters and will seek constructive solutions to any difference in values.
17. External professional help may be sought by Family Day Care staff with parental permission and the parent/child referred as appropriate.
18. Educators' expectations of children's behaviour will be developmentally appropriate and realistic for the situation.
19. Guidance will be seen as helping a child know what to do (in a positive way), e.g. "The blocks are for building, balls are for throwing". Adults will only say NO when prohibition is required quickly e.g. to prevent hurt, danger or damage to persons or belongings.
20. No child will be subjected to any form of physical/emotional punishment, immobilisation, or any other humiliating or frightening techniques. Educators will not use competition, comparison, blackmail or criticism.
21. Educators will acknowledge and accept a child's feeling of anger, frustration and jealousy. Educators shall distinguish the feeling from the behaviour so that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable rather than the feeling e.g. "I can see you are angry, but people are touched gently here, as I am touching you now".
22. Educators will work with children in a helpful and supportive way rather than seeing non-conforming behaviour as an attack upon the educators' authority (i.e. avoid power struggles).
23. Educators will help children develop empathy for others rather than forcing them to apologise (a fairly meaningless thing for young children).
This may be through:
 - Encouraging children to assist picking up the blocks they knocked down.
 - Encouraging the children to assist the educator in applying first aid e.g. retrieving and applying a wet cloth (where appropriate).
 - Encouraging children to acknowledge the feelings displayed by the hurt/upset child or educator and problem solve and work together for an amicable outcome.
 - Educators assisting older children to use moral reasoning to solve problems
 - Educators mediating and assisting children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others
 - Educators talking with children about their emotions and responses to events with a view to supporting their understandings of emotional regulation and self control
24. Educators will use differential attention:
 - a) To reinforce acceptable behaviour
 - Educators will acknowledge children behaving in a desirable way and give attention that is rewarding for that child (e.g: cuddle, encouragement, special job, sticker, attention)
 - The attention given should be immediate, obvious, consistent and frequent (especially in the early stages).
 - b) To deal with unacceptable behaviour:

- Educators will, whenever possible, ignore undesirable behaviour as attention given may reinforce the poor behaviour.
- Ignoring is not appropriate if any person's welfare is threatened or if there is the likelihood of damage to property.
- Ignoring will be a total withholding of attention (educators will be aware of body language), and should be immediate, obvious and consistent.
- Educators must avoid letting undesirable behaviour be the best way of getting attention.

25. Educators will recognize that testing limits and expressing opposition to adults is part of developing a healthy sense of self as a separate autonomous individual.

26. Other methods of guidance will include:

- Redirection to keep a disruptive child occupied.
- Anticipating and eliminating potential problems.
- Encouragement using actions and words to guide a child.
- Adapting the environment to eliminate the inappropriate behaviour.
- Giving choices, but only when it is appropriate and intended that the child truly has a choice.
- Using natural/logical consequences (e.g. if a child doesn't come for story, the child misses out).

27. The use of corporal punishment or isolation in any circumstance will result in the immediate forced de-registration of the educator.

Use of Time Out

Where educators are having difficulties with a child over the age of two and behaviour management strategies have been implemented and discussed with the coordination unit and family, and after a reasonable time the behaviour has not changed, 'time-out' may be used only in consultation with parents.

Time Out Guidelines

Where 'time-out' is being implemented:

- The child is to be separated from the other activities, in an activity on their own under the direct supervision of the educator
- The child is not to be isolated with nothing to do e.g. in a corner, on a windowsill, chair or stool,
- While we encourage having opportunities for alone/quiet play there is not to be a designated 'time out' area.
- Activities should be varied in nature to discourage the perception any specific activity is linked to behaviour.
- Time should be restricted to one minute per year of age to a maximum of five minutes for children aged five years and over.

Ongoing behaviour issues

Parents/Guardians should be made aware of repetitive issues as they arise, it isn't appropriate for them to be under the impression there are no behavioural issues with their child to be then requested to attend a formal meeting.

Where educators are having repetitive ongoing behaviour issues with a child:

- A meeting shall be arranged between the educator and parent/guardians where behaviour management strategies shall be discussed with the parent and behaviour guidance plan set out. This may include:
 - Documentation of discussion points between parent and educators
 - Strategies to manage the child's behaviour (in line with the service policy)
 - Record of any discussion (any documentation, if relevant) with other professionals and support agencies, including and information passed onto the educator by the parent/guardian
 - Minutes recorded and distributed to all parties
 - A follow up meeting shall take place 2-4 weeks after the original meeting to assess how the behaviour guidance plan is going and what further action is needed.

The behaviour guidance plan is to be documented and signed by the parent and educator.

- If the above measures are unsuccessful in limiting behaviour which is inappropriate, or endangering the safety of other children and/or educators the educator may cease care in line with their service agreement.

An individual behaviour guidance plan will be developed for children with specifically diagnosed behavioural and social difficulties. This will be developed in consultation with families, other professionals and support agencies.

Biting

1. Where a child has been bitten, the circumstances are to be written up in the accident/illness form and the parent of the child bitten will then be notified.
2. The parent/guardian of the child who has bitten should be notified;
 - If the biting is a reoccurring pattern
 - It is not age or developmentally appropriate for the child to be biting
 - To notify the parent/guardian so they are aware and able to assist in watching for a pattern of behaviour.
3. Where the skin is broken and/or blood is drawn the parents of both the bitten and biting child shall be notified.
4. The names of children and parents of either party will remain confidential.

Behaviour problems, consultations and referrals will be treated within guidelines of the Confidentiality policy.

Policies relating to this policy;

- Age of children in Care
- Bathing
- Car Safety
- Child Protection
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Emergency Situations
- Training and Development
- Water Activities

- Toilet Training
- Trampolines
- Unaccompanied Travel

Sources and Reference Tools:

- Effective Supervision: What to Remember at the End of the Day. Putting Children
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011
- 2011 National Regulations
- National Quality Framework
- Early Years Learning Framework – Being, Belonging, Becoming
- Victorian Early Years Learning Framework
- My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia

Policy developed May 2012

Next review due: November 2013

MARKETING and MEDIA (Family day care – original)

PRINCIPLE

The Greater Shepparton Family Day Care service will be promoted to the wider community in a positive and professional manner through a variety of sources.

GUIDELINES

1. Educators are welcome to advertise their business through various means: flyers, mail outs, letter drops, notices, business cards and media etc. All advertising must be approved by the coordination unit before it is distributed. (National Law Act Section 104)
2. Educators are encouraged to use the Family Day Care logo in all advertising to promote Family Day Care throughout the wider community.
3. Although there is no requirement to use the Greater Shepparton City Councils logo, it would be appreciated as recognition of support that individual marketing include the statement “**A registered educator with Greater Shepparton Family Day Care.**” If you would like to use the Greater Shepparton City Council’s logo in your advertising please contact our Marketing and Communications Department on 5832 9537.
4. Cost for all advertising undertaken by an individual educator will be met by the educator.
5. The Coordination Unit will use a wide range of sources to promote Family Day Care in general to the wider community, in consultation with Greater Shepparton City Councils Marketing and Communications department.
6. All promotion material dispersed by the Coordination Unit will be in conjunction with the Greater Shepparton City Councils Communications guidelines 2006.
7. Where an individual educator is used in any advertising, permission will be sought.
8. Educators and staff will seek permission from children and families prior to using their photos or information in media/marketing promotions.
9. All communications relating to an incident or emergency situation pertaining to Greater Shepparton Family Day Care will be directed to Greater Shepparton City Councils Marketing and Communications Department.

Related Policies:

- Confidentiality

Sources and References

- Greater Shepparton City Councils Marketing and Communications Department 2012
- National Law Act 2010

Reviewed: October 2012

Next review due: April 2014

MEDIA AND MARKETING (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

To ensure media coverage of any Children's Service or event is within confidentiality guidelines and Council's Communication Guidelines.

GUIDELINES

1. No comment is to be made to media or any other person in respect to action or non-action taken at the service as a result of an incident. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer at Council. Any statement made in a crisis situation may prejudice the Council, its insurer and/or the early childhood educator's position.
2. Where an educator wishes to notify media of a service activity, this must be approved by Aged and Children's Services. A Communications Officer at Council must also be notified before the media is approached. Educators may be required to provide details of the activity for approval and for media information.
3. Educators must ensure that the wishes of any family who has not given permission for photographs or media coverage of their child/children are respected.

Please refer to Council's Communication Guidelines for more information.

Related Policies

- Confidentiality
- Code of Conduct

Sources and Reference Tools

- Greater Shepparton City Council Communications Guidelines November 2009 – viewed 6/3/12
- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au> - viewed 19.5.12
- Health Record Act (2001) <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/> - viewed 19.5.12

Reviewed March 2012
Review by September 2013

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council early childhood services are committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children with specific health care needs, allergies or other medical conditions e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis etc. and resulting medication requirement.
- Ensuring that children with such needs can participate equally in all aspects of the children's program.
- Ensuring each staff member, and other relevant adults, have adequate knowledge of individual children's specific health care needs, allergies or other medical conditions and the relevant emergency procedures.
- Raising awareness about specific health care needs, allergies or other medical conditions amongst the service community and children in attendance.

GUIDELINES

All children's services will:

- Educators shall practice with a training auto-injection device on an annually basis.
- Ensure that the auto-injection device kit (which must contain a copy the child's anaphylaxis action plan is provided by the families for the child while at the service. Families will ensure the device is within its use by date at all times.
- Ensure that the auto-injection device kit is stored in a location that is:
 - Known to all staff, including relief staff
 - Easily accessible to adults, not locked away
 - Inaccessible to children (unless of age to self-administered (FDC)
 - Away from direct sources of heat
- Ensure that no child who has been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injection device is permitted to attend the service and its programs without the device (Reg. 90).
- Ask all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, and prior to their child's attendance at the service, whether the child has any specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions and document this information on the child's enrolment record.
- Ensure that all parents or guardians of the service are informed about the management of medical conditions in the service in a variety of ways including information in the service information handbook, having the service policies and procedures readily accessible and available for inspection (Reg. 171), newsletter items notices (as relevant).
- Ensure that all staff (including relief educators), volunteers and students are informed about the management of medical conditions in the service in a variety of ways including information in

the staff handbook, induction processes, having the service policies and procedures readily accessible and available for inspection (Reg. 171), discussion at educator meetings etc.

- Children will not be able to attend care without risk management plan or the medication stated in the plan e.g ventolin/epipen.
- Family Day educators and Occasional Care educators must undertake their asthma management training. (Reg 151 (3))

In services where a child with specific health care needs, allergies or other medical conditions are enrolled.

The staff will:

- Provide a copy of this medical conditions policy to the parent of the child with specific health care need, allergies or other medical conditions (Reg. 91).
- Ask the parents/guardians to provide a relevant medical management plan for the child informing staff of the condition, medical management and action to be taken in the event of an incident relating to the condition before the child can commence in care. This may include:
 - Anaphylaxis action plan (Appendix 13.1)
 - Asthma action plan (Appendix 13.2)
 - Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan (Appendix 13.3)
 - Other relevant medical management plan related to the child's specific health care need, allergies or medical conditionMedical management plans are required to be signed by a Registered Medical Practitioner, reviewed on an annual basis and, where relevant, include the child's photo.
- Develop an individual Medical Conditions Risk Minimization plan (Appendix 13.3) in consultation with the parent/guardian of the child, prior to commencement at the service. The Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan shall include:
 - Risks relating to the child's specific health care needs, allergies or other medical conditions
 - Specific practices and procedures in relation to the safe handling, preparation, consumption and service of food, if relevant
 - Practices and procedure identifying child, child's medical management plan and location of child's medication
- Ensure that the child's medical management plan and Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan is inserted into the enrolment record for the child and a copy is visible and known to all educators in the service. This may include copies being kept:
 - In the child's room
 - Other rooms at the service relevant to child's care
 - In the kitchen
 - On the food trolley
 - In portable first aid kits
- Follow the child's medical management plan in the event of an incident relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.
- Ensure that the Communication Plan is followed and fully implemented along with the guidelines set out at the end of this policy.
- Ensure that no child is permitted to attend the service and its programs without medication prescribed by the child's medical practitioner in relation to the child's specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical condition that is documented in the medical plan.

- Ensure that notices shall also be on display in the service kitchen and child's room alerting staff to the child's specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions.
- Display an Emergency Contact Card by the telephone and, if appropriate, the food trolley.
- Ensure that practices and procedures in relation to the safe handling, preparation, consumption and service of food are developed and implemented, where relevant.
- Refer to the child's Medical Risk Minimisation plan to guide the use of foods in activities within the program e.g. food, food containers, boxes and packaging in crafts, cooking and science experiments.
- Ensure that the educators accompanying children outside the service carry relevant medication, a copy of the medical management plan and Medical Risk Minimisation plan. This will include when children are on short excursions e.g. walk to kinder.
- All medication shall be administered by authorised educators. The services do not allow for self administration of medication even if the child is over preschool age (Reg. 90).

Parents/guardians of children will:

- Inform educators at the children's service, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions.
- Provide educators with a medical management plan complete with photo and signed by a Registered Medical Practitioner.
- Develop a Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan with service educators.(Appendix 13.3)
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to educators, for example, any matter relating to the child's specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical condition, including an episode outside education and care hours. Refer to Communication Plan below.
- Notify educators of any incident related to their child's medical condition that may have occurred while the child was not attending the service.
- Notify educators of any changes to their child's status in their specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical condition and provide a new medical management plan in accordance with these changes and/or update the child's Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan.
- Comply with the service's policy that no child who has been prescribed medication in relation to their specific health care needs, medical plan, allergies or relevant medical conditions is permitted to attend the service or its programs without that medication or device.

Communication plan:

1. All educators, including relief educators, volunteers and students will be:
 - Informed about medical conditions management in the service by having the service policies and procedures readily accessible and available for inspection (Reg. 171), including the service's medical conditions policy
 - Informed of the service's procedures for identification of children with specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions
 - Informed about the Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan for each child with specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions in the service

2. Such communication shall take place through:
 - Inclusion of medical conditions management information on the educator, relief educator, student and volunteer induction checklists
 - Staff meetings
 - Use of staff communication diaries e.g. new child enrolled
 - Where appropriate, prominent display of notices and/or the child's medical management and Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan (e.g. in main entrance, kitchen, child's rooms) informing those entering the service that a child with specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions is attending the service e.g. anaphylaxis
3. All parents/guardians will be:
 - Informed about medical conditions management in the service by having the service policies and procedures readily accessible and available for inspection (Reg. 171), including the service's medical conditions policy
 - Informed, where appropriate, if a child with specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions is being cared for and educated in the service
4. Such communication will take place through:
 - Where relevant, prominent display of notices and/or the child's medical management and Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan (e.g. in main entrance, kitchen, child's rooms) informing those entering the service that a child with specific health care needs, allergies or relevant medical conditions is attending the service e.g. anaphylaxis
 - Notices displayed and/or sent to families informing them of all known allergens that pose a risk to children in the service and strategies to minimise and manage these risks (as appropriate)
 - Information about medical conditions management in Parent Handbook, Newsletters, notice boards, displays etc.
5. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to communicate with educators at the service about any changes required to the child's Medical Management Plan and Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan. This can be by:
 - Verbal discussion with an educator and the Service Leader/Program Leader
 - In writing e.g. letter from parent/doctor setting out any changes
 - Submitting a new medical action plan
 - Renewal of child's Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan (revised annually)

Medication

GUIDELINES

Educators will administer medication to children in the service based on the following principles:

- The parent/guardian has given authorisation
- The correct child receives the medication
- The right medication is given
- The right dose is given
- The right method is used to administer the medication
- The medication is given on the correct date at the correct time

DEFINITION OF MEDICATION

For the purpose of this policy medication can be defined as either prescribed or non-prescribed:

1. Prescribed medication is:

- Authorized by a health care professional
- Dispensed by a pharmacist with a printed label, which includes the name of the child being prescribed the medication, the medication dosage and expiry date.
Examples – Ventolin, Ritalin, antibiotics.

2. Non-prescribed medication is:

- Medication that does not meet the above criteria for prescribed medication
- Over the counter medication
- Medication dispensed by a naturopath/homeopath
- Complementary or alternative medication e.g. vitamins, cultural herbs or remedies
Examples – topical or anti fungal cream for nappy rash, eczema; antihistamine; teething gel.

GUIDELINES

Early Childhood Educators will:

- Check all medication must be in the original container, bearing the original label. All prescribed medication for the child to whom it is to be administered to must state on the label the date of prescription, child's name, dosage and times to be administered.
- Medication must not be administered if the expiry date has elapsed (including eye drops).
- Educators and children are to wash their hands and/or wear gloves before and after administration of any medication and sanitizing equipment such as nebulisers and ventolin spacers.
- The dosage and times must be strictly adhered to e.g. before or after food. Where label states "take as directed", the parent must obtain written information about the medication from the doctor or the pharmacist and record on the medication form.
- The service is **NOT** to administer the first dose of any medication in case of severe reaction.
- If a repeat course of antibiotics is prescribed the child is not excluded provided she/he is coping with the daily routine.
- In the event that educators suspect a child is having a reaction to medication, including antibiotics, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Should educators deem that the child requires emergency treatment an ambulance shall be called.

Parents/Guardians will:

- All medication is to be handed to an educator and kept out of reach of children at all times in a locked or child resistant cupboard (at least 1.5m high) with a 'medication' sign. Medication that has to be refrigerated is to be kept in locked fridge or a locked container in the fridge.
- No medication is to be kept in children's bags.
- Parent's/guardian's permission must be given for all medication administered. Details must be recorded on the child's Medical Authorisation Forms (*Appendix 13.4) Parents are to use **one line** for every dose or type and/or time of medication. Parents are to indicate the specific time that the medication is required, "if required" or "when needed" is not acceptable. Parents may indicate that medication is required according to signs and symptoms listed on the relevant medical action plan.

****In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and National Regulations. For childcare services registered as Victorian services, the Children's Services Regulations 2009 and Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended) will apply.***

- Antibiotics: These must state on the label the child's name, dosage and times to be administered. A child who has been prescribed antibiotics for an illness should be kept at home for at least 24 hours after the commencement of antibiotics.
- Parents are encouraged to ensure that the full course of medication is completed, even if the symptoms disappear, especially antibiotics and eye/cream drops.
- Written permission must be obtained from the child's doctor (as relevant) for all ongoing medication, and all long term medication must be reviewed regularly by the child's doctor at a period of time set by the doctor. Ongoing medical conditions and medication must be recorded in a "Medical Standing Order form" (Appendix 13.5) or in the instance of asthma on an "Asthma Action Plan" (Appendix 13.2).

Non-prescribed Medication Guidelines:

Early Childhood educators will:

- For non-prescribed medications the child's name must be on the container/tube. Dosage, times and length of period to be administered must be within the recommended use guidelines. These need to be recorded in the child's Medical Authorisation Form.
- Non prescribed medication cannot be administered beyond recommendations on medication e.g. length of time between doses, not administered for more than 2 consecutive days. Written advice from doctor is to be sought by the parent, should a parent seek deviation from medication guidelines.
- Herb preparations will only be given if accompanied by a letter from the doctor/herbalist.
- Medication that has designated age groups noted on the container e.g. Panadol 5-12 years, can be used for children outside that age group **ONLY** if the appropriate age/dosage is stated in the directions listed on the medication container. Medication cannot be administered beyond the recommendations on the medication container e.g. age of child, dosage etc, unless written authorisation is given from a medical practitioner.
- Educators must complete all staff sections on the child's Medical Authorisation Form when administering medication (prescribed and non-prescribed).
- Ensure that prescribed medication and non-prescribed oral medication is administered and witnessed by a trained First Aid Certificate holder with recognized children's services qualifications. Both educators are to sign the authorized medical form following the dispensing of the medication.

NOTE: In the case of FDC educators, parents sign forms to give permission for only the FDC educator to sign.

- If a child's temperature reaches above 38 degrees, every effort to contact the families or authorized emergency contact will be made. If the parents, or the emergency contacts cannot be contacted, medical services will be contacted if the child is deemed at risk.
- If educators believe it is necessary to apply items from the First Aid Kit e.g. bandaids, antiseptic creams, bite/sting lotion, eyewash etc. they will:

- Check that parents have authorised this on the enrolment form.
- Record application in the Incident, injury, trauma and illness record (Appendix 6.1)
- Ensure that the person collecting the child from the service must be informed and is required to sign the Accident Record entry.

Asthma plans: Educators must have a recent copy of the child's Asthma Plan signed by the child's doctor. Asthma plans are advised to be reviewed every 12 months or upon notification of a change in the child's condition by the parent/doctor.

Anaphylaxis Plans: Educators must have a recent copy of the child's Anaphylaxis Action Plan signed by the child's doctor. Anaphylaxis Plans are to be reviewed annually or upon notification of a change in the child's condition by the parent/doctor.

Epilepsy Management Plans: If applicable, educators must have a recent copy of the Epilepsy Management Plan signed by the doctor. Epilepsy Plans are to be reviewed annually or upon notification of a change in the child's condition by the parent/doctor.

Diabetes Action Plan: If applicable, educators must have a recent copy of the Epilepsy Management Plan signed by the doctor. Epilepsy Plans are to be reviewed every annually or upon notification of a change in the child's condition by the parent/doctor.

Anaphylaxis Management

GUIDELINES

Early Childhood Educators will:

- Ensure that a notice is displayed prominently in the main entrance of the children's service stating that a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being educated and cared for at the service. This notice shall include:
 - Known allergens that pose a risk to the child at risk of anaphylaxis
 - How these risks shall be minimised and/or managed
- Be instructed about food preparation measures necessary to prevent cross contamination between foods during the handling, preparation and serving of food e.g. careful cleaning of food preparation areas and equipment, use of separate utensils, crockery etc.
- Ensure that the child should only eat food that has been specifically prepared for him/her:
 - Where the service is preparing food for the child, it will ensure that it has been prepared according to the parent's instructions and child's Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan
 - Where the meal is provided by a service all attempts will be made to provide a meal that all of the children can eat, but there may be times when an alternative meal (prepared by the service) would be more suitable
 - Parents may choose to provide some/all food for their child

- Ensure that where food is brought from home to the service by all children, parents/guardians may be asked not to send food containing specified allergens or ingredients as determined in the child's Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan. This shall only occur following recommendation by a relevant medical specialist and the provision of documentation of this recommendation.
- Check that all food for the child is approved by the child's parent/guardian and be in accordance with the child's Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan. (Appendix 13.3)
- Check that all bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes, including any treats, provided by the parents/guardians for the child are clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Ensure that there is no trading or sharing of food, food utensils and containers while eating. Separately labeled utensils, crockery and/or containers may be necessary.
- Closely supervise all children at meal and snack times and ensure food is consumed in specified areas. To minimise risk children will not be allowed to 'wander around' the service with food.
- Follow guidelines in the child's Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan whether it may be appropriate that a highly allergic child does not sit at the same table when others consume food or drink containing or potentially containing the allergen. However, children with allergies should not be completely separated from all children and should be included in all activities.
- Check if it is necessary that the child is required to have their own high chair to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.
- Ensure hand washing for all children before and after eating. If it is specified in a particular child's Anaphylaxis action plan and/or Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation plan that all children's hands are to be washed on arrival at the children's service, educators will ensure that this is done.
- Ensure tables, high chairs and bench tops are washed down after eating.
- Ensure non-allergic babies are held when they drink formula/milk when the child at risk of anaphylaxis is allergic to milk.
- Refer to the child's Medical Condition Risk Minimisation plan to guide the use of food, food containers, boxes and packaging in activities within the program e.g. crafts, cooking and science experiments.
- Use non-food rewards for all children e.g. stickers.
- Increase their supervision of the child on special occasions such as excursions, incursions or family days.
- Ensure that the educators accompanying children outside the service carry the anaphylaxis medication, a copy of the Anaphylaxis action plan and Medical Condition Risk Minimisation plan with the auto-injection device kit. This will include when children are on short excursions e.g. walk to kinder.
- Regularly check the adrenaline auto-injection device expiry date. (The manufacturer will only guarantee the effectiveness of the adrenaline auto-injection device to the end of the nominated expiry month). This shall be done and documented via the quarterly first aid checks undertaken in the services.

- Provide information to the service families about resources and support for managing allergies and anaphylaxis.
- In the situation where a child who has not been diagnosed as allergic, but who appears to be having an anaphylactic reaction:
 - Call an ambulance immediately by dialing 000
 - Commence first aid measures
 - Contact the parent/guardian
 - Contact the person to be notified in the event of illness if the parent/guardian cannot be contacted
 - Notify Children and Youth Services at Council on 5832 9783

Parents/guardians of children will:

- Inform educators at the children's service, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's allergies.
- Develop an individual Medical Condition Risk Minimisation plan with service staff (Appendix 13.3) (Reg. 90).
- Regularly check the adrenaline auto-injection device expiry date.
- Provide a safe treat box for their child, if relevant.

Asthma

GUIDELINES

1. Organise the provision of Emergency Asthma Management training to educators and ensure that at least one educator who has completed accredited asthma training (Emergency Asthma Management) is on duty whenever children are being cared for or educated. (LDC/Kinder Only)
2. Store Asthma Action Plans in the child's enrolment record and a copy in the Emergency Asthma Kit.
3. Ensure that all educators are informed of the children with asthma in their care.
4. Ensure that the First Aid Kit contains a blue reliever puffer (e.g. Airomir, Asmol, or Ventolin) a disposable spacer device, face mask and concise written instructions on Asthma First Aid procedures. This reliever puffer will be within the use by date.
5. Ensure a copy of the Emergency Asthma Management procedures are with the First Aid kit.
6. Ensure that an Emergency Asthma First Aid poster is displayed in all key locations.
7. Ensure that the asthma component of the First Aid Kit i.e. blue relief puffer is within use by date (new relief puffer is to be ordered before the expiry date), spacers are clean, asthma action plans are included and up to date.
8. Provide a mobile Asthma First Aid Kit for use at activities outside the Children's Service.
9. Provide educators with resources and professional development materials regarding asthma on orientation and at regular intervals thereafter.

10. Where appropriate, organise information sessions on asthma for parents/guardians.
11. Encourage open communication between parents/guardians and educators regarding the status and impact of a child's asthma.
12. Promptly communicate any concerns to parents should it be considered that a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities.
13. Ensure, in consultation with the parent/guardian, the health and safety of each child through supervised management of the child's asthma.
14. Ensure that all regular prescribed asthma medication is administered in accordance with the information on the child's written Asthma Action Plan or Medical Authorisation Forms. (Appendix 13.4)
15. Follow immediately the Emergency Asthma Management procedures) if no Action Plan is available.
16. Notify the parents/guardians of any child in the event of an attack (Reg. 86), even if the child has a complete recovery from the asthma attack.
17. Notify ACECQA within 24 hours should the attack require the attention of a medical practitioner (or ought to have been sought) or the child attended (or ought to have attended) hospital (Reg. 176). (FDC/LDC/Kinder only)
18. Record any asthma attacks and treatment as per the Incident, injury, trauma and illness records forms (Appendix 6.1) (Reg. 87).
19. Where necessary, modify activities in accordance with a child's needs and abilities.
20. Ensure that children with asthma have the same opportunities as all other children.

Parents/Guardians will:

1. Inform early childhood educators, either upon enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has a history of asthma.
2. Provide all relevant information regarding the child's asthma via an Asthma Action Plan that is signed by a doctor.
3. Notify educators, in writing, of any changes to the Asthma Action Plan.
4. Ensure that their child has their asthma medication (adequate supply and within use by date) with them at all times while in the service.
5. Ensure that their child has their own spacer device with them at all times while in the service. Parents/guardians will be responsible for cleaning their own child's device.
6. Ensure that they comply with all requirements and procedures in relation to the Medication Authorisation Forms.

7. Communicate all relevant information and concerns to educators as the need arises e.g. if asthma symptoms were present last night.
8. Ensure, in consultation with the educators, the health and safety of their child through supervised management of the child's asthma.

Asthma First Aid Kit

Each childrens service will be required to have a suitably equipped First Aid Kit containing:

- Blue reliever puffer (inhaler) e.g. Airomir, Asmol, or Ventolin. This is to be within its use by date.
- A disposable spacer device that is compatible with the puffer.
- 4 step action plan

Emergency Asthma Management

1. If a child/adult develops signs of what appears to be an asthma attack, appropriate care must be given immediately. Regardless of whether the attack is mild, moderate or severe, treatment should commence immediately as delay may increase the severity of the attack and ultimately risk the child's/adult's life.
2. In an emergency the blue reliever puffer used may be the child's/adult's own, from the First Aid Kit or borrowed from another child/adult. In an emergency situation where the child/adult does not have their own blue reliever puffer.
3. The parents/guardians of any child will be notified in the event of an attack, even if the child has a complete recovery from the asthma attack.

What if it is the first attack of asthma?

A problem that may be encountered is when a child/adult suddenly collapses, or appears to have difficulty breathing, and is not known to have pre-existing asthma or other health problems. In this situation educators will follow the Emergency Asthma Management.

Family Day Care

Occasional Care

Early Childhood Educators will:

1. Ensure that they maintain current accreditation in Emergency Asthma Management (valid for three years).

RELATED POLICIES:

- Infectious Diseases and Immunisations
- Healthy eating and Oral health
- Working Requirements
- Hygiene and Infection Control
- Emergency situations

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD: Quality Area/s 1,2,5,6,7

Sources and Reference Tools

- Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended) and Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Asthma Foundation Victoria www.asthma.org.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- ASCIA – Guidelines for prevention of food anaphylactic reactions in schools, Kindergarten and childcare centres. www.allergy.org.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- ASCIA – The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy www.allergy.org.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- Local Medical practitioners and pharmacists
- Royal Children's Hospital – www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/factsheets Viewed 12/08/2013
- Codes and Procedures for Child Care Centres – Hornsby Shire Council Community Services Branch Viewed 12/08/2013
- .Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- www.education.vic.gov.au – Department of Education and Early Development. Viewed 12.08.2013
- Anaphylaxis Management: Practice Note 3 DEECD January 2011.
- Health Act 1958
- Health Records Act 2001
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- www.diabetesvic.org.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- Diabetes Australia Victoria 1300 136 588
- www.epilepsy.org.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- Asthma and the Child in Care: Model Policy The Asthma Foundation Victoria
- www.asthma.org.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- www.deecd.vic.gov.au Viewed 12/08/2013
- www.nationalasthma.org.au Viewed 12/08/2013

Reviewed: August 2013

Next Review: August 2014

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN IN CARE (Family day care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

The Family Day Care service will meet the Education and Care National Regulations 2011 state that the Family Day Care service must assess the 'suitability of the residence or venue according to the number, ages and abilities of children attending or likely to attend the service'⁹.

GUIDELINES

1. To ensure our continuing ability to enhance children's learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing whilst providing a strong commitment to best outcomes and ethical standards the service will;
 - Maintain a ratio of one adult to seven (7) children of which only four (4) will be of preschool age.
 - Include in the ratio children whom educators are legally responsible for as a guardian or parent until they are 13 years of age.
 - Assess at the initial safety check and each safety check thereafter the suitability of numbers in care accordance to the space within the environment available to children.
2. Where other persons reside in the Family Day Care environment with child/children where the educator is not legally responsible and the legally responsible parent/guardian also resides in the Family Day Care environment the service will;
 - Not include the child/children within the ratio of the environment within the following guidelines.
 - The child is adequately supervised by their parent/guardian and never left unaccompanied or in the sole company of the educator.
 - The additional child/children do not detract from the physical environment to the detriment of children in care.
 - The coordination unit is made aware in each instance that this will be occurring
 - The legally responsible parents/guardians has a valid Working With Children Check and Police Record Check.
3. Adequate supervision as described in the Guide to the National Law and National Regulations means that the adult can respond immediately, including when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation. This will include the legally responsible parent/guardian;
 - Being in sight or hearing distance at all times of the child/children in their care.
 - Being the primary care giver for the child/children in providing meals, routines, behaviour guidance and assistance to the child in every instance.
 - Taking the child/children with them on outings, between indoor and outdoor environments and in the case of an emergency.
 - Ensuring the legally responsible parent/guardian is showered and dressed prior to care commencing.

This policy relates to:

- Supervision
- Interactions and Communications with Children

⁹ National Law and Regulations 2011 – Regulation 116 (2b)

- Safety and Hygiene Checks
- Safety
- Emergency Situations

Sources and Reference Tools:

- National Law and Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Law and Regulations

For review by December 2013

NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY and ORAL HEALTH

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council Early Childhood Services aim to promote children's health and nutrition by creating an environment that supports healthy eating, breast and bottle feeding, food safety and oral health practices.

The services are committed to educating children and their parents/guardians about healthy food, healthy eating habits and oral health. The formation of good nutrition and oral health are paramount for children, as what children learn about food, nutrition and dental hygiene during early childhood will carry on and play a significant role in adult life.

GUIDELINES

ENVIRONMENT

1. The service recognizes it is critical to form healthy eating habits in the early years as they impact on social and emotional health as well as physical wellbeing.
2. Parents/Guardians are asked to notify the service on the enrolment form of any dietary requirements such as allergies, intolerances or cultural requirements so that provisions can be made.
3. Through the enrolment process and newsletters, the service will encourage parent/guardians, extended family and friends to share recipes which reflect their family culture, and to come and cook at the service with the children.
4. All children will be encouraged to develop independence in the serving and clearing of food and drink, managing utensils, pouring, drinking and eating, assisting in setting up and packing up of tables where appropriate. It is expected that children from the age of 3 years are participating in these self-serve experiences and that children under the age of 3 are encouraged where appropriate.
5. Resources will be adequate at all services to support independence and self-serving.
6. Educators will sit with the children during snack and meal times and be a positive role model, while also discussing food types, the value of foods and eating habits.
7. Incidental learning opportunities will be available through stories, displayed pictures and educator encouragement.
8. Information on a range of related nutritional areas will be provided to parents to improve knowledge in nutrition via newsletters, displays and handouts.
9. The Nutrition, Food Safety and Oral Health policy will be available in the service policy book.

EDUCATION and FOOD PROVISION

1. Nutritional needs of children will be catered for while they are attending the service.
2. No child will be forced to eat what they do not want. No child will be bribed to eat one food before or after another.
3. Children will have access to water whenever they need or ask for it as outlined in services handbook.
4. During all meal and snack times children will be carefully supervised.
5. Food provided for special occasions will adhere to the Food Safety section in this policy. During special celebrations the emphasis will be placed on the occasion not the food.
6. Children will be encouraged to try new foods of different colors, textures, flavors and aromas.
7. In managing the negotiation of foods, educators will:
 - Encourage a child to try all foods served to them or provided in their lunch box.
 - Continue to offer food to a child even if they have refused it on other occasions.
 - Assist a child with eating as required. Positive reinforcement will be used to encourage and promote good eating practices.
 - Never use food as a reward, punishment or as a bribe.
 - Notify parents/guardians of children's eating habits and strategies used to support them.
 - If children don't like a particular food or meal the child will be offered an alternative, ie a piece of fruit.
 - Monitor, assess and seek further support and assistance should the concern of staff be ongoing and not improving.
 - Share the meal time with children, providing an opportunity to role model behavior, engage in meaningful conversations and assist children as necessary.
 - All children will be offered other food or items from their lunch box if they are still hungry after the first sitting.
8. Accept that mess is normal for children. This is an exploration of food and learning how to eat.

ALLERGIES

1. When a child has a reaction to a certain food provided, parents/guardians will be notified and the reaction will be documented and signed in the incident/injury/trauma/illness record by both the educator and families. Steps will be put in place to manage suspected intolerances/allergy. Educators will share information with families regarding allergies/intolerances.
2. Each child with an allergy/intolerance will have a Management Plan, which will be followed should they have an allergic reaction. Refer to individual children's, Anaphylaxis Plan (Appendix 13.1) and Medical Conditions Policy. A Medical Condition Risk Minimisation plan (Appendix 13.3) will be filled out on enrolment with parent/guardian in conjunction with service staff.

FOOD SUPPLIED BY FAMILIES

In the instance where food is supplied for children by their parent/guardian

1. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to provide a nutritious packed lunch for their child, including fruit and vegetables, and with the recommendation that chips, cakes, lollies and other 'sometimes' foods are not part of the child's snacks.
2. All services will promote the provision of healthy snacks and lunches through information upon enrolment, newsletters, fact sheets, and displays throughout the year.
3. Water is preferred by the service and parents/guardians are asked to bring a full water bottle from home each day. Parents/guardians are discouraged from providing sweetened drinks such as juices, cordials and soft drinks. If a service offers milk as an alternative, a menu will be displayed to outline what food/drink is offered while the children are in care.
4. While it is understood that educators encourage and promote healthy food, hungry children cannot be denied food they bring from home.
5. Educators/staff or other adults in the service will not make judgments as to the nutritional value of food brought to the service by children. All food brought by families to the service will be offered to the child.

Long Day Care

Occasional Care (Nancy Vibert only)

Family Day Care (Educator provided food)

1. Lunch (where applicable) and morning and afternoon tea will be provided on a regular schedule, including water and milk may also be offered, and noted on the menu.
2. Services will ensure that they cater for the food requirements of a child who has not eaten lunch by offering an alternative.
3. The food shall be age appropriate to prevent choking hazards, therefore the following foods will not be given to children under the age of two years to prevent choking:
 - Raw carrot
 - Apple with peel
 - Popcorn
 - Corn chips
 - Sausages, if served to children under the age of 2 years, will be skinless and cut in quarters for all children to prevent choking.
 - Any hard or firm foods will be cut in to small pieces for the 0-3 age groups.
4. Every child under 12 months will have an 'introducing solids' chart provided for families to mark off what the child has tried. (Appendix 35) Educators will only give children under 12

months foods the family has marked off to minimize the risk of allergies/intolerances. Alternative fluids such as boiled water will only be given upon requests from the parent/guardian.

5. In emergency situations (power failure, break in, floods) the level of food preparation at the service may need to be reduced to only low risk foods such as dry biscuits and sandwiches with appropriate filling.

NUTRITIONAL ALLOCATIONS AND FOOD SAFETY PROGRAMS

1. A dated, current weekly menu will be displayed outlining the food that the children will be offered while they are in care. The menu will be assessed by the Healthy Together Achievement Program menu assessment team to ensure it meets Australian Guidelines. The menu will be reviewed every 12 months and will be assessed to see if it's meeting The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating Guidelines and amended where recommended.
2. Services will ensure the food or beverage provided to children is nutritious and adequate in quantity; and the food or beverage provided is chosen having regard to the dietary requirements of individual children taking into account –
 - (i) Each child's growth and development
 - (ii) Any specific cultural, religious or health requirements(regulation 79)
3. A late snack will be offered to children who remain in the service after 5.00 pm. Children's individual dietary needs, likes and dislikes, and preferred quantities will be respected and accommodated.
4. Nutritional information will be given to parents/guardians on a regular basis. Parents/guardians and children are encouraged to participate in the menu planning, food preparation and presentation through foyer displays, invitations to parents to join the children at meal times, discussions with the children during group times and menu reviews.
5. Details and quantity of food eaten will be available to all parents in the form of communication books, wall charts, and verbal communication or displayed in each room.
6. Educators will only have cold drinks while in the children's rooms. Educators will also be encouraged not to bring unsuitable drinks into the children's rooms such as soft drinks or food that is not nutritional.
7. Where issues arise with food suppliers, food nutrition, handling of/or supply of food products, the process of food recall will be followed in accordance to the service food safety program.
8. Nancy Vibert Occasional Care will provide a variety of fruits and vegetables at snack times across the week.

Family Day Care

Occasional Care

Kindergarten

Fun Group

1. All hot drinks will be consumed in closed, non-spill travel mugs as there are no breaks away from the children to access hot drinks safely. (NQS 2.3.2)

Family Day Care

1. Educators will ensure appropriate extra food, such as bread or fruit, is available for children when they are hungry or insufficient or inappropriate food is provided by the family. Relevant charges per fee schedules will apply and documentation on the program will occur.

Breast and Bottle Feeding

GUIDELINES

1. Children will normally be held whilst given a bottle. Educators will use the opportunity to create a positive and bonding experience for the child i.e. holding the child close to and facing educator, maintaining eye contact, giving one to one attention.
2. If parent/guardians request their child to having a bottle by him/herself, they are required to complete a bottle feeding – parent request form (Appendix 14.1)
3. Breast and formula milk is to be transported in an insulated container with an ice brick or frozen water bottle.
4. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to place all named bottles in the fridge on arrival at the services.

5. Educators will adhere to food handling procedures when handling and heating breast and formula milk.
6. Leftover breast or formula milk will not be reheated and used, but will be discarded following the feed.

BREAST FEEDING

Council's Early Childhood Services support mothers who wish to provide breast milk to their children whilst in care. If a parent wishes to return to the service to breast feed while the child is at the service, a comfortable arm chair will be provided for them.

If providing expressed breast milk the following procedure shall be followed:

Labeling and Storage:

- Expressed milk must be provided in sterilized containers, labeled with the name of the child, and the date to be used.
- Bottles should be placed in a non-spill tray on the lowest shelf of the refrigerator. This is to make sure that if knocked or spilled, breast milk does not drip onto other food.
- A minimum of five clean sterilized bottles should be provided if early childhood educators are to portion the breast milk.
- Breast milk that is not used on the day and is brought from home should be returned to the mother or discard at the end of the day.

Heating Breast Milk:

Babies can drink breast milk straight from the refrigerator, however if a baby prefers warm milk:

- Heat the milk by standing the bottle in warm water.
- Always check the temperature of the milk before giving it to a baby.
- Do not warm the milk in the microwave, as often this does not heat the milk evenly and can cause burns. Also, microwaving breast milk may destroy some natural benefits
- Discard leftover breast milk. This cannot be saved for later or rewarmed.
- Do not leave frozen breast milk to thaw at room temperature. Breast milk that has been thawed in the fridge can be stored for 24 hours in the fridge or for no more than 4 hours at room temperature or used immediately to feed the baby.

Bottle Feeding:

When supplying formula bottles the following procedure shall be followed:

- Parents will be encouraged to bring in sterilized bottles of cooled boiled water and staff will add formula to each bottle prior the feed.
- Bottles are to be clearly labeled with the date, baby's name and amount of water (if not already supplied) to be mixed with the formula.
- If bottles are to be heated in the microwave, educators need to follow the procedure outlined in(Appendix 14.3).

Food Safety

GUIDELINES

FOOD SAFETY

Greater Shepparton Children's and Youth Services will:

- Support the principle of providing safe food and will pursue such objectives through the implementation of good management practices and sound procedures in accordance with legislative responsibility.
 - Accept the aims and provisions of the Food Act 1984 as being essential to maintaining and improving food safety standards.
 - Believe in the importance of preparing, distributing and transporting safe and wholesome food to their clients.
 - Support the principles of correct premises design and construction, and continued maintenance of the structure and equipment.
 - Promote food hygiene education and training for all educators involved in the handling of food and the implementation of the food safety program.
 - Develop support programs and policies for all areas of operations.
 - Councils Children and Youth Services management will be responsible for the implementation and review of all policies, and the modification where necessary, to comply with statutory requirements.
1. Services will ensure that the food or beverage provided for children is chosen having regard to any child's special dietary requirements for health and medical reasons.
 2. It is recommended that educators have training in either Food Handling or a basic refresher course in food safety and the food safety program.
 3. The cook in each service will be a Food Safety Supervisor who is trained in an Accredited Food Hygiene Course with refresher courses undertaken on a regular basis
 4. A high standard of hygiene will be observed when food is stored, handled and prepared for the children's consumption.

Procedures for Preparing Food

1. Tasting
Tasting of food will be done with a clean tasting spoon each time per person. Hands, fingers or other kitchen utensils will not be used.
2. Cooking Activities for Children
Cooking activities for children are permitted provided that:
 - Children wash hands before commencing
 - Raw meats and poultry are not used
 - Allergies of children will be taken into account when cooking activities are planned
 - Caution is to be taken with raw eggs. Raw eggs have bacteria on the surface and therefore pose a risk to handlers. As they are porous, they are unable to be washed to remove the bacteria. Raw eggs should be handled with caution and should be handled or cracked by children over the age of 3 or the educator only and hands will then be washed immediately before handling the rest of the ingredients.
3. Food preparation/sink area

A separate food preparation/sink area will be used in food preparation and food activities. The sink used for program activities (such as cleaning paint pots, hand washing etc.) will not be used in food preparation and food activities.

Procedures for Serving Food

1. Children (this to be a must for over 3's) are encouraged to self-serve during snacks and meals. Educators will supervise this closely to ensure appropriate hygiene and food safety practices are implemented e.g. no licking of serving utensils, monitoring children with colds/coughs (thereby minimizing risk of spreading infections) etc.
2. Children will wash and dry hands before eating. It is the responsibility of the educators to supervise the children in this activity.
3. Dishes and cups used to serve food will be used for this purpose only.
4. If cooking or preparation of food is to occur during any session, a menu/list of ingredients will be displayed prior to the session.

Special Occasion or Birthday Treats

1. Simple items such as a cake, slice or biscuits may be brought in by the child or parents to celebrate a child's birthday or special occasion with a list of ingredients provided.
2. Blowing out of candles – individual cupcakes or 'pretend cake' will be used and then cut and distribute the real cake.
3. Should parents wish to supply birthday cakes for children:
 - The cake is not to contain cream
 - The cake, if purchased, is to be from a registered food premises in the original container and/or include the list of ingredients
 - A list of ingredients shall be provided if the cake is home made. This may be kept with the Menu and/or Program records.
 - All cakes shall be covered and stored in the refrigerator upon arrival.

Educator Responsibilities

1. To supervise the washing of hands of children before eating.
2. To follow the hygiene practices as displayed in the service.
3. To report illnesses of children to parents and Team Leader at Children and Youth Services Shepparton City Council, if appropriate.
4. To be aware of and take into account children's allergies & intolerances as per the allergy list.
5. To be aware of the symptoms and isolation procedures of childhood illnesses.
6. Ensure all perishable food is placed in a clean well maintained refrigerator as soon as practicable after arrival. Food left in the danger zone (between 5 – 60 degrees Celsius) for 4 hours must be thrown out.
7. Discourage direct sharing of food between children
8. Keep all food preparation and kitchen utensils clean

9. Heat food until steaming hot then when the steam stops rising, cover and put it in the fridge to cool until safe to eat
10. Cover and refrigerate any food prepared so that it can be served later
11. Do not reheat food that has already been reheated once
12. Do not store or prepare raw and cooked food together

Parent/Volunteer Responsibilities

1. To follow the hygiene practices as displayed in the service.
2. To report illness of child to educators.
3. To wash their hands before preparing or serving food to children.
4. To ensure all food brought to the service for their child/ren is fresh and uncontaminated.
5. To name and refrigerate high risk foods on arrival at the service e.g. yoghurt, meat etc.

Dental Hygiene and Oral Health

GUIDELINES

1. To promote good oral health and hygiene behaviors in children and families, educators will:
 - Model and actively discuss current oral health practices.
 - Discuss and promote dental hygiene incidentally at meal and snack times.
 - Provide direct access to and encourage the drinking of tap water frequently throughout the day.
 - Provide dental and oral health education such as curriculum activities for children and oral health literature for children and families.
 - Actively implement the sun smart policy for the prevention of lip cancer.
 - Encourage children who are old enough to rinse their mouth by drinking water after each meal.
2. Educators will encourage parents/guardians:
 - To provide healthy food and drinks for their child. Examples include: fruit, vegetables, wholegrain cereals, yogurt, tap water and milk.
 - To avoid bottles containing sweetened milk, fruit juices, cordial or soft drinks.
 - To avoid food and snacks with limited nutritional value such as lollies, chocolate, chips and muesli bars.
 - To promote sound tooth-brushing habits such as brushing twice per day, once in the morning after breakfast and before going to bed. Parents are encouraged to assist their child to brush their teeth until 8 years of age.
 - To advise the service on the enrolment form of the name, address and phone number of their preferred dentist.
 - To take their children for an oral health check by the age of two.
3. Educators will encourage and support families in seeking dental care where appropriate.

4. Educators will report to the family any incident, injury or suspected injury to teeth and gums, gum swelling, infection of the mouth or problems, pain or discomfort the child has with chewing, eating or swallowing.
5. If providing toothbrushes for the children, each toothbrush should be labeled with the child's name, the bristles should be exposed to the air and allowed to dry after use, stored separately so they cannot drip on each other and not stored in individual containers. Active supervision will be maintained at all times when children are brushing their teeth to minimize the chance of children accessing the wrong toothbrush.

Dental Emergencies

The following practices will be implemented in the event of the following dental emergencies:

1. Toothache

- The mouth will be rinsed out with warm water to remove any debris
- If swelling is present a cold compress will be placed to the outside of the cheek
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted to seek dental treatment immediately

2. Dislodged tooth – baby tooth

- **Do not try to put it back** because it may fuse to the socket, which leads to difficulties when it is time for the tooth to be shed or it may damage the permanent tooth underneath the socket
- If a baby tooth is dislodged store in milk in a secure container for the dental practitioner to assess
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted to seek dental attention immediately.

Dislodged tooth – older child (adult tooth)

- Stay calm and act quickly
- Locate the tooth and hold it by the crown (smooth white part)
- If the root has dirt on it, gently rinse the tooth in milk or saline solution such as contact lens solution for a few seconds only – **do not use water or scrub.**
- If the person is conscious, hold the cleaned tooth by the crown and replace it into its socket using light pressure.
- Hold the tooth in place by getting the person to gently bite on a handkerchief.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted to seek dental attention immediately.

If you can't replace the tooth:

- Do not let it become dry and **do not use tap water**
- Place the tooth in milk or saliva (preferably the patient's)
- Seal it in plastic wrap
- Seek immediate advice or treatment from oral health professional.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted to seek dental attention immediately.

3. Chips, fractures and cracks

- Cracked or fractured teeth may or may not be painful.
- If the tooth fragment is broken and is intact, store it in milk or saliva (preferably the patient's.)
- Seal it in plastic wrap.
- Contact the parents immediately and encourage them to see an oral health professional, as early recognition can improve the survival of the damaged tooth.
- If a tooth chip's or fracture is only minimal and there is no soft tissue trauma or pain, parents/guardians will be advised to seek dental advice within 24 hours.
- If there is any sign of 'pink' in the tooth (indication of exposure of a nerve) the parents/guardians will be advised to seek dental attention immediately.

4. **Soft tissue trauma and bleeding**

- In the case of a lip or cheek being bitten during eating, as a result of a fall or after a local anesthetic, parents/guardians will be advised to seek advice from a dental professional if swelling or pain occurs. This will be documented as necessary on an accident/illness/trauma record.
- In the case of trauma and bleeding to the lip, cheek or gums:
 - A clean bandage will be applied to the wound with firm pressure.
 - The child will be sat down (not laid down) and pressure applied for at least 10 minutes.
 - If the bleeding cannot be controlled parents will be contacted and advised to seek medical/dental treatment.
 - A cold compress will be applied to relieve swelling and pain.

5. **Abscesses and swelling**

- An abscess is a pus-filled swelling caused by infection inside a tooth, the gum and/or trauma to the tooth. They are often painful but not always. An abscess can cause facial swelling and/or enlarged lymph glands.
- A cold compress will be applied to help control swelling.
- Parents/Guardians shall be contacted to seek prompt dental attention immediately. For more information contact Goulburn Valley Dental Services on 5832 3050.

For dental emergencies contact Goulburn Valley Health Dental Services on 03 5832 3050 or the Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne on **1800 833 039**

Related Policies

Hygiene and Infection Control
Inclusion, Diversity & Equity
Medical Conditions
Supervision
Emergency Situations
Infectious Diseases and Immunisations
Environment & Sustainability

National Quality Standards – Quality Standards A2 – 2.1, 2.1.1 & 2.2.1

National Regulations –

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	79	Service providing food and beverages
	80	Weekly menu
	90	Medical conditions policy
	91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Sources and Reference Tools

- Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013
- Get Up and Grow: Health Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood: Australian Government 2009
- www.breastfeeding.asn.au Viewed 2/4/14
- Bottle Feeding – Safety Issues. Better Health Channel www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au viewed 2/4/14
- Bottle Feeding: A Guide to Safe Preparation and Feeding of Infant Formula. SA Health and Women and Children's Health
- Child and Youth Health – Bottle Feeding, Breast Feeding www.cyh.com Viewed 2/4/14
- www.sisdandkids.org
- National Health and Medical research Council www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/publications
- Healthy Together Victoria – menu assessment
- Dental Health Services Victoria – dhs.vic.gov.au – viewed 2/4/14
- www.health.vic.gov.au/healthpromotion/ Viewed 2/4/14
- Goulburn Valley Health Dental Services.
- Staying Healthy in Childcare – 5th Addition
- Food Act (Vic) 1984
- Food Safety Standards. Food Standards Australia New Zealand Food Authority (FSANZ)
- A Caregivers guide to the breastfed baby – April 2013
- Centre Support – www.centresupport.com.au
- GSCC – Best Start Breastfeeding Project Officer
- Healthy Eating for Children – www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- GSCC – Team Leader of Environmental Health

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH and SAFETY and WELLBEING

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton Children and Youth Services operate under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and OHS procedures of the Greater Shepparton City Council and the regulatory body, WorkSafe Victoria. Occupational Health and Safety is the responsibility of all staff employed in Council's early childhood services. Staff representatives are employed by the sponsoring body to monitor the health and safety standards and wellbeing of early childhood educators during official hours of operation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Greater Shepparton City Council Occupational Health and Safety and Wellbeing Policies, as well as Children and Youth Services policies related policies as nominated at the end of this document.

Purpose

- To take all reasonable precautions to provide and maintain, so far as is practicable, an environment that is safe and without risks to health and wellbeing for early childhood educators, children and parents during the hours of operation of children's services.
- To ensure that the safety and health of the early childhood educators, during hours of operation of business, is the mutual goal of the management and early childhood educators.

GUIDELINES

1. Children and Youth Service's management will:

- Provide Occupational Health and Safety information to new early childhood educator and work experience students/volunteers at orientation.
- Develop safe workplace procedures and ensure that early childhood educators read and understand them.
- Promote workplace health and safety and wellbeing by education, information and instruction.
- Develop and review policies and procedures, which support and encourage a safe and healthy work place.
- Develop, communicate and review Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) for guidance to all Children & Youth Service workers.
- Services will display full worded charts on appropriate handling procedures.
- Ensure that educators maintain a high level of awareness of health and safety issues, including an annual review which discusses issues, related to each educator's role, workload and job satisfaction and training requirements.
- Consult regularly with educators regarding their workload. Referrals will be made based on this information and guidelines of best practice.

- Provide regular Manual Handling professional development and require educators to attend participate.
- Ensure each early childhood educator is aware that incident prevention is his/her responsibility.
- Foster a working environment which encourages educators to report difficulties, and to seek help or support as required.
- Require that every incident, near miss and hazard is reported and investigated ensuring any necessary action is taken to eliminate or reduce further safety and health risks.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that all toys and equipment used in children's services meet the relevant Australian Safety Standards.
- All educator's must have a copy of the instruction manual/manufacturer guidelines for all equipment being used (hard copy or electronic).
- Ensure that all equipment used by the service will be safe and clean. Maintenance and cleanliness of equipment is the responsibility of the early childhood educators using it.
- Support early childhood educators new to the role, by offering support through regular contact via visits, telephone or office contacts.

2. Early Childhood Educators will:

- Will take all reasonable care for their health and safety and the health and safety of other people who may be affected by their actions during the operation of children's services.
- Will follow workplace procedures.
- Observe all occupational health and safety instructions and act accordingly, therefore avoiding unnecessary risk e.g. wearing of disposable gloves when changing nappies and dealing with body fluids.
- Not willfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse equipment provided in the interests of health and safety or welfare.
- Not willfully place at risk the health or safety of any person involved in the program.
- Implement all appropriate safe work practices.
- Observe all safety instructions and act safely, therefore avoiding unnecessary risk e.g. wearing of disposable gloves when changing nappies and dealing with body fluids.
- Ensure all equipment is used in accordance with manufactures guidelines, and Safe Work Method Statements.
- Attend training as deemed necessary and/or relevant e.g. regular updates on manual handling/infection control/child protection etc.
- Diligently exercise their responsibility for control of working conditions, practices and appropriate workload.
- Participate in an annual review which identifies their training needs, work challenges and opportunities for ongoing support.

- Identify and report safety and health risks in the work place, remove or minimise these risks and advise children service team /service leader/management of actions taken/required to be taken.
- Maintain a clean, tidy and safe workplace during the operation of children's services

Family Day Care

1. Family Day Care Coordination Unit will:

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that all toys and equipment used in Family Day Care meet the relevant Australian Safety Standards and stay abreast of changes to standards or legislation.
- Safety check all educator's homes considering Occupational Health and Safety risks before approving applicants to provide Family Day Care with the Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Service. Safety checks will then be carried out annually.
- Ensure that all equipment loaned by the service is safe and meet manufacturer's requirements for use and Family Day Care Policy and Procedures.
- Conduct and record risk assessments on all borrowed equipment every six months.
- Conduct and record risk assessments on all equipment when it is returned/before it is borrowed and a comprehensive audit of all equipment annually.
- Provide regular professional development opportunities on topics relating to Occupational Health and Safety such as manual handling, wellbeing and legislation.
- Consult and document regularly with educators regarding their workload prior to referring new children for placement. The number, ages, needs and hours of care of each placement will be considered in conjunction with the educator's needs.
- Support educators through regular contact via home visits, telephone or office contacts, particularly when educators are new to the role and where new children are placed into care.
- Ensure each educator is aware that their own Occupational Health and Safety is predominantly his/her responsibility, supported by coordination unit staff.
- Maintain cleanliness of all equipment including equipment borrowed from the resource library

Related Policies

- Infectious Diseases and Immunisations
- Tobacco, drugs, alcohol and Illegal substances
- Work requirements
- Hygiene and Infection control
- Hours of work
- Equipment and resources

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD: Quality Area/s 2, 3, 4, 7

Sources and Reference Tools

- Greater Shepparton City Council and My Safety www.greatershepparton.com.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- WorkSafe Victoria www.worksafe.vic.gov.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- www.safeworkAustralia.gov.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 Viewed 14/10/2013
- www.ohsinecservices.org.au Viewed 14/10/2013

Reviewed: October 2013

Next Review: October 2013

ORIENTATION FOR FAMILIES

PRINCIPLE

Orientation experiences build the foundation for an ongoing partnership for the child, family and the service.

Orientation provides children and families with a sense of belonging. *“Relationships are the foundations for the construction of identity – ‘who I am’, ‘how I belong’ and ‘what is my influence?’* ELYF – Outcome 1.

GUIDELINES

1. Parents/Guardians and families are encouraged to visit their preferred service to meet with the service leader to gain information and discuss relevant issues prior to application for a place.
2. An information booklet containing details regarding the relevant service will be distributed to the family. Families can direct queries regarding this information to the individual services.
3. At all times the focus of orientation will be about providing the best start for the child and family. The orientation period will vary for each child and family dependent on individual needs and service requirements.
4. Educators will discuss with families during orientation, the services implementation of the National Quality Framework (including EYLF), and how it is reflected in the program.
5. Educators will use the orientation time to gain knowledge and understanding of the child, their needs, strengths, background, interests, likes and dislikes assisting in the settling process. Families will be encouraged to share their values, culture and beliefs with the service. This will enable the service and family to work together in partnership to provide education and care for the child.
6. All parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in orientation with their child, but services will respect the needs and requirements of the families as to their level of participation. It is not compulsory for families to complete an orientation period prior their child commencing at the service.
7. If families are unable to participate in orientation then the service will ensure that other opportunities and forms of communication that support the individual family needs are offered and provided to share service and family information.
8. All enrolment information as required by the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and for Occasional Care Services only the Children’s Services Regulations 2009, must be completed before the child can commence care at the service (including being left for short orientation periods).
9. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to contact the service at any time to enquire how their child is settling.
10. The service will ensure appropriate communication tools are available for families for whom literacy is an issue or for who English is not a first language.

Long Day Care

Occasional Care

Family Day Care

1. Whilst the parent stays with their child for orientation prior to their agreed start date, they will not be charged. At any time that a parent wishes to leave their child, it will only be if there is a space available and a fee will be charged for this time.

Kindergarten

1. Kindergarten children can attend the Orientation day in December of the previous year. Orientation days for the beginning of the year will vary according to each service. More information can be gained by contacting the relevant service.

Fun Group

1. Orientation at the beginning of the year for Fun Group will vary according to each service operating a Fun Group. More information can be gained by contacting the relevant service.

RELATED POLICIES

- Access in Children's Services
- Inclusion, Diversity and Equity
- Children's Learning and Programming

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended 2009) and Children's Services Regulations 2009(Occasional Care Services only)
- NQS –National Guide –QA 6 –Standard 6.1 –element 6.1.1
- NQS PLP – Newsletter No 35 2012 –Collaborative Partnerships with Families
- NQS PLP – Newsletter No 36 2012 –Relationships with Children
- NQS PLP – Newsletter No 61 2013 – Supporting babies' social and emotional wellbeing

PHYSICAL PLAY (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council Early Childhood Services recognizes the impact of active play/physical activity in early childhood on immediate and long term health consequences. The Services will provide opportunities for active play/physical activity within the program as per the National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years (Appendix 15.1).

GUIDELINES

This policy aims to ensure optimal adult guided and child initiated active play activities are provided in early childhood services. These will encourage young children to be active and develop fundamental movement skills, ensuring growth and development and assist them to be confident and enjoy participating in physical activity as they grow into active young people.

- Daily adult guided and child initiated active play will be a significant component of the program plan.
- Television and other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) will be limited within the program as per the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years below.
- Age appropriate traffic safety education, including pedestrian and car safety and playing safely, will be provided as part of the program to children and their parents/carers in the service.

Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years:

- For healthy development in infants (birth to 1 year) physical activity – particularly floor based play in safe environments – should be encouraged from birth.
- Toddlers (1-3 years) and preschoolers (3-5 years) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day.
- For children aged 2-5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day.
- Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games).
- Infants, toddlers and preschoolers should not be sedentary, restrained or kept inactive for more than one hour at a time – with the exception of sleeping.

The following recommendations will assist the promotion of structured adult guided and child initiated active play activities:

Participation

- Every child will be provided with equal encouragement to allow them to acquire skills and develop confidence.
- Gender, cultural, age and individual differences will be considered when planning activities
- Time allocated to adult guided and child initiated active play for children 1-5 years will be a minimum of 3 hours over the child's whole day.
- Educators will ensure that a variety of indoor and outdoor active play experiences such as dance, drama, moving to music, climbing, building, digging, somersaulting, hurdling, ball skills, obstacle courses, jumping from various heights etc, are planned to encourage all children, and cater for a range of abilities.

- Educators will try to ensure that groups for adult guided play are not too large. It is important that most of the children are active for most of the time during the structured active play session.
- Educators will integrate some adult guided play into children's free play time by providing the children with games they can play during these times. Replication also allows them to learn and remember how to carry out the activities correctly.
- Active play will be presented in a fun way and the children's attempts at activities will be acknowledged and reinforced in a positive manner and will be inclusive of all children.
- Educators will be positive role models, participating in the physical activity with the child/children and promoting the importance of regular physical activity for a healthy life.
- To decrease sedentary activities, children will be encouraged to play outdoors with free and creative active play activities.
- In adverse weather conditions, outdoor playing time will be substituted with equivalent indoor activities.
- Warm-up and cool down exercises will accompany all physical activities including free and creative active play activities.
- Children will learn about the importance of physical activity for future health.
- The service will provide physical activity information and guidelines for carers and parents.

Screen based activities

- Television and other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) will be limited within the program as per the National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years (appendix 15.1). Educators are to work within these guidelines and should not be allowing children more than 30 minutes per day.
- Television and electronic media will be age appropriate and monitored by an educator sitting with the children to discuss what is being viewed.
- Children younger than 2 years of age will not spend any time watching television or using electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games).
- Refer to Television and Electronic Access policy for more information and guidelines.

Safety

- Pedestrian and car safety and playing safely will be promoted in play experiences within the program and on excursions.
- Information and materials from VicRoads will be used in the program e.g. Starting Out Safely program.
- Parents will be encouraged to walk or ride with children to the service if the distance is suitable.
- Space will be provided for children to leave bikes or scooters if they choose to ride to the Service.

Related Policies

- Television and Electronic Access
- Children's Clothing
- Excursions

Sources and Reference Tools

- National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years: Get up and Grow series www.health.gov.au Viewed 2/09/11
- Kids – Go For Your Life Active Play Program www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au Viewed 2/09/11
- <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au> Viewed 2/09/11
- <http://www.playpower.com.au> Viewed 2/09/11
- Starting out Safely /www.vicroads.vic.gov.au Viewed 22/09/10

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

The coordination unit support educators in taking their entitled leave whilst also meeting the needs of the Greater Shepparton community.

GUIDELINES

1. Educators are not required to work on gazetted public holidays.

“Public Holidays will be counted as an absence day if;

- The child would normally have attended the service or individual carer on that day if it were not a public holiday, and
- Fees have been charged in respect of the absent child for the day.”*

2. Charges and charging practices for public holiday periods are according to individual educator’s fee schedules. This needs to be discussed with new and existing parents at either initial interviews or at times when fee schedules are revised.

3. It is Greater Shepparton Family Day Cares practice that educators do not charge for care when they are sick or not available due to annual leave etc. Therefore if a public holiday falls during a week that the educator is not working at all no charges would apply.

4. If an educator is unavailable to provide booked care on a public holiday and the parent uses another educator the following conditions will apply if the educator in the first instance is charging for booked care:

- Any holding fee charged by the original educator will have the Child Care Benefit deducted as usual.
- The fee charged by the second educator will not have Child Care Benefit deducted and the parent/guardian will pay the full fee.

Policies relating to this policy;

- Fee Agreements

Sources and Reference Tools

- Child Care Service’s Handbook 2011-2012*

RECORDS

PRINCIPLE

All information provided to Council's Early Childhood Services regarding children, families and staff will be treated in strict confidentiality and within the guidelines of the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic), the Health Record Act (2001) and Councils Records and Information Management Policy – M08/4509.

GUIDELINES

Children and Families files:

1. Attendance records (sign in sheets) must be kept, listing the name (including surname), date and time of arrival and time of departure of each child. Each child attending a service must be signed in and out of the service with the signature of the person dropping them off and picking them up (Education and Care Services National Regulation- 158).

These records must be kept for a period of 7 years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (PROS0905 class 4.6.2) (Requirement of Public Record Act).

2. Incident, injury, trauma and illness records must be kept listing all information as detailed on the form as prescribed by the (Education and Care Services National Regulation 87). These records must be kept until the child is aged 25 years of age (Education and Care Services National Regulation 183).

Fatality or serious injury outlined on ACECQA Notification of Serious Incident Form (Section 174 of the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010) must be kept permanently (PROS0905). – 4.6.4

3. Enrolment records will be checked for currency on an annual basis and retained according to the Child Care Management System (CCMS) guidelines. (See below)
Enrolment forms will be completed in full in accordance with (Education and Care Services National Regulation - 160).

Enrolment records will be kept for 7 years – (PROS0905) – 4.6.2 – Destroy 7 years after last attendance of child (Requirements of Public Records Act).

4. Developmental Records relating to children must be kept for 7 years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service. These records will be destroyed after the child has not attended the service for 7 years. (Requirement of Public Records Act). Copies of these records can be provided to parents/guardians when the Educator is notified of a child leaving the service. (PROS0905) - 4.6.2 -7 years after last attendance of child.
5. All records pertaining to the service, children's program and enrolments are the property of Greater Shepparton City Council who is the approved provider.
6. Routine excursion forms are to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Routine excursion forms must be kept for 7 years after the date on which the child participated in the excursion. (PROS0905) – 4.6.2 -7 years after last attendance of child. (Requirements of the Public Records Act.)

7. All Family Day Care, Long Day and Occasional Care services Childcare Benefit (CCB) and Childcare Management Systems (CCMS) notices and all relevant documentation e.g. parent statements, records for allowable absences etc. will be required to be kept for a period of 3 years as per the requirements of the Family Assistance Office (refer over page for more information). PROS0701 – 2.11.2 – Destroy 7 years after action completed.
8. All confidential records will be stored in a safe and secure place according to Education and Care Services National Regulations – 183.
9. Records will only be available to:
 - Educators and children's services staff in direct care of the child
 - Parents (those pertaining only to their own child)
 - Child Protection (after consultation with Children's Services Advisor and Children & Youth Services Management)
 - Police upon issue of a warrant form.
 - Solicitors and/or Court upon issue of subpoena of records.
 - Early Childhood Professionals (eg: Special Children's Services) to whom the child has been referred with parental permission.
 - Greater Shepparton City Council Children & Youth Services Management and Greater Shepparton City Council Information Management.
 - Records will follow children between all Greater Shepparton City Council Services.
10. Disposal/destruction of records will be in accordance with the requirements of the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) The current disposal method used for Greater Shepparton City Council Children's Services is secure shredding of documents by the Information Management Team.
11. Records for Archiving are to be filed in Archive Boxes with details of:
 - Record Description Centre
 - Service
 - Content Date Range
 - Year of archiving
 - Year of expiry
 - PRON 6DA and Code – (PROS and class No).

Archived records can be stored at the Service or sent to Council (Children & Youth Services) for archiving. External Storage Provider Grace Records Management.

12. Records can also be stored on council's TRIM program in accordance with the Information Management Department Requirements.

Reducing creation and storage of paper records and making use of electronic Information Management systems.

Councils Information Policy encourages the continual improvement of process and the reduction of use and creation of hard copy records.

13. Storage - all manual (hard copy) records will be kept in a secure, lockable filing or storage cabinet which should be locked when not in use. Computerized files must have restricted access controls.

Staff files:

1. All staff sign in sheets are to be kept for 25 years.

Long Day Care

Family Day Care

Occasional Care

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FOR CHILDCARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CCMS) and Family Assistance Office (FAO)

All approved child care services are required to keep the following kinds of records for a period of 3 years:

- If applicable, the licence to operate a child care service issued by the state or territory where the service operates
- Online weekly Attendance Record Reports for every child provided with care given under section 219N of the Act.
- Records of any instances in which the service certified an item under the family assistance law e.g. eligible hours or a SCCB rate for a child at risk or an individual in hardship. The record will include the reasons for doing so.
- Copies of receipts (issued for periods before the service transitioned to CCMS or 1 January 2009, whichever is later).
- Enrolment records – reviewed annually.
- Any statements or other documents for the purposes of documenting an additional absence.
- Copies of forms completed by parents nominating CCB eligible hours.
- Insurance policies and any other documentation relating to insurance.
- Accounting records, including cash books and journals.

Family Day Care

Educator files must contain all information pertaining as outlined in agreement stored on (TRIM).

Access to educator files is restricted. The following guidelines must be adhered to;

- Access will be restricted to the following people;
 - Manager of Children & Youth Services
 - Team Leader Children's Services
 - Early Years Services Coordinator

- Coordination Unit Staff
- Information of on an educator's file must not be divulged to any person other than those who have a right of access to such information.
- Educators shall have access to his/her file accompanied by coordination unit staff.

In relation to the Child Care Management System and Family Assistance office

Information pertaining to;

- Periods of 24 hour care

. * Records must be kept for 36 months from the end of the calendar year in which the care or event recorded.

External access to Information

Access to information contained on educator's files by people or groups external to Family Day Care will be restricted to cases where:

- Access is a requirement of or specifically authorized by law.
- Access may prevent or lessen a serious or imminent threat to the educator's life or health.
- The educator has specifically consented, in writing to such access or
- The release is required as part of a criminal investigation, the enforcement of criminal law, or national security purposes.

At the time of an educator's resignation or de-registration, the complete file will be, closed sealed and archived in secure storage on TRIM.

Related Policies

- Confidentiality
- Records and Information Policy (M08/4509)
- Information Privacy Policy (M13/46474)

Sources and Reference Tools

- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au> - viewed 7.5.14
- Health Record Act (2001) <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/> - viewed 7.5.14
- Greater Shepparton City Council Human Resources manual
- Children & Youth Services Management: Greater Shepparton City Council
- Childcare Services Handbook 2013
- <http://education.gov.au/> viewed 7.5.14
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- <https://education.gov.au/child-care-management-system> viewed 7.5.14
- Public Records Act 1973
- PROS 09/05 – Retention Disposal Authority for Records of Local Government Function
- Pros07/01 General Retention Disposal Authority for Records of Common Administration Functions.

RECRUITMENT and ORIENTATION OF EDUCATORS (LDC/K/OC Original)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council Children and Youth Services recruits, selects and orientates suitably qualified/experienced early childhood educators according to Greater Shepparton City Council Human Resources policies (see Greater Shepparton City Council Human Resources manual).

GUIDELINES

1. Positions will be advertised in the local newspaper, other external sources (as appropriate) and/or internally through the COGSpeak newsletter.
2. Coordinators/Program Leaders and educators must be qualified in an early childhood related discipline as set out in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
3. A Position Description and Information on Position will be available on the Greater Shepparton City Council website or from Human Resources.
4. A panel shall be set up to short list and interview suitable applicants and then recommend an appointment to the position.
5. The successful applicant will be selected using the key responsibility areas (KRA) in the position description and referee checks.
6. The successful applicant will be notified verbally and in writing. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.
7. The successful applicant will be orientated to the position using the 'Greater Shepparton Children and Youth Services Induction checklist (Appendix 16.1) and will spend a period of time with a mentor educator to orientate into the role.
8. New staff members shall be required to undergo a 6 month qualifying probationary period in accordance with the Fair Work Australia minimum employment period.
9. During the qualifying probationary period employees will be provided with appropriate ongoing induction, support, assistance, resources and training to enable them to meet the required performance standards for their position. Review meeting(s) shall be held regularly with the employee during the 6 months probationary period to discuss staff progress and any further action required.

Related Policies

- Staffing
- Criminal History Check
- Working with Children Check
- Roles and Responsibilities of Council to Kindergartens

Sources and Reference Tools

- Induction. Policy number 46:610:0001:2.13 Greater Shepparton City Council.
- Recruitment and Selection. Policy number 46.POL34 Greater Shepparton City Council.
- Local Government Act 1989
- Greater Shepparton City Council Enterprise Agreement 2011

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION and ORIENTATION OF EDUCATORS (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

“Consistent and committed educators and coordinators support good quality standards and continuity of care for children. Effective, transparent and equitable recruitment processes ensure the service attracts and retains educators, coordinators and other staff members who can best meet the needs of the children and their families.”¹⁰

To meet the needs of the families and community within Greater Shepparton and respond to the demand of the service’s waiting list, the coordination unit will promote family day care on an ongoing basis and advertise for suitably qualified and experienced educators to be sponsored by Greater Shepparton City Council.

GUIDELINES

1. To increase awareness of Greater Shepparton Family Day Care in the community, pamphlet/posters will be distributed through the Greater Shepparton City Council Children’s Services and the Greater Shepparton region.
2. Principles of inclusion will be considered when recruiting new educators.
3. Educators will be given a position description prior to commencement detailing their roles and responsibilities.
4. On initial inquiry, coordination unit staff will provide an Information Pack and answer queries.
5. After reading the information pack the applicant completes an application form and makes an appointment for interview. The applicant will be interviewed by coordination unit staff at the coordination unit.
6. If the interview has been successful and the applicant meets the key selection criteria the coordination unit will conduct reference checks.
7. If unsuccessful, the applicant will be advised in writing that he/she has not been approved.
8. If successful, the applicant will be informed verbally and in writing that he/she has been approved to be an educator, conditional upon the following:
 - Permission to operate family day care in the home from the landlord (if renting).
 - Copies of a qualification equal to or higher than a Certificate III in Children’s Services
 - Suitable Criminal Record Check for Educator and anyone 17 years of age or older living in the Educator’s home.
 - Working With Children Check for Educator and anyone 18 years or older living in the Educator’s home.
 - Presentation of level two first aid qualifications.
 - A thorough safety check of the applicant’s home.

¹⁰ Family Day Care Quality Assurance, Quality Practices Guide, National Childcare Accreditation Council 2004

- A check of the safety restraints in the applicant's car at an authorized outlet or by a Vic Roads safety educator.
- Obtaining appropriate Public Liability Insurance for Family Day Care
- Participation in all compulsory orientation sessions
- Obtaining an Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Presentation of an Anaphylaxis Management certificate
- Presentation of an Asthma Management certificate
- A successful three month qualifying period

9. Compulsory orientation sessions include;

- Orientation One: Regulations, Quality Standards and Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Policy and Procedures

During orientation one coordination unit staff will review the entire Policy and Procedure document with the applicant, explaining the importance and relevance of each policy to their new role. The coordination unit will also explain how each of the policies and procedures support and link with each other in creating the framework and guidelines which we operate within.

- Orientation Two: Forms, Fees and Implementation

During orientation two coordination unit staff will provide the applicant with all the forms to assist them in their day to day environment. Each form will be explained, discussions will occur on what needs to be displayed and examples will be given. Applicants will also be provided with all the necessary guidance to complete their fee schedules, agreements and contracts at this orientation.

- Orientation Three: Practical, Mentors, Networking and Resources

During orientation three the applicant will accompany coordination unit staff on a visit to a Greater Shepparton Children's Service and two existing Family Day Care educator's homes.

Upon returning to the office coordination unit staff will demonstrate accurate procedures for nappy changing, assembly of equipment and other hygiene practices.

Child Protection protocol, Occupation Health and Safety and accessing the toy and resource library will be comprehensively discussed.

Coordination unit staff will discuss and provide professional development material to the applicant regarding all areas relating to the provision of care and education of children, including the Early Years Learning Frameworks.

The applicant will be provided with resources including but not limited to Staying Healthy in Childcare, road safety, SIDS and Kids recommendations, product safety information and nutrition.

10. A fourth orientation can be provided if requested by the applicant for their family regarding the roles of the educator's family.
11. The applicant will be allocated an experienced Family Day Care educator as a mentor by the coordination unit staff. Coordination unit staff recommend applicant spend a minimum of eight hours with their mentor prior to commencement and schedule regular visits or phone calls after commencing.
12. Coordination unit staff will visit a new educator weekly for a minimum of three weeks when they commence.

13. Registration as a Family Day Care Educator does not come into effect until completion of the orientation process; at any time during the orientation process should coordination unit observe or be made aware that the applicant would not be a suitable educator the process will cease.
14. A Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Contractor – Service Agreement will need to be completed and signed (Appendix 16.1).

Related Policies

- Home Visits
- Criminal Records Checks
- De registration of an Educator
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Child Protection
- Working With Children's Check
- Nutrition and Food Safety
- Educator Hand Book
- Role of the Educators Family

Sources and Reference Tools

- Educators Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Reviewed: February 2013

Next review due: August 2014

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION and ORIENTATION OF COORDINATION UNIT STAFF (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

“Effective recruitment and induction processes ensure that the best possible Coordination Unit staff and educators are attracted to and retained by the scheme and that quality standards and continuity of care are maintained.”¹¹

Greater Shepparton City Council Aged and Children’s Services recruits, selects and orientates suitably qualified/experienced Family Day Care Coordination Unit staff according to Greater Shepparton City Council Human Resources policies (see Greater Shepparton City Council Human Resources manual).

GUIDELINES

- Positions are advertised in print media, internally through the COGSPEAK newsletter, In Site and through Councils external website www.greatershepparton.com.au
- Principles of inclusion will be considered when recruiting Coordination Unit staff.
- Coordinators and Fieldworkers must hold a minimum Diploma Children’s Services.
- Potential applicants are issued with a position description upon request from the Greater Shepparton City Council Aged and Children’s Services department or online.
- Applications are viewed and short listed by the Coordinator and/or Early Years Service Provision Coordinator/ Team Leader Children’s Services.
- Short listed applicants are interviewed by at least three appropriate panel members.
- The successful applicant is selected using the key selection criteria in the position description and information received from referees.
- The successful applicant is notified verbally and in writing of the decision.
- Unsuccessful interviewed applicants are notified verbally and in writing.

The successful applicant is orientated to the position using the ‘Greater Shepparton City Council Induction checklist – Family Day Care Staff’ and is paired with a buddy for the first month of employment.

Policies relating to this policy are;

- Inclusion
- Working With Children Check

Sources and Reference Tools

- Greater Shepparton City Council HR Department 2011
- Local Government Act 1989
- Greater Shepparton City Council Enterprise Agreement 2008
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995

¹¹ Family Day Care Quality Assurance, Quality Practices Guide, National Childcare Accreditation Council 2004

- Workplace Relations Act 1996
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Quality Practices Guide – Quality Area Five
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Reviewed: June 2011

Next review: December 2012

RELIEF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

All Greater Shepparton Early Childhood Services will be staffed in accordance with the Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended) and Children's Services Regulations 2009.

GUIDELINES

1. Relief educators will only be used if they are registered with the Greater Shepparton City Council and have:
 - A current Police Check (within 6 months)
 - Current Level 2 First Aid qualifications
 - A Working with Children Check Card
 - Anaphylaxis Management Training
 - A minimum of Certificate 3 Children's Services qualification
 - Undergone an induction process at one of the Council Services
2. The services will be provided with a current Relief Educator list and the Coordinator/Program Leader are responsible for contacting relief educators within service hours.
3. If unable to obtain relief staff, the Coordinator/Program Leader should contact Aged and Children's Services, Greater Shepparton City Council, to see if an educator from another centre may be redeployed or a decision made to close the service (see 'Closure of Services' policy).
4. The On-Call Coordinator is responsible for finding relief staff out of service hours and can be contacted on 0408 329 300
5. Children of or directly related to relief educators, may be placed at the same service where the relief educator works, but cannot be in direct care of the related relief educator on a regular and ongoing basis. This relates to relief educator's:
 - Children
 - Grandchildren
 - Stepchildren

If all other avenues have been exhausted in finding a suitable reliever, a relief educator may be used in a service where their child attends **as approved by Aged and Children's Services Management.**

Related policies:

- Staffing
- Staffing from Other Agencies
- Criminal History Check
- Working with Children Check
- Closure of Services
- Recruitment, Selection and Orientation of Staff

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care Children's Services National Regulations 2011
- Victoria Police
- Department of Justice
- Aged and Children's Services Department: Greater Shepparton City Council

RE-REGISTRATION and APPRAISAL OF AN EDUCATOR (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

“A lively culture of professional inquiry is established when early childhood educator’s and those with whom they work are all involved in an ongoing cycle of review through which current practices are examined, outcomes reviewed and new ideas generated. In such a climate, issues relating to curriculum quality, equity and children’s wellbeing can be raised and debated.”¹²

Every educator is required to re-register with Greater Shepparton Family Day Care every three years and undertakes an annual review and appraisal process, where an annual educator/scheme evaluation needs to be completed (Appendix 17.1) This supports the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics and therefore our service philosophy;

“In relation to myself as a professional, I will:

Regard myself as a learner who undertakes reflection, critical self-study, continuing professional development and engages with contemporary theory and practice.”¹³

GUIDELINES

The review and appraisal process involves an unannounced annual safety check, a written self assessment and a review discussion with the service Coordinator.

Approximately fourteen days after the initial safety check the service Coordinator will return to the educator’s home to check if identified areas on the safety check have been addressed. At this time the annual review process will be undertaken including discussing topics including but not limited to;

- Educator strengths
- Educator training needs/wants
- Educator availability
- Adherence to scheme guidelines
- Meeting scheme requirements such as
 - First aid
 - CPR
 - Criminal record check
 - Public liability Insurance
 - Working with Children Check
 - Meeting training/in-service/professional development requirements
 - Anaphylaxis and Pippen Training
- Meeting a minimum satisfactory quality standard
- Concerns by staff or educator
- Support given by the coordination unit
- Relationship between the educator and coordination unit
- Job satisfaction
- Plan for continuing improvement
- Fee schedules and contracts

¹² Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Page 13

¹³ Early Childhood Australia – Code of Ethics section seven dot point two

- Marketing
- Relationships with families and children
- Implementation of an approved Early Years Learning Framework

If the educator has not met all requirements and provides an unsatisfactory standard of care, the de-registration policy will be implemented and may include:

- A structured improvement plan and/or a three month probationary re-registration

Or

- The coordination unit, in consultation with Aged and Children's Services management, may decide to de-register the educator.

The educator will be issued with a copy of the self assessment, educator agreement (three yearly) and notes taken during the re-registration procedure (if applicable). The educator will also receive an updated certificate of registration (three yearly).

If an educator is de-registered, families will be informed by the coordination unit that the educator is no longer a registered educator with the scheme. Details will remain confidential and parents will not be informed why the educator was deregistered, unless their child was subjected to inappropriate child behavior management or unsafe practices. In this case they would have the right to be informed.

Policy Relates to:

- De registration of an Educator
- Philosophy
- Working With Children Check
- First Aid
- Safety and Hygiene Check
- Safety

Sources and Reference Tools

- National Childcare Accreditation Councils Quality Practices 2004 Guide Area 5
- Children's Services Regulations 2009

Reviewed: August 2011
Next review due: February 2013

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES IN A KINDERGARTEN

ROLES OF THE COUNCIL (LDC/K/OC - Original)

PRINCIPLE

To ensure clear guidelines are set determining the role and responsibility of Greater Shepparton City Councils in regards to staff management and employment in Council Kindergartens.

GUIDELINES

The Council will undertake the following:

1. To assist with planning and maintaining the finances of the service in consultation with the Committee of Management in consideration of enrolment and funding levels.
2. To employ early childhood educators who will be responsible to the Director Services through the Manager Aged and Children's Services.
3. To provide an on call service to maintain staffing levels in all service where possible.
4. To arrange selection panels to include:

Teacher Committee of Management Representative
Greater Shepparton City Council Representative
Another Greater Shepparton City Council Kindergarten Director/or independent representative with relevant expertise in the Early Childhood area

Fun Group Leader, Occasional Care Leader, Kindergarten Assistant
Kindergarten Teacher
Greater Shepparton City Council Representative
Greater Shepparton City Council Independent

Fun Group Assistant
Fun Group Leader
Greater Shepparton City Council Representative
Greater Shepparton City Council Independent

Occasional Care Assistant
Occasional Care Leader
Greater Shepparton City Council Representative
Greater Shepparton City Council Independent

5. To take full responsibility of payment of staff salaries, including allowances, superannuation and work cover.
6. To ensure that all requirements of the Children's Services Regulations 2009 are fulfilled.
7. To carry out specified or major works to the centre as approved in Council estimates.
8. To arrange and meet the full cost of insurance covering the building, all contents, Public Liability, Professional Indemnity and Voluntary Workers Cover.
9. To arrange and meet full cost of security service if necessary to guard against acts of vandalism etc.

10. To approve hours of program operation after due consideration of the Committee of Management recommendations, environment and budget considerations and consultation with the early childhood educators and Committee of Management.
11. To approve any special circumstances/arrangements made in regard to enrolments in consultation with Committee of Management/educator/parents involved.
12. All other matters are dealt with in accordance with the use and service agreement between the Kindergarten and Greater Shepparton City Council, including Schedule 1.

Related policies:

- Roles and Responsibilities of Kindergarten Committee of Management to Council
- Recruitment, Selection and Orientation of Staff

Sources and Reference Tools

- Greater Shepparton City Council HR manual
- Local Government Act 1989
- Greater Shepparton City Council Enterprise Agreement 2011
- DEECD
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Reviewed November 2011

Review by May 2013

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KINDERGARTEN COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

To ensure clear guidelines are set determining the role and responsibility of Kindergartens Committee of Management in regards to centre management and maintenance.

GUIDELINES

The Committee of Management will undertake the following:

1. To oversee the day-to-day running of the centre.
2. To abide by all requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Children's Services Regulations 2009, Children's Services Act 1996 and Department of Early Education and Childhood Development Kindergarten Funding and Service Agreement and relevant Greater Shepparton City Council Kindergarten Policy and Procedure Manual.
3. To organise enrolment of children in accordance with the Greater Shepparton City Council Central Enrolment Policy.
4. To seek approval from Council for any special circumstances/arrangements made in regard to enrolments.
5. To set hours of operation for the service in consultation with early childhood educators/parents/Greater Shepparton City Council and with consideration of budget requirements.
6. To collect fees as set by Greater Shepparton City Council.
7. To pay Council the required annual contribution to employment costs as determined by the annual budget.
8. To be responsible for maintaining all necessary records and make these available to the Greater Shepparton City Council if required (including submission of minutes of all meetings, reports on activities, financial reports, balance sheets, financial estimates etc.).
9. To record Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) eligibility details each term.
10. To provide an Annual Report and Audit Statement to Council after the Annual General Meeting each year.
11. Not to enter into any loan or overdraft arrangement without written consent of Council.
12. To consult with Council in regard to any structural work to be carried out at the centre (e.g. new cupboards, outdoor play structures) or alterations to any established structures.
13. To consult with Council regarding any maintenance/alterations e.g. painting, new heating or cooling systems, new carpets/floor coverings.
14. To maintain gardens, lawns and playgrounds.
15. To meet the full costs of heating, lighting and power charges, telephone rental and calls.
16. To arrange and meet the costs of cleaning the service unless otherwise agreed with Council.
17. To raise funds by lawful means and to retain control of the expenditure of such funds.
18. To supply all ongoing educational equipment and replace and maintain such equipment, unless specifically provided for in Council estimates.

19. To supply all consumables for the program.
20. To advise Council of any requests for use of the premises by outside groups and abide by Council decisions in this matter. Any rental or incidental income from such use is to be retained by the Committee of Management.
21. All other matters are dealt with in accordance with the use and service agreement between the Kindergarten and Greater Shepparton City Council, including Schedule 1.

The roles and responsibilities of both Council and Committees of Management will be a consultative/interactive process intended for mutual agreement and will be reviewed. If however agreement cannot be reached on any issue the Greater Shepparton City Council as the Proprietor of the service retains the right to make the final decision

Related Policies

- Roles and Responsibilities of Council to Kindergartens
- Recruitment, Selection and Orientation of Staff

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended) and Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Department of Early Education and Childhood Development
- Local Government Act 1989

Reviewed December 2010
Review by June 2012

ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR'S FAMILY (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

“From birth children experience living and learning with others in a range of communities. These might include families, local communities or early childhood settings. Having a positive sense of identity and experiencing respectful, responsive relationships strengthens children’s interests and skill in being and becoming active contributors to their world.”¹⁴

Relationship between educator’s family/household members and family day care children also contribute to establishing trusting relationships with adults and other children and value the relationship between the educator’s family, the children’s family and the children.

Educator’s family/household members can provide:

- Positive role models for children in care. For example, older siblings, parental figures of the same and opposite gender and even grandparent figures.
- An experience of other family structures, dynamics, interests, hobbies, values and cultures.

Family day care children and families can provide for educator’s families:

- Enrichment
- Relationships and connections’
- Understanding of community and cultural differences

GUIDELINES

1. Just as educators are expected and encouraged to provide a positive and nurturing care environment for the children in care, members of the educator’s family/household are also expected to communicate and interact with family day care children and their families in a polite, friendly and respectful manner.
2. Members of the educator’s family/household are encouraged to keep certain areas of the family day care home private so that they can have their own personal space. It is expected that the family day care children and families will respect these boundaries.
3. Family day care children and their families are expected to relate to members of the educator’s family/household in a polite, friendly and respectful manner and respect their privacy.
4. No member of the educator’s family or household may be left unattended in a supervisory capacity of any family day care child at any time (excluding emergency situations).
5. If there are issues or concerns that the attitude or behavior of any member of the educator’s household may have a negative impact on family day care children or family resulting in unsatisfactory results, breach of regulations or quality standards the de registration policy will be referred to.
6. When commencing family day care new educators and their families will be offered a separate orientation session to discuss the impacts of family day care on the home environment, strategies and ideas.

¹⁴ Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework, Commonwealth of Australia 2009

7. The positive benefits of offering family day care in your home will be explained to the educator's family if requested by the coordination unit.

Sources and Reference Tools

Being, Becoming and Belonging 2009

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Reviewed: February 2013

Next review due: August 2014

SAFE SLEEPING and REST TIME

PRINCIPAL

Effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in the education and care environment. Regular sleep or rest times are essential for a child's health, growth and development.

Greater Shepparton City Council's Children's Services have a duty of care to ensure that all children are provided with a high level of safety when resting and sleeping in an education and care service, and to role model safe sleeping in their practice and to educate parents and families.

DEFINITIONS

SIDS - Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Infant - is a baby who is under 12 months of age. (Throughout the policy the term infant is used synonymously with the word baby)

GUIDELINES

This policy is based on recommendations from the recognized national authority SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping; "as some sleeping arrangements are not safe for baby and can increase the risk of sudden unexpected death in infancy [SUDI], including SIDS and fatal accidents" refer to the (Child Care Kit - SIDS and Kids safe sleeping background information).

Children's Services will:

1. "Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for at the service are met, having regards to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children" (Education and Care Services National Regulation 81).
2. Inform families about the services Safe Sleeping and Rest Time policy and will display Safe Sleeping posters and information within the service (Appendix 19.1).
3. Not endorse an alternative practice unless the service is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner, if a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping and this policy.
4. Ensure there are adequate numbers of cots and bedding (one cot/bed/mattress per child) available to children.
5. Ensure all cots meet Australian Standards for cots (AS/NZS2172) and portable/porta cots (AS2195). Refer to "*Keeping baby safe – a guide to infant and nursery product*", available from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's website www.productsafety.gov.au
6. Ensure all cots must have a firm well-fitted mattress that is supplied with the cot. There is to be no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress and the cot sides and ends.

7. No extra padding will be added under the mattress that is supplied with the cot and waterproof mattress protectors must be strong and fit tight.
8. Ensure each child has individual bedding which is laundered at least weekly or when soiled and stored separately from other children's bedding.
9. Where children require comforters to settle, the use of these will be monitored closely by all educators. At no time will a child's face be covered with a comforter and all comforters are to be removed from the child once they are settled.
10. "Babies and older children should never be given bottles to take to their cots or beds, as this can cause tooth decay from the milk sugars and damage teeth¹⁵." If a family requests that their child is to hold their own bottle at rest time (not in the cot or bed), then the family must complete a 'Bottle Feeding – parent request' form (Appendix 14.1).
11. Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting.
12. Ensure that products designed for sleeping may not be endorsed by SIDS & Kids and should be checked before being used, ie positional devices or wedges that restrict a child's movement. Information and advice can be sourced from www.sidsandkids.org.
13. Ensure a clear path for evacuation will be maintained in the room in which children are sleeping/resting.
14. Ensure the service environment is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol as detailed in the services Smoke Free Environment Policy (Education and Care Services National Regulation 82).
15. Promote Breastfeeding ensuring it is encouraged and supported
16. Provide SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping information at induction for all educators, staff and volunteers and offer ongoing training, updated information and resources about safe sleeping practices.

Educators will:

1. Consult with families about their child's sleep and rest needs, and will be sensitive to each child's individual needs ensuring sleep and rest times are a positive experience.
2. Be committed to recognizing that children have different requirements for relaxation and sleep and are responsive to those needs. They will assist children in learning about their individual needs for rest and comfort and will encourage children to communicate their needs where possible.
3. Not force any child to sleep/rest (by patting a child's back/shaking the cot) or remain awake. Children who do not require a sleep will be provided with alternative activities that may include individual, one-to-one and small group experiences relating to interests and experiences.
4. Provide a safe environment free from hazards for children while sleeping or resting ensuring cots/beds/mattresses are in good repair, cleaned with disinfectant after being used, and are placed in an area that is a safe distance from heaters, electrical appliances and hanging cords or strings.
5. Ensure soft bedding, such as soft mattresses, or folded doonas, pillows, cushions and sheepskins are not to be used as substitutes for mattresses.

¹⁵ Department of Education & Training –Regulation and Quality Assessment Update Issue 12 March 2015

6. Ensure that amber teething necklaces and bracelets are removed from children before sleep and rest time.
7. Ensure that cots and mattresses are arranged so there is easy access to each child.
8. Monitor the temperature of the rest environment to ensure maximum comfort for the children and encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when sleeping or resting.
9. Provide a relaxing environment for sleep and rest periods that is within hearing and observation range for educators to closely monitor children and assess the children's breathing and colour of their skin to ensure their safety and wellbeing.
10. Maintain active supervision and child/educator ratios throughout the sleep and rest time period. Students and volunteers are not to be left unsupervised with sleeping/resting children.
11. Ensure children who are unwell and resting are constantly supervised until their parent/guardian arrives to pick them up.
12. Support children's agency during sleep/rest time ensuring there is consistent practice between home and the service.
13. To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome all educators must comply with the 'SIDS and Kids Safe Sleeping Checklist and guidelines for Education and Care Services (Appendix 19.2)

Safe sleep and resting practices for a 'baby' (who is under 12 months of age)

❖ Sleep baby on their back

- All babies are to be placed onto their back at the start of every sleep time.
- For babies who are able to turn over and move around, if they turn over during their sleep educators will allow them to find their own position ensuring that they are closely monitored.

❖ Sleep baby with head and face uncovered

- At no time will a baby's face be covered during sleep and rest times.
- All head coverings including hats, bonnets, hooded clothing, are removed before the baby is placed to sleep or rest.
- Ensure the baby's feet are touching the bottom of the cot/mattress to prevent them wriggling down under bed linen.
- If bed clothes are used make sure they are tucked in securely so bedding is not loose, or place the baby in a safe sleeping bag (ie. correct size for the baby with a fitted neck, arm holes/ sleeves, and no hood).
- No soft bedding is to be used (this includes pillows bumpers, doonas, quilts, loose bedding or fabrics, sheep skins, or lamb's wool), as they may cover the baby's face and obstruct breathing, or cause overheating.

- Soft toys are to be kept out of the sleeping environment for babies as they may cover the nose and mouth and interfere with breathing. The risk posed by suffocation by the presence of soft objects in the baby's sleeping environment outweighs any benefit to the baby from a soft toy.
- If a baby is wrapped to settle, educators need to consider the child's stage of development. The child's arms need to be free once the startle reflex disappears around 3 months and when a child is able to roll from their back to their tummy and then onto their back again during supervised play (usually 4 -6 months) discontinue the use of the wrap as this may prevent a child who has turned onto their tummy during sleep from returning to the back sleeping position

❖ **Provide a safe sleeping environment**

➤ Ensure a safe environment is provided for babies making sure of the following:

- Do not use hot water bottles, electric blankets or heated wheat bags
- Babies will not sleep on a sofa, bean bag , waterbed or pillow
- Bouncinettes, rockers, prams and pushers will not be used unsupervised or as sleeping environment. (A pram has not been designed as a permanent place to sleep a baby or to be used unsupervised. If a baby will only settle whilst in a pram, educators should remain with the baby and when the baby is asleep, and then place the baby into a safe cot. Never leave babies unattended in a pram)
- Hammocks can be dangerous and are not considered a safe sleeping environment for babies
- Babies will not be left unsupervised and alone on an adult bed or a bunk bed.

Family Day Care

Occasional Care

1. To accommodate the needs of school age children during rest time educators will:

- Designate a quiet area for resting
- Provide quiet areas for down time
- Provide a cushion, mat, chair or blanket
- Ensure the school age child's face is uncovered when sleeping

Family Day Care

1. No portable cot will be used for a child who weighs more than 15kg.

Overnight Care

1. For the purposes of overnight care supervising and monitoring children regularly will be defined as;
 - Educators will check overnight children are asleep and have a regular breathing pattern and there is no items covering their face prior to the educator going to sleep. The educator will document the times they checked the child/ren on timesheet.
 - If the educator wakes during the night, they will check that sleeping children have a regular breathing pattern and there are no items covering their face. The educator will document the times they woke and checked the child/ren on timesheet.
2. Educators will ensure that children sleeping overnight have individual sleeping spaces in a room shared only with siblings.
3. Children sleeping overnight will have their own cot/bed/mattress.
4. Educators only (excludes partners and children) providing care to babies are able to sleep in the same room (separate bed) for the purposes of feeding and settling if parents/guardians agree.
5. Educator's will ensure their own bedroom and privacy is respected during periods of 24 hour care and overnight care.
6. Educator's engaging in regular overnight care will conduct one emergency evacuation a year during the overnight care period.

Related policies:

- Emergency Situations
- Hygiene and Infection Control
- Recruitment, selection and orientation of educators
- Safety and Hygiene checks
- Smoke Free Environments
- Supervision
- Students, volunteers and visitors
- Tobacco, drugs, alcohol and illegal substances
- Training and Development

National Quality Standards – 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 3.1.2

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – Regulations 81, 82, 103

Sources and Reference Tools

- SIDS and Kids Infant Safe Sleeping Child Care Kit
- SIDS & Kids – Website www.sidsandkids.org – sighted 17/3/2015
- Kidsafe

- Australian Safety Standards
- National Childcare Accreditation Council Policy Guide Rest and Sleep Policy – ACEQA – viewed 17/3/2015
- Education And Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard – ACECQA
- www.productsafety.gov.au - *Keeping baby safe – a guide to infant and nursery product*”, available from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission’s website
- http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/preventing_strangulation_and_suffocation.html

Reviewed: July 2015

Next review due: December 2016

SAFETY (Chemical safety and storage) (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Management, coordination unit staff and educators have a legal and ethical obligation to ensure that potentially dangerous products, plants and objects are made inaccessible to all children at all times.

Safe storage and minimal use of toxic chemicals and potentially dangerous products will be enforced throughout all educator's homes to protect all children from access to these products without jeopardising hygiene.

Dangerous products include but are not isolated to alcohol, chilli products, medications, toiletries, first aid equipment, flammable substances, cleaning agents, some beauty and hygiene products, perfumes, and plants.

House hold items that can be hazardous can include but are not limited to cooking appliances, sheet glass windows, sharp objects, heaters and BBQ's.

GUIDELINES

1. All chemicals and potentially dangerous products are to be kept in their original containers or clearly labelled.
2. Medicines and chemicals will be used safely and directions read carefully and followed. Medicines and chemicals will not be left unattended whilst in use.
3. Chemicals and potentially dangerous products are kept out of reach* of children, or kept in a storage facility fitted with an approved child safe lock.
4. All items stating "keep out of reach of children" , "not to be consumed by children" and "not recommended for consumption by children" are to be kept out of reach* of children, or kept in a storage facility fitted with an approved child safe lock.
5. Educators must take steps to minimise the risk of hazard to children by observing strict supervision practices, minimising or removing hazards from the home and making potentially hazardous items inaccessible to children.
6. Toys and equipment will be cleaned as per the infection control policy on a regular basis. Toys and equipment will be used in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines and within FDC policies.
7. Any situation compromising the safety of children will be actioned within the guidelines of the schemes policy 'de-registration of an Educator'.
8. Plants that are identified as poisonous by the Victorian Poisons Information Centre must not be accessible to children.
9. Outdoor areas in which the children have access to will be fenced at a minimum of 1.5 metres from ground level. Fences are not to be scalable, have no gaps and should reach the ground at the bottom so a child cannot climb under. Any material such as chicken wire or shade cloth that can be easily deformed is not an acceptable fencing material..
10. Cars, boats and caravans must be kept locked if accessible to children.

11. Where there is a garden bed against a fence, the fence must be 1.5 meters above the height of the garden bed.
12. Children must be fully seated in the vehicle in approved child restraints prior to the engine starting. Under no circumstances are vehicles to be moved in or out of driveways with children observing unsupervised by an approved educator.
13. Safety checks must be completed daily and initialled each day to confirm Family Day Care environments are kept safe and hygienic in line with service policies and procedures.
14. If a child comes into contact with dangerous products emergency procedures must be followed and first aid procedures must commence immediately

* Kept out of reach is deemed as 1.5 meters or more above floor level to which a young child cannot climb or reach, a container or cupboard which has fitted to it a child-resistant catch, lock or enclosure, in good working order.

Policies relating to this policy are;

- Safety and Hygiene Check
- Car Safety
- Supervision
- Emergency Situations
- Medication
- De registration of an Educator

Sources and Reference Tools

- Department of Health - Greater Shepparton City Council 2010
- Kids Safe Victoria 2011
- Victorian Poisons Information Centre 2011
- National Regulations 2011
- Dangerous Product Model Policy

Reviewed: December 2011
Next review due: May 2013

SAFETY AND HYGIENE CHECKS (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Educators and coordination unit staff have a duty care to provide and facilitate safe environments that protect children from harm.

GUIDELINES

All premises in which Family Day Care takes place will be subject to an annual Safety and Hygiene Check and must comply with the Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Policies and Procedures and the National Quality Framework of Australia.

- A Family Day Care coordination unit staff member, (or where possible two (2) coordination unit staff) will conduct an unannounced annual safety check on each educators home using a Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Annual Safety & Hygiene checklist. (Appendix 18.1)
- Items identified on the Safety and Hygiene check will be posted to the educator and an appointment is made to re-check the premises within two weeks of the initial safety check.
- Serious hazards will be required to be removed immediately or care may be suspended until the hazard is removed.
- On visits coordination unit staff will check the safety of areas of the home and document their findings on the home visit form. (Appendix 9.1)
- Depending on the hazard and the potential risk to the child, the educator or the service the educator may be issued with a warning or be instantly.
- Educators will ensure that the equipment and material that children use are safe and appropriate for the developmental level and ability of those children and used in accordance with the manufacturers guidelines and FDC policies.
- Educators will maintain the premises, ground, equipment and furnishings in a safe, clean condition and in good repair at all times. Educators will complete a daily hygiene and safety checklist (Appendix 18.2) and a smoke alarm check at the end of Day Light Saving (Appendix 18.3) (See OH&S/Hygiene/Infection Control policies).
- Educators will conduct risk assessments prior to excursions and outings to ensure they meet the safety requirements. (See Excursions policy)
- Educators and coordination unit staff will ensure that no one in contact with the children is under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs. (See Drugs, Alcohol & Illegal Substances policy)
- Educators will provide a smoke free environment for the children while they are in care. (See Smoke Free Environment policy).
- Educators will ensure that pets and other animals on the premises are in good health and are kept in areas not accessible to children. (See Animals/Family Pets policy)

- Educators will ensure that all vehicles used to transport children in care are safe and clean condition and use safety restraints required by law. (See Car Safety policy).
- Educators will ensure they follow recommended hygiene practices when caring for children. (See Nutrition & Food Safety and Oral Health policy, Nappy Change policy, Toilet Training/Toileting policy, Hygiene/Infection Control policy and Bathing Policy).

Policies relating to this policy;

- Deregistration of an Educator
- Safety
- Home visits
- Hygiene/infection control
- Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Excursions
- Drugs Alcohol and Illegal substances
- Smoke Free environment
- Animals and Family Pets
- Car Safety
- Bathing
- Toilet Training/Toileting
- Nutrition and Food Safety
- Equipment and Resources

Sources and Reference tools

- Vic Roads – 2011
- Australian Safety Standards 2011
- SIDS Foundation 2011
- National Quality Framework 2011

Reviewed: December 2011
Next review due: May 2013

SERVICE CLOSURES (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Council is committed to maintaining the high quality of services with appropriately trained educators.

GUIDELINES

1. If the On Call Coordinator is not able to replace a staff member and Greater Shepparton City Council Youth & Children's Services management is unable to redeploy an educator, a program may be closed for a day. This decision will be made only after all possible avenues of staffing have been exhausted. In this instance every effort will be made to notify all affected families as soon as possible. Families are asked to supply a mobile phone number to be used for this notification by text message if possible.
2. If a service/program is closed, remaining educators will be redeployed at the discretion of council.
3. Compensatory sessions will not be provided, nor will fees be refunded.
4. Fees for the first closure of each term will not be refunded.
5. If a second closure day affects the same children in the same school term (term 1, 2 & 3) a credit for that day's kindergarten fee will be given against each child's kindergarten fees for the following terms fees (terms 2,3 & 4) of one days fees. The credit will be calculated under the following formula:

$\$ \text{ term fee} \div \text{ hours per term} \times \text{ closed session hours} = \text{ credit.}$

If 2 or more closure days, affecting the same children, families will be refunded by kindergarten or Greater Shepparton City Council cheque.

Related Policies

- Fees
- Emergency Situations

Sources and Reference Tools

- Management – Youth and Children's Services, Greater Shepparton City Council

SIBLINGS (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council will ensure all parents/guardians/carers entering the children's services with children who are not booked into attend the service understand their responsibility regarding supervision.

GUIDELINES

Any child present in the service that is not booked into attend the service that day (e.g. siblings, toddler, visitors) is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian/carer who has brought them into the service.

Educators are not responsible for the care and/or supervision of visiting children.

Related Policies

- Supervision

Sources and Reference Tools

- Children's Services Regulations 2009 and Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended)
- Management – Aged and Children's Services, Greater Shepparton City Council

Reviewed October 2010
Review by April 2013

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton Council Early Childhood Services will operate in a smoke free environment.

GUIDELINES

1. All persons involved in Greater Shepparton Children's Services will refrain from smoking on service premises. This will include staff, parents and other family members, contractors and visitors.
2. The Greater Shepparton Children's Services buildings, grounds and controlled worksites will be a smoke free environment.
3. All business activities and functions undertaken during Greater Shepparton Children's Service hours of operation will be in smoke free environments.
4. All vehicles used in transporting Greater Shepparton Children's Service will be tobacco/smoke free.
5. Staff choosing to smoke may only do so in designated smoking areas and during designated break times.
6. Staff are required to wash hands after smoking.
7. All persons are required to properly dispose of cigarette butts and cigarette packets in an appropriate manner, ensuring that such disposal does not cause a risk of starting a fire or harm the environment.

Related Policies

- Occupational Health and Safety
- Asthma
- Hygiene

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Smoke-Free Workplace. Policy Number 16.POL1. Greater Shepparton City Council
- Smoking in the Workplace. CogSAFE procedure 46.PRO3.28. Greater Shepparton City Council.

Reviewed February 2012
Review by August 2013

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT (Family Day Care – Original)

Under review

Principle

“A growing body of scientific evidence has concluded that secondhand smoke can harm the health of non-smokers...children are especially vulnerable to secondhand smoke.”¹⁶

Greater Shepparton Family Day Care educators and coordination unit will maintain a smoke free environment.

Guidelines

1. The educator’s premises will be a smoke free environment during Family Day Care hours of operation.
2. The Family Day Care coordination unit office will be a smoke free environment.
3. Educators family members, visitors, contractors or any other person will not smoke whilst education and care is occurring at the Family Day Care residence.
4. All business activities and functions undertaken during Family Day Care hours of operation will be in smoke free environments.
5. All vehicles used in transporting Family Day Care children will be tobacco/smoke free.
6. If smoking occurs at a Family Day Care educators residence outside of Family Day Care hours of operation the educator will ensure prior to recommencing care the home is ventilated and there is no reminisce of cigarettes.
7. When considering excursions educators will first determine if the venue is a smoke free environment.
8. Ashtrays and ignition devices will be stored out of reach of children.
9. Ashtrays and cigarettes will be stored out of view of parents/guardians.

Policies relating to this policy;

- Safety
- Safe Sleeping
- Safety and Hygiene Check

Sources and Reference Tools

- Children’s Services Regulations 2009
- Quit Victoria 2011

Reviewed: July 2011
Next review due: July 2013

¹⁶ Quit Victoria www.quit.org.au/resource Accessed 24/6/2011 last updated 2011

STAFFING AND RATIOS (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton Council Early Childhood Services will be staffed according to the requirements of the Educational and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Occasional Care Services **only** will be staffed according to the requirements of the Children's Services Regulations 2009 (as amended) and Children's Services Act 1996,

GUIDELINES

1. All early childhood educators will have approved/appropriate qualifications as relevant to their position.
2. All educators will have a current Police Check, Level 2 First Aid certificate and Working with Children Check, Anaphylaxis Management Training and a minimum Certificate III Children's Services.
3. Records of staff within each early childhood service are to be kept in accordance with the Regulations 145 -152 of the Education and Care National Regulations 2011.
4. All Kindergarten, Fun Group and, Long Day Care Services will comply with required child/educator ratios as below as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (see below for other occasional care services):

Current requirements:

Children under the age of 3:

- 1 educator for every 4 children (or fraction of that number)
- 1 qualified educator for every 12 children (or fraction of that number)

Children over the age of 3:

- 1 educator for every 15 children (or fraction of that number)
- 1 qualified educator for every 30 children (or fraction of that number)

1 qualified educator will be required if there is 12 children or less (regardless of the mix of ages).

New requirements from the 1 January 2016

Children under the age of 3:

- 1 educator for every 4 children (or fraction of that number)
- 1 qualified educator for every 12 children (or fraction of that number)

Children over the age of 3:

- 1 educator for every 11 children (or fraction of that number)
- 1 qualified educator for every 33 children (or fraction of that number)

5. Children of, or directly related to staff, may be placed at the same service where a staff member works, but cannot be in direct care of the related staff member on a regular and ongoing basis. This relates staffs:
 - Children
 - Grandchildren
 - Stepchildren
 - Guardians

Refer 'Relief Early Childhood Educators' policy regarding relief educator's children attending at the same service.

6. Relief educators will only be used if they are registered with the Greater Shepparton City Council and have:

- A current Police Check
- Current Level 2 First Aid qualifications
- A Working with Children check
- Anaphylaxis Management Training
- Minimum Certificate III Children's Services
- Undergone an induction process at one of Council's early childhood services

Refer Relief Early Childhood Educators policy.

Early Years Rural Occasional Care, Colliver Road and Gowrie Park Occasional Care services.

The above services operate under the Children's Services Regulations 2009 and require the following educator: child ratios:

Children under the age of 3:

- 1 educator for every 5 children (or fraction of that number)
- 1 qualified educator for every 15 children (or fraction of that number)

Children over the age of 3:

- 1 educator for every 15 children (or fraction of that number)
- 1 qualified educator for every 30 children (or fraction of that number)

1 qualified educator will be required if there is 15 children or less (regardless of the mix of ages).

Additional Assistants Employed by Council

Such educators will be required to meet the same criteria as other educators i.e. qualifications. First Aid/Anaphylaxis training, Criminal History and Working with Children Checks etc.

While these educators are employed to provide additional support to the program to assist meeting the needs of children with additional needs they may be counted in the staff: child ratio at times.

Records of these staff are to be kept in accordance with the Education and Care National Regulations 2011 (Reg. 147 - Other Staff Members)

Additional Assistants Employed by external agencies

While such educators will be required to meet the requirements of the employing agency e.g. Scope, under Regulation 147 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 the service is required to keep the following staff records of assistants from other agencies:

- Full name, address and date of birth
- Evidence of any qualifications held by the assistant or, if applicable, that the staff member is actively working towards that qualification
- Evidence of any approved training (including first aid training) completed

- Working with Children Check (number and expiry date)

Additional aides employed from other agencies cannot be counted in the service's staff: child ratio.

Related Policies

- Relief Early Childhood Educators
- Criminal History Checks
- Working with Children Checks
- Recruitment, Selection and Orientation of Staff
- Staff from Other Agencies

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Transitional Arrangements: Children's Services Regulations 2009. DEECD Factsheet October 2009.
- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care: Staffing Requirements. Council of Australian Governments
- Children in the Workplace. Policy number 46:610:0001:3.01 Greater Shepparton City Council
- Victoria Police
- Department of Justice

Reviewed April 2012
Review by October 2013

STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

PRINCIPLE

The Greater Shepparton City Council Early Childhood Services will ensure a safe work place for all persons engaged in work experience, student placements, voluntary programs, visitors or guests to their children's services.

“Relationship building is fundamental to cultural competence and is based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and subsequently building on the strength of each other's knowledge, using a wide range of community members and resources to build on their understandings.¹”

Students, volunteers, visitors, guests and community members are encouraged, as they bring the community into the children's services and educator's homes to share their experiences, expertise and talents.

The following principles of the Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics will be followed by all educators during times of student placements.

“In relation to students I will”

- Afford professional opportunities and resources for students to demonstrate their competencies
- Acknowledge and support the personal strengths, professional knowledge, diversity and experience which students bring to the learning environment
- Model high-quality professional practices
- Know the requirements of the student's individual institutions and communicate openly with the representatives of the institution
- Provide ongoing constructive feedback and assessment that is fair and equitable
- Implement strategies that will empower students to make positive contributions to the workplace
- Maintain confidentiality in relation to students².

DEFINITIONS

Student – is a person who is enrolled in a school/college or an educational institute.

Volunteer – a person who participates in an early childhood service without being paid.

Visitor – a person other than an educator or staff member who attends the service

(FDC only) – a person aged 17 years or over who does not reside in the Family Day Care residence and visits for any purpose while the educator is working.

Guest (FDC only) – a person aged 17 years or over who stays overnight at the educators home, while the educator is working.

¹ Educators Guide to the EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK FOR AUSTRALIA, DEEWR

² Early Childhood – Code of Ethic 2010 www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca/

GUIDELINES

The Greater Shepparton City Council will provide public liability and personal accident insurance under the following conditions:

1. Acceptance of student/volunteer placements will be at the discretion of the Service Leader.
2. Students do not require a Working with Children Check as they are to be under the immediate supervision at all times of an educator, but it is recommended they obtain a voluntary Working with Children Check.
3. Students/volunteers/ visitors and guests are not to be included into the staff/ child ratios at any time and at no time is a student/volunteer, visitor or guest permitted to be left alone/or in charge of children at any time. In regards to excursions, student/volunteers and visitors are above regulation ratio requirement to provide additional support to reduce risk and are to be in sight at all times of paid staff whilst with the children.
4. Children and Youth Services Management and People Performance at Council are to be notified of any student/volunteer placements before the commencement of the placement.
5. Service Leaders will ensure the correct procedure for student/volunteer placements as outlined in the Student/volunteer Flow Chart (Appendix 20.1) is followed:
 - Student/volunteer to arrange a meeting with Service Leader to discuss placement. The Service Leader will decide if student is accepted for placement.
 - Student/Volunteer placement form is completed (Appendix 20.2.)
 - Greater Shepparton Children and Youth Services Induction checklist is completed (Appendix 16.1)
 - Students/volunteers will receive the Service Expectations of Students/Volunteers (Appendix 20.3).
 - Student Attendance Record is completed (Appendix 20.4).
 - Where payment is required for work experience the student/volunteer is to complete a Supplier Registration Form (Appendix 20.5) and submit with the Attendance Record at the end of the placement (Appendix 20.4).
 - Once the placement is completed all forms will be returned to Children and Youth Services management for processing with Payroll and filing with People Performance.
6. All students/volunteers/visitors/guests will be advised of issues such as safe work practices and confidentiality by the Service Leader.
7. It is important that all students/volunteers/visitors and guests are aware of the importance of acknowledgment and respect of the rights of parents/guardians and children using the early childhood service.
8. All such participants will work under the immediate supervision of an educator and must comply with all Greater Shepparton City Council's OHS Policy and Procedures.
9. In the event of a fire or emergency, all such participants shall follow directions of service staff and educators.
10. Students/volunteers/visitors and guests will be informed of any child suffering from Anaphylaxis and other medical conditions and the importance of confidentiality will be stressed.
11. The Team Leader – Children's Services must be informed of any early termination or concerns/issues with students/volunteers/visitors and guests.

12. A visitor log book must be kept by each service and at all Family Day Care homes to record all visitors to the early childhood service. All students/volunteers, visitors and guests to services and Family Day Care homes must sign in and out of log books. (Education and Care Services National Regulation 165)
13. Service Leaders will review and monitor the visitor's log, and the Family Day Care Coordination Unit will review and monitor the visitors log on each home visit.
14. Parents/guardians have been notified and have given written consent to having student/volunteers participating in the program.

Family Day Care

In relation to Educators:

To ensure that children remain the priority of the educator, are actively supervised, engaged and that the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 are adhered to the following guidelines apply to students/volunteers/visitors and guests:

1. Educators must notify the Service Leader of any guests staying with the educator.
2. Acceptance of student/volunteer placements will be decided in consultation between the educator and Service Leader.
3. Students and volunteers must respect the privacy of the educator and their family regarding matters that are not Family Day Care related
4. Educators will sign a declaration at the commencement of each visitor log book stating, that to the best of the educator's knowledge the visitors and guests entering the home are of good moral character and do not have a conviction against children.
5. International guests residing with a Family Day Care educator will need to provide the Service Leader with copies of their visa on commencement of their stay at the educator's home.
6. The number of guests staying and the size of the education and care space should be considered, to decide if Family Day Care should operate during the guests stay.
7. Guests residing with the educator for a period longer than two weeks will require a Working with Children Check (over 18) and a Criminal Records Check.
8. A Family Day Care educator must not leave a child with a visitor to the Family Day Care residence or venue.(Education and Care Services National Regulation 166)

Related policies:

- Staffing and ratios
- Work Requirement
- Recruitment, selection, orientation of staff
- Supervision
- Child Protection
- Occupational Health and Safety and wellbeing
- Medical Conditions
- Nutrition, Food Safety and Oral Health

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – Regulations 149, 165,166168

Sources and Reference Tools

- Children and Youth Services Management – Greater Shepparton City Council
- Greater Shepparton City Council – People Performance
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Reviewed April 2015
Review by October 2016

SUNSMART

RATIONALE

A healthy balance between too much and too little ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun is important for good health.

Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before they reach the age of 70. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to vitamin D deficiency. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and teeth.

To ensure that a healthy balance between too much and too little UV is maintained, sun protection will be used whenever the UV level reaches 3 or above. Particular care should be taken between September and April when UV levels reach extreme.

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council's Early Childhood Sun Smart policy has been developed to ensure that all children are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful UV rays of the sun. Educators will endeavor to protect children and themselves from excessive exposure to the sun whenever levels reach three or more.

GUIDELINES

1. The service will require children and educators to wear a broad brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat (bucket hats must have a deep crown and minimum 5cm brim for children under 5 years and 6cms for older children and adults) whenever the UV level reaches 3 or above. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative. Exposure to direct sun will be limited for babies under the age of 12 months whenever the UV level is 3 or above.
2. Sun protection measures will not be used when the UV index levels are below 3.
3. When outside children are to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Tops with elbow length sleeves, if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress they will need to cover up with a t-shirt before going outdoors. Children will be encouraged to make use of shaded areas.
4. If a child refuses to wear a hat/suitable clothing, or no hat/suitable clothing is available, educators will organize play equipment to be placed in/under a fixed shade structure and children will be required to play in these areas.
5. After discussion with parents/guardians and with parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin will not be required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

6. The availability of shade will be considered when planning excursions and outdoor activities. Particular care will be given when UV levels are at extreme times to ensure outdoor activities and excursions are not planned during these times.
7. Educators and parents will act as role models by:
 - Wearing appropriate hats and clothing outdoors
 - Applying a broad spectrum SPF 30+, water resistant sunscreen for skin protection
 - Seeking shade whenever possible.
8. Learning about sun protection and vitamin D are incorporated in to the learning and development program.
9. The Sun Smart policy will be reinforced in a positive way through parent newsletters, notice boards and meetings.
10. Educators and parents will be provided with educational material on sun protection.
11. Where practical, children are encouraged to wear close fitting, wraparound sunglasses that meet Australia Standard 1067 (sunglasses category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye areas as possible.
12. Services will access the Sun Smart UV Alert at sunsmart.com.au, the free sun smart app, or look in the local paper to find out daily local sun protection times and display these times for families accessing their services.
13. Children will be encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of educators.

When enrolling their child, parents will be:

- Informed of the service's Sun Smart policy.
- If the service doesn't provide hats, parents are required to provide a suitable hat for their child's use.
- Asked to provide 30+ or higher sunscreen in Family Day Care in some cases.
- Encouraged to provide their children with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible i.e. (that covers the shoulders and chest, upper arms and legs).
- Required to give authority and directive for educators to administer sunscreen.
- Encouraged to practice and role model Sun Smart behaviors.

Long Day Care

Kindergarten

Occasional Care

1. SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen will be provided for educators and children's use as necessary. With parents' permission, educators will apply sunscreen, or encourage children to apply it themselves at least 20 minutes before outdoor play whenever

the UV level reaches 3 or above. Sunscreen will be reapplied according to the sunscreen manufacturer's recommendation.

2. Council will ensure there are a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the service grounds. Outdoor play will be scheduled to avoid the hottest part of the day 10.00am and 2.00pm (11.00am – 3.00pm daylight saving time) and activities will be provided in shaded areas of the playground when the UV is at 3 or above.

Family Day Care

1. SPF 30+ (or higher) broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen will be provided either by the educators or the families for use as necessary. With parents' permission, educators will apply sunscreen, or encourage children to apply it themselves at least 20 minutes before outdoor play whenever the UV level reaches 3 or above. Sunscreen will be reapplied according to the sunscreen manufacturer's recommendation.
2. Annual safety and hygiene checks on the educator's homes will observe if there is adequate shade. If not, the coordination unit will ask for shade provision by a set date.

Educators will be sent a text message with sun smart times when the UV level reaches 3 or above. If educators are working on weekends or public holidays, they will need to source the UV level themselves.

Related Policies

- Children's learning and programming
- Excursions
- OHS & Wellbeing
- Active play

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD AREA: 1, 2, 3, 6

Sources and Reference Tools

- Sun Smart – Anti Cancer Council: Victoria
- www.sunsmart.com.au Viewed 19/03/2014
- Sample SunSmart policy for Early Childhood Services. Cancer Council Victoria, Vic Health 2012
- Sun Safety in Childcare. Factsheet for Families. Putting Children First. NCAC March 2011.
- Keeping Sun Safe in Childcare. Putting Children First. NCAC March 2011
- Healthy Together Victoria – Achievement Program – Sun protection benchmarks

Reviewed: February 2014

Next Review by: February 2016

SUPERVISION

PRINCIPLE

The service is committed to complying with Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011, the Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended) and the Children's Services Regulations 2009, to ensure that all children are supervised at all times throughout the day.

"Adequate supervision means that an educator can respond immediately Effective supervision also requires educators to be actively involved with children" (Guide to the National Law & Regulations page 62)

GUIDELINES

1. Supervision shall be:

Active and constant with the educator aware of the number of children in their care, location of all children, experiences being undertaken and correct positioning of self and other educators.

For example:

- Staying at the children's level
- Preparing in advance so you do not need to remove yourself from the activity
- Partaking in activities alongside the children
- Children are to be within sight/hearing of educators at all times.
- When child/children are being transported to and from home, school, long day care or kindergarten
- Potentially hazardous activities should be carefully planned and should take into account that they are undertaken in a manner to reduce and prevent injury or incident to children and adults.
- Undertaken in a manner that promotes, supports, builds on and challenges children's learning and development.

2. Educators shall be aware of and maintain correct educator/child ratios at all times.

3. Educators shall plan for supervision of the environment, both inside and outside, document blind spots, high risk areas and potential positioning locations of educators to ensure adequate and safe supervision. New educators, relief educators, students and volunteers shall be made aware of the environments supervision plans and their responsibilities in those areas. The supervision plan shall be reviewed as part of the program or on a needs basis e.g. change of room/yard configuration. Supervision plans are to be available within the rooms and yards of the service in an easily visible location to all educators.

All activities should be carefully planned and should take into account:

- ages and developmental levels of children in care
- experience/activity type
- environment
- service policy
- time of day and location of children e.g. sleeping babies
- task undertaken e.g. handling dangerous products, administering medication
- positioning of the educator in relation to all the children
- flexibility to maintain routines such as nappy changing, safe sleep times, toileting and hand washing
- knowledge of the children ie: temperament and abilities of children

- any identified high risks
4. Educators shall regularly scan their eyes across the children in their care whilst continuing to participate in activities with the children e.g. within room, outside yard, while children are sleeping.
 5. Educators shall listen for and be aware of signs inside and outside indicating the need for more immediate and closer supervision e.g. splashing water, raised/aggressive voices, aggressive body language, quietness, opening/closing doors, movement of furniture, choking/gasping, crying, new adult voices etc.
 6. Supervision shall be increased appropriately for high risk activities inside and outside e.g. water play, using scissors, climbing, swings, new experiences, excursions, transitions, visiting animals, etc.
 7. Educators shall ensure that there is ongoing communication and exchange of information between themselves throughout the day e.g. passing messages/routine information, shift handover, going for/returning from breaks, children coming together etc.
 8. Educators shall monitor and advise students, volunteers, and relief educators on correct positioning to allow best supervision.
 9. Educators shall be familiar with and take into account children's ages and development, number of children in room and/or yard, play behaviours and additional needs when planning, setting up, implementing and supervising experiences and routines.
 10. Experiences are to be well planned, materials prepared and equipment close at hand before implementing to ensure that educators are free to adequately participate and supervise throughout.
 11. The service shall consider supervision needs when planning educator rosters and staff accordingly e.g. more experienced educator at beginning/end of day; extra educators/volunteers for excursions; staffing needs for busy periods, additional needs children, different age groups, group combinations and dynamics.
 12. The service shall implement risk management strategies where appropriate to ensure supervision is safe and appropriate e.g. children's arrival/departure times, transporting children, handling dangerous products, administering medication, in response to possible/actual incident etc. These shall be implemented and reviewed on an ongoing and as needs basis.
 13. The service shall inform families of their role in contributing to safe and appropriate supervision of all of the children in the service e.g. not letting other children out of service; who is responsible for the supervision of children at the beginning and end of the day; reporting of illnesses or injuries etc.
 14. The service shall offer educators access to a range of information and support in becoming aware of and understanding appropriate and safe supervision practices e.g. Supervision Policy, information, updated/changed practices, adequate orientation, staff meeting discussion, training.
 15. Management shall use appropriate recruitment strategies when employing educators to facilitate supervision e.g. selection criteria, position description, interview questions, Working with Children Check, Criminal History Check, referee checks.
 16. Educators will familiarize themselves with the Interactions, Communications with Children and Behaviour Management policy which outlines:
 - Importance of limits

- Communication
 - Behaviour guidance strategies
17. Educators will undertake daily safety checklist to ensure their environment is safe and the activities are ready to commence prior to the first family arriving into care for that day.
 18. Educators shall work with parents in identifying individual children's needs and exchange information with families on an ongoing basis to ensure two way communications and that all parties are up to date with the child's needs and happenings.

Family Day Care

1. In situations where the child cannot be seen by the educator e.g. toilet break or children asleep in bedrooms, the educator shall have an awareness of the child's whereabouts and ensure their safety at all times. This is to be achieved by adequately preplanning an activity, ensuring the area the children are in is free from hazards (refer to Safety policy) and regularly checking the absent child/ren.
2. At times when child/children are being transported to and from home, school or kindergarten it is clearly established between the parent/guardian and educator who is responsible for the supervision of the child/children.
3. Educators are responsible for the children in their care at play session and therefore are responsible for their supervision, unless previously discussed and approved by the Family Day Care Coordination Unit staff and parent permission obtained where relevant.
4. Coordination unit staff will support educators in their ongoing continuous improvement and provide strategies and information regarding supervision by;
 - Discussing and reviewing in depth the policies on and relating to supervision at the initial orientation
 - Ongoing strategies and supports at home visits and play sessions
 - Providing professional development opportunities through training and publications.
5. Coordination unit staff shall supervise educators well being and safety through regular home visits, professional development, meetings and implementation of the services OH&S policies.

Relevant Policies

- Work Requirements
- Family Law
- Delivery/collection of Children
- Emergency Situations
- Medical Conditions
- Child Protection
- Excursions
- Sleep, Rest and Safe Sleeping
- Dangerous Goods and Storage
- Car and Pedestrian Safety
- Unaccompanied Travel
- Water Activities
- Hygiene and Infection Control
- Animals

- Staffing and Ratios

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD AREA: 1, 2, 3, 4

Sources and Reference Tools

- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Supervision: Practice Notes 12 May 2010. DEECD:
www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood Viewed 14/10/2013.
- Effective Supervision: What to Remember at the End of the Day. Fact Sheet
www.pscsa.org.au/eylf/NCAC%effective supervision Viewed 14/10/13.
- Children's Services Adviser, DEECD, Shepparton.
- Quality Practice Guide: Quality Improvement and Accreditation System – NCAC
- www.ncac.gov.au Viewed 14/10/2013
- Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011

Reviewed: February 2014

Next review due: February 2016

TELEPHONE (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Educators are to ensure that they have access to a working telephone to ensure that they are contactable and able to make contact at all times in the case of emergencies, by parents/guardians, Coordination Unit staff and Children and Youth Services Management queries. (Reg 98)

GUIDELINES

1. Educators must have a message bank service available that allows for a voice spoken message to be recorded.
2. Where practicable educators will return messages within 24 hours.
3. Educators must carry a mobile phone on all outings for use in emergency situations.
4. Educators should contact the Children's Services Team Leader on 58329783 or the Family Day Care Coordination Unit on 58221373 to advise of telephone outages or disconnections as soon as possible.
5. If in the event of a permanent disconnection to the educator's only telephone source e.g. mobile phone;
 - Care will be suspended until a working telephone is available (Family Day Care only)
 - An alternate telephone source should be sourced immediately
 - All parents/guardians of children in care will be given the alternate number as soon as practicable.
6. Where the only phone available is a mobile phone the educator must ensure that the mobile phone;
 - Is in good working order
 - Is fully charged
 - Has the credit maintained
 - Be in hearing distance
 - Operates in all areas the educator may attend while children are being educated and cared for.

Sources and Reference Tools

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Reviewed: January 2013
Next review due: July 2014

TELEVISION AND ELECTRONIC ACCESS (LDC/K/OC – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Educators will ensure the use of television viewing and/or electronic access is properly planned and implemented ensuring the use in children's services leads to positive outcomes for children. Screen time will be monitored to ensure appropriate access and use.

GUIDELINES

1. Television and other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) will be limited within the program as per the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years below:

Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years:

- For healthy development in infants (birth to 1 year) physical activity – particularly floor based play in safe environment – should be encouraged from birth.
- Toddlers (1-3 years) and preschoolers (3-5 years) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day.
- For children aged 2-5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day.
- Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games).
- Infants, toddlers and preschoolers should not be sedentary, restrained or kept inactive for more than one hour at a time – with the exception of sleeping.

Educators are to work within these guidelines and should not be allowing children more than 30 minutes of screen time per day. Screen time is not recommended for children under two.

2. Viewing of programs are restricted to special events that are programmed for and show a clear benefit to the child's development and go for no more than 30 minutes in duration.
3. Children in care may only watch TV programs and/or videos/DVD's approved for children's viewing under the Australian Children's Television Foundation guidelines. It is recommended that educators share the viewing of these programs and be available to discuss the contents of the program/video/DVD with the children.
4. It is recommended that educators read reviews of the programs that they are planning to screen for children, and to access any supporting literature or teaching notes that are available for the program.
5. Educators will talk with new families about the service's TV and electronic policy and procedures, and seek their input about how they feel about their child watching TV or accessing electronic media in the service.
6. Other electronic interaction e.g. computer games/internet access will be discussed with parents before use commences. Computer games and internet access are to be monitored educators to ensure suitability for children and time will be limited within the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years.

Related Policies

- Active Play
- Program

Sources and Reference Tools

- Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years: Get Up and Grow series. www.health.gov.au Viewed 2/09/11
- Using television in Childcare. Putting Children First Issue 30 June 2009
- Creina Porte – Early Childhood State Coordinator, Kids Go For Your Life
- www.raisingchildren.net.au Viewed 2/09/11
- www.abc.net.au/parenting Viewed 2/09/11

Reviewed September 2011
Review by March 2013

TELEVISION/SCREEN TIME (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

“Children who spend long periods of time inactive are more likely to have poorer physical, social and intellectual development”ⁱ

Greater Shepparton Family Day Care does not promote the use of screen time as an integral part of the educational program. We do acknowledge that some screen time may need to be accommodated for; school age children needing some down time, transitioning routines (playschool on arrival children’s awareness shows such as BTN to highlight prominent issues contributing to their world and children using periods of twenty four hour or overnight care to connect with their own home environment.

Screen time includes videos, DVDs, television, computers and electronic games.

GUIDELINES

1. Children in care may only watch programs and/or videos/DVD’s approved for children’s viewing under the Australian Children’s Television Foundation guidelines (G rated only PG with written permission). It is recommended that educators share the viewing of these programs and be available to discuss the contents of the program/video/DVD with the children.
2. The educator will monitor/restrict screen time during care to no more than two hours per day for a full day of care for children between five years and 12 years as per National Physical guidelines (listed below).
3. The educator will monitor/restrict screen time to less than 1 hour per day for children between 2 years and 5 years as per National Physical guidelines (listed below).
4. Screen time is not recommended for children under two
5. Screen Time e.g. television, computer games/internet access will be discussed with parents before care commences. Computer games and internet access are to be monitored by the educator to ensure suitability for children and should contain an educational component.

Sources and Reference Tools

- Get up and Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood 2009
- Kids Go For Your Life 2011

Reviewed April 2011

Next review: October 2012

The National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0 to 5 years for Screen Time:

For children two to five years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day.

Children younger than two years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games).

Taken from Get Up and Grow - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood. Commonwealth of Australia 2009

Get up and Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing 2009

TIMESHEET PROCESSING (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton Family Day Care coordinate's the operations of the scheme in accordance with the rules governing the Child Care Benefit (CCB) scheme, as monitored by the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

GUIDELINES

Parent, Guardian or Authorized Adult Responsibilities

1. Ensure they enter their child's actual entry and exit times on the attendance record and signature them.
2. Ensure they write their name clearly, identifying their signature.
3. Pre sign timesheets for holding fees only in the case of holidays or known absences, in which case the timesheet should be fully completed including, charged hours prior to signing.
4. If more than one children's service is being utilized and the family exceeds their eligible hours the full out of pocket cost of the excess hours will be the responsibility of the paying party.
5. Identify on the timesheet if children are in care at another service. If this has not been done, the coordination unit will not revise the timesheet.

Note: Failure to adhere to these practices will result in the scheme not processing a CCB claim. This will adversely affect the fee reductions via CCB that can be received. The responsible payee will have to pay full fees until the scheme can process the CCB claim.

Educator Responsibilities

1. To ensure timesheets are at the office no later than 9.00am on the morning of the processing week. If late timesheets exceed two weeks DEEWR may refuse to process them or a fee may be occurred.
2. To ensure timesheets are checked prior to coming to the office and are signed by the parent/authorized adult and the educator.
3. Ensure booked hours forms have been lodged at the office for each child to confirm charged hours.

The Coordination Unit will

In recognition that illness, personal issues and workloads can contribute to mistakes and oversights the co ordination unit will,

1. Notify educators of a timesheets that have not been completed accurately and if possible allow educators an opportunity to contact the parent/authorized adult to come to the office to sign the timesheet if time allows.
2. Verify attendance records by the authorized adult on the phone, via fax or email if allocated signatures exist.

3. If booked hours are not completed on the timesheet coordination unit staff can use a signed booked hours form for confirmation, by copying and attaching it to the timesheet.
4. Ensure all processes within the Child Care Services Handbook/CCMS Child Care Services handbook are followed.
5. Inform families during the initial interview of their responsibilities in relation to timesheet processing and provide them a copy of the timesheet policy.
6. Provide statements to families every 12 weeks relating to their attendance.
7. Notify families that revising timesheets between financial years may result in a debt to the service, therefore reconciliation is to occur via Centrelink.

Adherence to this policy will ensure that parents/guardians CCB fee reduction is passed on to you in a timely manner.

Sources and Reference Tools

- DEEWR 2011
- Child Care Services Handbook 2011-2012

Reviewed: January 2012
Next review due: June 2013

TOBACCO, DRUGS, ALCOHOL and OTHER SUBSTANCES (LDC/K/OC – Original) under review

PRINCIPLE

All staff members and/or adults in the service must be free from the influence of drugs, alcohol and other substances that may impair their capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children being educated and cared for by the service (Reg. 83).

GUIDELINES

1. The consumption or use of alcohol, drugs or any other substances that affects a person's capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children being educated and cared for by the service and work safely or efficiently is not permitted in an early childhood service.
2. Any alcohol, drugs or other substances must be out of reach of children (1.5 metres).
3. Personally prescribed drugs must only be taken in accordance with doctor's instructions, stored safely and not taken into the children's rooms. Staff taking prescription or other legal medications that may impair performance are to advise Aged and Children's Services management. Such advice will be used without prejudice and dealt with confidentially (refer Council's Drugs and Alcohol Management policy). In specific cases medical advice or advice from a pharmacist or other relevant experts may be sought.
4. Long term medication, which may affect the quality of care provided by a staff member, must be discussed with Aged and Children's Services management and relevant action will be on a case-by-case basis (refer Council's Drugs and Alcohol Management policy).
5. No person adversely affected by drugs, alcohol or other substances shall supervise or provide education and care to children in the service (Reg. 83).
6. Staff must not drive or operate a Greater Shepparton City Council vehicle or equipment unless they are below the relevant blood alcohol content limit or whilst under the influence or effect of alcohol, illegal or legal drugs to the extent that their ability to competently and safely drive a vehicle or operate equipment, may be impaired (refer Council's Drugs and Alcohol Management policy).
7. Where an educator believes that an authorised person collecting a child is under the influence of drugs, alcohol and other substances the educator will:
 - Suggest an alternative person be contacted to collect the child
 - Release the child if the authorised person insists on taking the child
 - Contact police on 000 if they believe the child's safety may be at risk
 - Document the incident
8. In the event of such an occurrence immediate contact must be made with Aged and Children's Services management at Council on 5832 9783.
9. In the event of such an occurrence **out of hours** staff are to contact:
 - Early Years Services Provisions Coordinator on 0489 990 303, or
 - Team Leader, Children's Services on 0418 148 166
 - Manager, Aged and Children's Services on 0419 597 322

Related Policies

- Disposal of Needles, Syringes and Condoms

- Child Protection
- Dangerous Products: Use and Storage

Sources and Reference Tools

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Drug and Alcohol Management. Greater Shepparton City Council policy no. 46.PRO3.25 CoGSAFE
- Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Younger People. Protocol of DHS Child Protection, DEECD and Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools. May 2010
- Environmental Health – Greater Shepparton City Council

Reviewed April 2012
Review by October 2013

TRAMPOLINES (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Due to the serious injury potential and safety/supervision issues, trampolines without safety nets may not be used during Family Day Care hours of care. However, mini gymnasium, jogging trampolines and trampolines with a suitable safety net barrier are allowed.

GUIDELINES

1. Educators must ensure that trampolines that do not meet Family Day Care safety standards in their play area are inaccessible to children during care hours.
2. Educators must ensure that only one child at a time is allowed on approved trampolines.
3. Educators must ensure that trampolines safety net barriers are properly zipped/closed in line with their operating instructions when in use.

Policies relating to this policy are;

- Safety and Hygiene Checks

Sources and Reference Tools

- 2011 National Regulations

Reviewed: December 2011

Next Review: May 2013

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council Aged and Children's Services actively encourages training opportunities and the professional development of all the Aged and Children's Services including Family Day Care coordination unit staff and educators.

GUIDELINES

Guidelines for Educators

All educators are required to participate in all training and development sessions that are required for the purposes of meeting the National Quality Standard, service policies and guidelines and the educators own professional development.

1. The intention of training and development sessions are:
 - For educators to have the skills and knowledge to provide high quality care to the children and a successful home based childcare business.
 - To involve educators in a program of professional development which is the result of consultation/requests, items addressed in performance reviews and perceived needs of the educator and service.
 - For educators to have appropriate training/information to implement changes.
 - For educators to be aware of the importance of training/updating information as an essential part in critical reflection.
2. The coordination unit should advertise/make educators aware of any training which may be offered in the area by outside agencies e.g. Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE, Lady Gowrie, Neighborhood Houses or other Family Day Care schemes.
3. The coordination unit will organise and/or inform educators of any training which is required to meet standards set out in the National Quality Framework.
4. Professional Development topics for each year will be drawn up in consultation with educators.
5. The coordination unit will respond with information or referral if a particular need has to be met within a short period of time.
6. The coordination unit will provide information relating to First Aid and trainers in the area. Educators are expected to organize their own training and provide a copy of their Certificate to the coordination unit.
7. Professional development in regard to Occupational Health and Safety, Child Protection, Car and Pedestrian Safety and Interactions with children will be offered to educators at least once every two (2) years.
8. If an educator does not attend compulsory training;
 - a) The coordination unit will ask the educator to source and attend that training within an appropriate timeline (dates to be nominated by the coordination unit).

- b) If the educator does not undertake such training before the nominated date, the De registration of an Educator policy will come into effect.
- c) First Aid, CPR, Emergency Asthma Management training and Anaphylaxis training must be completed by the expiry date or the educator will be suspended from providing care.

**Guidelines for Coordination Unit Staff
(See Greater Shepparton City Council Aged & Children's Services Staff Handbook)**

Information regarding in-service and training opportunities is placed in the training folder and provided to staff at regular meetings. Individuals are responsible to keep up to date with information provided. All staff are encouraged to attend three (3) suitable professional development sessions per year. Areas identified in staff performance reviews shall be of highest priority when selecting/taking up training opportunities. For further information refer to training policies in the Council Human Resources manual.

Payment for out of hours work/training:

Staff will be paid to attend staff meetings one (1) hour per month. Additional meetings e.g. National Quality Standard will not automatically be paid without prior approval from the Early Years Service Provision Coordinator or Aged and Children's Services Management. Compulsory meetings that staff are required to attend will be paid or time in lieu granted, whichever is applicable.

Where a staff member attends training during the day, they shall be paid for the hours ordinarily worked on that day. Where training is in 'out of hours' e.g. evening or it occurs on a day that is not usually rostered or worked, this will be attended in unpaid time.

All training identified in the individual's training plan will have registration paid for. Additional requests for training are in accordance with the training assistance policy and individual staff needs.

Note: there is a limited budget for professional development, hence training plans or additional training requests are subject to approval and not automatically granted.

It is expected that staff undertake professional development activities for both their own and the organisations benefit.

Policies this policy relates to;

- De registration of an Educator
- Asthma
- Anaphylaxis
- Child Protection
- Car Safety
- First Aid

Sources and Reference Tools

- National Quality Standard
- 2011 National Regulations
- Greater Shepparton City Council Human Resources manual

TRANSPORT and ROAD SAFETY

PRINCIPLE

Road trauma is one of the leading causes of death among young Australians¹⁸. Young children are at risk as passengers in motor vehicles, as pedestrians and as cyclists. They are particularly vulnerable because of their small size and the fact that their cognitive and perceptual skills are still developing.

Road safety education can help to reduce the risk of serious injury and death among young children by assisting them to develop skills, knowledge and behaviour about the safe use of roads. Working collaboratively with families to help children become safe and responsible road users aligns with the learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Greater Shepparton City Council Children's Services will ensure every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury whilst travelling as pedestrians, cyclists or passengers in vehicles. Children will be provided road safety education to help them to become safe and responsible road users.

GUIDELINES

Children's Services will:

1. Ensure all children travelling on an outing or excursion have the written authorisation of a parent/guardian. If the excursion is a regular outing, the authorisation is required to be obtained once every 12 months and kept with the child's enrolment record (refer to *Excursion Policy*).
2. Ensure that a written risk assessment is undertaken prior to conducting excursions and when transporting children by foot (walking bus), including details of the safest route for travel and safety aspects for the chosen mode of transport e.g. motor vehicle, bus, train and tram (refer to *Excursion Policy*).
3. Ensure all transport used is suitable and safe for all children including buses that are hired for use on excursions.
4. Arrange accessible transport for children with additional needs if required, to enable them to participate in an excursion or outing.
5. Ensure all children are adequately supervised and accounted for at all times whilst being transported by foot or vehicle. Regular monitoring where children's presence is checked against an accurate attendance record is required to ensure all children have been transported to the destination and have been returned to the service at the conclusion of the excursion.
6. Ensure educator to child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained at all times whilst children are being transported by foot or vehicle.

¹⁸ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2012) *A picture of Australia's children 2012* (Cat. No PHE167). Canberra, Australia: AIHW.

7. Ensure at no time will an individual restraint be used for more than one child and the number of children exceeds the number of legal restraints in the vehicle, whilst being transported.
8. Ensure no child will be left unattended in any vehicle or pram to avoid any risk of harm to the child and to prevent heat stress.
9. Ensure that road safety education based on the *National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education* (Appendix 21.1) is included in the curriculum for all children attending the service and offer opportunities for children to learn to take increasing responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing and that of others.
10. Provide educators with access to a broad range of resources to support road safety education.
11. Provide effective learning environments that include partnerships with families to support road safety education through program participation and the sharing of information in culturally sensitive and inclusive ways.
12. Ensure that educators and staff have access to regular professional development/training in road safety and are kept up to date with current legislation, regulations, rules, standards and best practice information.
13. Ensure that appropriate procedures are followed in the event of a vehicle crash or transport-related injury involving any children, staff or volunteers from the service (refer to *Emergency Situations Policy*).
14. Promote the use of bicycle helmets for children using bicycles or wheeled toys within the service.
15. Ensure that parents/guardians and visitors to the service are provided with location-specific road safety information (e.g. details about where to park safely when delivering and collecting children and local area speed limits etc.).
16. Ensure that parents/guardians are provided with general road safety information about transporting children to and from the service (which might include using the 'safety door' (the rear kerbside door), driveway safety, child restraint information and role modelling safe road use).
17. Provide resources to families relating to road safety, pedestrian safety and car restraints.

In relation to bus Travel:

A 'bus' is defined as a motor vehicle which seats more than 12 adults (including the driver). If the vehicle has 12 or fewer seats, including the driver, then any children under the age of 7 years must use an appropriate child restraint or booster seat. If the bus has more than 12 seating positions, including the driver, the children are not required to use child restraints or booster seats. Vic Roads recommends that child restraints and booster seats are used in buses where possible. As a minimum the children should use the seat belts provided.

Educators will:

1. Ensure the number of passengers must not exceed the number that the bus is licensed to carry.
2. Ensure if seat belts are provided they must be worn at all times.
3. Ensure, when the bus driver is picking up the children, the bus should be parked in a location, which does not require children to cross roads.
4. Wait with children until the bus has stopped and the door has opened before approaching the bus.
5. Ensure all children remain seated at all times whilst travelling on the bus.

When transporting children by foot (walking bus) educators will:

1. Ensure that the safest route is taken, choosing places where there are sidewalks or footpaths separate from traffic if possible.
2. Undertake extreme care crossing all roads and ensure children cross the road at the crossing or lights where available, and obey the road rules
3. Remain vigilant to ensure that no child runs ahead or is too far behind the group.
4. Have discussions with children about road safety so they can gain understanding about the broad range of factors involved.

When transporting children by prams:

1. Educators will use the equipment in accordance with the manufactures guidelines

Kindergarten

Kindergarten's who have children travelling on the school bus service please refer to the following website for updated information: <https://ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/school-buses/school-bus-program/>

All children travelling to Kindergarten on a school bus service must:

1. Have their parent/guardian accept the conditions of travel and the authority of the coordinating Principal of the school.
2. Have their parent/guardian provide a written undertaking to the coordinating Principal that other transport arrangements will be made if seating becomes insufficient due to an increase in the number of students with prior rights to travel or a smaller vehicle is engaged for the service.

3. Have their parent/guardian provide written confirmation to the coordinating Principal that the child is independently able to travel on the bus.

Children's Services will:

1. Ensure the Service Leader provides written confirmation to the coordinating Principal that the child is independently able to travel on a bus and that an adult arranged by the Service Leader will escort the child between the bus stop and the kindergarten in the morning as bus drivers are not permitted to escort children from the bus to the kindergarten.
2. Ensure a risk assessment is completed for this regular outing and Parent/guardian authorisation requirements as set out in the (*Education and Care Services National Regulations 100 to 102*) are provided.
3. Ensure the educator who has been arranged to escort the children from the school bus to the kindergarten sign all children into the service on arrival.
4. Ensure educators notify the parent/guardian if the child does not arrive on the school bus as expected.

Families will:

1. Notify the Kindergarten before expected arrival if the child is not travelling on the school bus.

Family Day Care

Family Day Care Coordination Unit staff and educators will often need to transport children as part of the education and care they provide for children. Children may be transported in a number of ways including Council vehicles, family day care educator's car, by public transport, or by walking to the destination.

1. The Coordination unit staff must be asked for transport assistance in advance prior to any discussion with families.
2. Parents/guardians must be notified and provide written consent to the coordination unit staff that they agree for the coordination unit to transport their children in a Council vehicle. The written consent note must include the intended departure and arrival points.
3. The Coordination unit staff is only to use Council vehicles to transport children.
4. The Coordination unit staff and educators will operate within the guidelines of *My Safety Procedures* when placing children into cars.
5. The Coordination unit staff reserves the right to decline to drive children, except in cases of emergency.

Car Safety:

In relation to drivers and vehicle use:

- All Family Day Care authorised drivers hold a current Australian Drivers Licence.
- Probationary drivers (P plates) may only transport care children by car if they are a registered educator.
- Learner drivers (L plates) must not transport children by car.
- Educator's partners are able to drive the approved vehicle with family day care children if the educator is accompanying the children and the coordination unit is provided with a copy of their current driver's license.
- Family day care children are not to be transported in vehicles (excluding public transport) that have not been checked:
 - During the educator's registration process before any children are transported
 - Annually
 - Whenever the educator purchases or uses a different vehicle.
- Educators will maintain their vehicle in a road worthy condition at all times.
- Coordination unit staff may request to sight a current roadworthy certificate if the safety of the vehicle is deemed questionable.
- Educators will obey all road laws when transporting children.
- Educators will always wear their own seat belt.
- Educators will assist children to enter and leave the vehicle on the kerb side – away from the traffic.
- Children must remain in the educators direct supervision at all times and may not travel or be left alone with any other person in the vehicle for any reason
- Educators will maintain the interior of the vehicle keeping them clean and hazard free ensuring that there are no loose objects in the vehicle that cause injury in the event of an accident.
- Vehicles are locked and inaccessible to children when not in use.

In relation to child restraints:

<https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/vehicle-safety/child-restraints>

- Types of child restraints are :
 - Rear facing child restraints
 - Forward facing child restraints
 - Booster seats
 - Integrated booster seats
- It is the educator's responsibility to ensure that all vehicles and restraints used to transport family day care children are fitted according to instructions and must meet
- the Australian /New Zealand Standards for child restraints (AS/NZS 1754).
- Educators must ensure they have a copy of the manufactures instructions for all child restraints used to transport family day care children.
- Where children are transported in a motor vehicle, each child shall be restrained in an approved child restraint appropriate to the child's age and size. Refer to the Child Restraints - <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/.../child-restraints/child-restraint-fitting-s>.
- At no time will the number of children exceed the number of legal restraints available in the vehicle.
- Car restraints older than ten years cannot be used to transport Family Day Care Children. The age of the seat can only be determined if it is labeled or the manufacture date is logged on the Harmony program. If a restraint's age cannot be determined it will be considered unsafe.
- Health professional, such as an occupational therapist, can prescribe a child restraint appropriate for children with additional needs.

Children from birth to 4 years

- Children under the age of 4 years must only travel in the back seat of a vehicle.
If the vehicle does not have a back seat (e.g. ute) the child can travel in the front seat if they are in a child restraint. However, rear facing child restraints can't be used in the front seat if it has an airbag.
- Children under 6 months must use a rear facing child restraint.
- Children aged 6 months to under 4 years must either use :
 - A rear facing child restraint ,or
 - A forward facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness

Children aged between 4 - 7 years:

- A child who is aged between 4 – 7 years must travel in a forward facing child restraint or a booster seat. The type will depend on the age and size of the child.

- Children aged 4 years old to under 7 years old can only sit in the front seat if all of the back seats are taken by other passengers under 7 years. If the vehicle does not have a back seat (e.g., a ute) the child can then travel in the front seat if they are in a child restraint.
- It is recommended that children aged twelve years or under should not be in a seating position with a front passenger airbag if there is an available rear seat position.
- If the child must travel in the front seat and the vehicle has a passenger frontal airbag, the seat should be moved as far back as possible.
- Educators must ensure they follow the vehicle's owner's manual for advice on airbag safety and must not contradict manufacturer's advice (e.g. airbag warning label prominently displayed, warning to never install any child restraint or sit a child in the front seat).

Booster seats:

- Booster seats are held in place by the child's own body and the vehicle's lap-sash seat belt. A child can be injured in a crash if the seat belt is not properly adjusted.

Integrated booster seats:

- Children aged 4 years or older can use integrated booster seats when travelling in Victoria.
- Integrated booster seats have already been built into the seat of the car and can be adjusted so that an adult or a child aged 4 years or older can travel in the seat.

Booster cushions:

- The use of booster cushions is not recommended.
- Booster cushions are seats which do not have a seat back. They provide no protection to a child in a side-on crash.

Children aged between 7 and 16

- Are required to use a booster seat or adult seat belt when travelling in a vehicle.

Unaccompanied travel:

A provision for unaccompanied travel exists to promote access to school programs and support inclusion principles for parents/guardians without vehicle access.

Unaccompanied travel is where the parent/guardian has signed the authorization releasing the educator from any responsibility associated with unaccompanied travel, to and from the educator's home for the purpose of inclusion in a school based educational program.

1. The unaccompanied travel to and from school form must be completed prior to unaccompanied travel taking place (Appendix 21.2).
2. Permission will be sought by the coordination unit for unaccompanied travel prior to its commencement.

3. In considering approval of unaccompanied travel coordination unit staff and educators will consider;
 - The age of the child.
 - The developmental level of the child.
 - The proposed route from the school to the educator's home.
 - Other factors that may impact on the child's safety or ability to make appropriate decisions.
 - Distance and method of travel for the child.
4. Parents/guardians are to notify the educator in each instance that their child will not be arriving as scheduled to the educator's residence.
5. If a child does not arrive as scheduled to the educators residence they will;
 - Immediately contact the parent/guardian or authorized person on the enrolment form.
 - If there is no answer the educator will call the coordination unit who will immediately continue to attempt to contact the authorized contacts.
 - The educator will then contact the child's school to see if the child has missed their bus etc.
 - If the child is not located the educator will call 000.

Related Policies:

- Excursion
- Emergency Situations
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Occupational Health and Safety and Wellbeing
- Supervision

National Quality Standards: 2.3.1; 2.3.2; 6.3.2

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 99,100,101,102,158,159,160,161

Sources:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Vic roads website – www.vicroads.vic.gov
- Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) – Vic Roads – starting out safely
- MY Safety Procedure
- Department of Education and Training (DET) – Fact sheet – Transporting children and Transporting children in family day care
- Department of Education and Training (DET) – School bus program
- RACV –Child restraints and airbags – May 2013

Reviewed October 2015
Review by April 2017

TWENTY-FOUR HOUR CARE (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Twenty Four hour care is available for parents/guardians who require 24 hour care for their child for reasons relating to work or exceptional circumstances as described in the Child Care Services Handbook.

GUIDELINES

1. A parent/guardian/educator must seek approval for 24-hour care from the coordination unit before care takes place.
2. The educator must complete the 24-hour form provided by the Family Assistance Office and return it to the coordination unit at the end of the financial year where it will be stored for three years.
3. The coordination unit is able to approve up to 14 instances of 24 hour care in any financial year. After 14 instances of 24 hour care approval must be sought by the Family Assistance Office.
4. 24 hour care is eligible to families for the purposes of employment and exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances include periods of local emergency, family emergency, short time medical issues and matters relating to child protection.
5. Parents/guardians seeking approval for additional periods of 24 hour care will need to provide documentation to the Family Assistance office supporting their claim.
6. A child is considered to be in 24-hour care if he/she does not return to care and supervision of their parent or guardian for any time during a 24-hour period, and is cared for by an approved child care service other than an OCC service. This includes children attending school or other approved childcare where the school hours, plus the care provided before and after school, comprise a period of 24-hours or more.
7. A 24-hour period may commence any time during the day or night.
8. If the educator fails to obtain approval for 24 hour care and notify the coordination unit of their commitment to work out of hours, the timesheet will not be processed as it will not be considered approved care (excludes emergency situations).
9. Approval for 24 hour care can be obtained outside of working hours by calling the On Call Coordinator on **0408329300**.
10. In the case of an emergency situation the educator may approve a case of 24 hour care prior to contacting the coordination unit. The coordination unit or on call coordinator must then be notified within four hours of care commencing.
11. Educators should consider carefully the commitment of 24 hour care on their family prior to agreeing to participate in the care. Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Policies and Procedures and Regulatory guidelines must continue to be maintained at all times. Consider;

12. Parents/Guardians of children partaking in after hours care will be provided with the on call phone number. The On Call Coordinator is only to be used in cases of an emergency, serious incident/accident/illness or to address a grievance or complaint
- No alcohol consumption
 - Viewing of G rated television and gaming only
 - Inability to participate in water activities or sports
 - Smoke free environment
 - Maintenance of safety and hygiene standards

Policies relating to this policy are;

- Safety and Hygiene Checks
- Timesheet Processing
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Smoke Free environment
- Swimming
- Water Activities
- Active Play
- Role of the Educators Family

Sources and Reference

- Children's Service Handbook 2010-2011
- National Regulations 2011

Reviewed: October 2011
Next Review: April 2013

WATER ACTIVITIES

PRINCIPLE

We acknowledge there are many sensory benefits gained by children engaged in safe water play activities. Water play is essential in developing literacy and numeracy skills as well scientific discovery abilities and environmental awareness in children. It while assists them in their fine motor skills as they learn to grasp, measure, pour, and by experimenting discover the basic concept of water displacement and water .

We also understand drowning is the most common cause of preventable death for children under 5 years of age in Victoria ¹

Water activities may be undertaken during education and care hours under the following conditions.

GUIDELINES

1. Any wading pool that is capable of a depth of water greater than 300mm must have child resistant safety barriers. "Safety barrier" refers to a fence, wall, gate or screen. And includes doors, gates, windows, locks, latches, hinges and self-closing devices attached to them.
2. Wading pools/water play containers may only be used while the educators are physically present and providing strict supervision.
3. The wading pool/water play container must be emptied immediately after use and stored in a position where it cannot be refilled or partly filled by rain or tap water.
4. Ponds or garden features should be secured in position and covered by material designed to prevent a child putting his/her face into the water or completely enclosed by a barrier, such as a fence, wall, gate or door.
5. Due to their unpredictable composition and supervision difficulties, channels, rivers, lakes, dams and ponds are considered unsafe and inappropriate for excursions in children's services.
6. A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any excursion taking place. Particular attention will be focused upon water safety where the excursion is near a body of water. (reg 101).
7. Swimming in pools are not considered a part of children's services activities.
8. Children will not be taken on excursions to pool.

¹ Victoria Building Commission

Bathing

GUIDELINES

Bathing would usually occur outside care hours unless badly soiled or attending a FDC service
Educators will:

1. Make sure other children in care are being actively supervised.
2. If using a sink (babies and small children only), use warm water and test the water before putting the child in. Recommended temperature is between 37-38°C (slightly warm to the touch).
3. Ensure the water level is low. Newborns and infants are recommended to bathe in 5cm. 13 - 15cm for older children.
4. Make sure all supplies are readily available so children will not be left unsupervised while in the sink/bath or shower.
5. Use the shower – LDC only (for children old enough) only if staff ratios allow the staff member to leave the room. Where possible, a hand held shower will be used.
6. Supervise young children at all times while washing, drying and dressing.
7. Communicate with the child in a warm, assuring and respectful manner.
8. Wash and sanitize the bath/shower with disinfectant after each child's use.
9. Ensure each child has an individual bath towel.
10. Inform families that their child has been bathed or showered.

Family Day Care

PRINCIPLE

In 2011/12 there were 37 drowning deaths in Victoria, nine of these occurrences were in the home environment.

POOLS AND SPAS

1. A safety barrier (effective height of 1200mm considering steps, landing, finished ground or climbable object with a self-closing, self-latching gate that has a child resistant lock)² is required for all swimming pools, spas, bathing or wading pools holding more than 300mm's of water.
2. Do not allow direct access from the house to the pool or spa, and windows that allow direct access should not open more than 100mm.
3. Remove any ladders or pool filters accessible to children.

² Swimming Pools and Spa Safety Barriers – Building Commission Victoria 2011/05

SWIMMING

Swimming is not considered a Family Day Care activity.

GUIDELINES

1. Educators with swimming pools/spa pools/hot tubs must have a safety fence which meets Australian Standards A.S.19226:1:2.
2. Coordination unit staff will assess risks associated with water at the educator's property at the initial safety check and every safety check after (reg 168).
3. A resuscitation chart must be displayed in the pool or spa area.
4. Children will not be permitted to use such pools/spas/hot tubs at any time during hours of care.
5. Children must not be taken to public or private pools for recreational purposes at any time during hours of care.
6. For information regarding Wading pools: refer to Water Activities policy.
7. Educators own children are not to participate in swimming activities under the supervision of the educator whilst family day care children are in care. Swimming activities require absolute supervision therefore inhibiting the educators' ability to adequately supervise and appropriately engage with family day care children.

Sources and Reference Tools

- Australian Standards A.S.19226:1:2
- 2011 National Regulations
- Management of local aquatic centre – 'Aquamoves' 2013
- National Quality Standard
- www.watersafety.vic.gov.au
- www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au 27/07/2013
- Swimming Pools and Spa Safety Barriers – www.buildingcommission.com.au 22/7/2013
- National Quality Standard – 2.3
- www.acecqa.gov.au 22/7/2013
- Greater Shepparton City Council's Building and Planning Pool Safety Fact Sheet
- www.littlehampton.childcarecentre.com.au 22/7/2013
- www.kidsdafensw.org 22/7/2013
- http://www.buildingcommission.com.au/resources/documents/Swimming_Pool_and_Spa_Safety_Barriers_FINAL.pdf viewed 15.7.13
- National Standards for Family Day Care
- www.watersafety.vic.gov.au/home/pool+safety viewed 15.7.13
- Staying Healthy in Child Care 4th Edition – National Health and Medical Research Council <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch43> viewed 15.7.13
- Raising Children Network http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/bath_safety.html viewed 15.7.13
- www.uws.edu.au 2013

Related Policies

- Infectious Diseases and Control

- Hygiene
- Toilet Training/Toileting
- Nappy Change
- Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing
- Supervision
- Excursions
- Safety and Hygiene Checks
- Supervision
- Swimming
- Excursions
- Safety
- Safety check

Reviewed: July 2013
Next review: July 2014

WORKCOVER (Family Day Care – Original)

PRINCIPLE

Work cover for educators will be provided by the Greater Shepparton City Council in accordance with relevant legislation.

All workers have a duty of care to ensure that they work in a manner that is not harmful to their own health and safety and the health and safety of others.

GUIDELINES

1. It is Greater Shepparton City Council's policy that in all cases of a work related injury to the educator the coordination unit will be notified as soon as possible (not more than 24 hours)
2. Upon notification of the injury an Incident near miss form and Hazard Correction Form will be completed and forwarded to the Aged and Children's Services and Greater Shepparton City Councils Occupational Health and Safety Representatives.
3. Workplace injuries occurring outside of the coordination unit operating hours should be reported to the On Call Coordinator on **0408329300**.
4. If an injury occurs requiring urgent medical attention emergency procedures should be followed.
5. Notification's made after 30 days may affect the educators claim for compensation.
6. Evidence of any medical attention and/or treatment must be retained.
7. Remuneration will be provided to the educator for small medical costs up to \$200.00 for an injury. For amounts exceeding this Work Cover paperwork should be completed by the educator in conjunction with their medical practitioner.
8. If an educator is not able to complete their normal duty they will be required to complete with their doctor a 'Certificate of Capacity'.
9. If an educator is claiming for loss of income or expenses they will need to complete the 'Worksafe Workers Injury claim form'.
10. Return to work plans will be developed in consultation with the educator and the Greater Shepparton City Councils Return to Work Coordinator for instances where it is required.
11. Risk Assessments to assess potential risks to the educator will be conducted on commencement and annually at educator's homes as part of the Safety and Hygiene check process.

Policies relating to this policy;

- Occupational Health and Safety
- Emergency Situations

Sources and Reference Tools;

- Greater Shepparton City Councils Human Resource Department
- WorkSafe 2011

WORK REQUIREMENTS

PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council supports the intent of Police Checks and the Working with Children Check and associated legislation. In relation to all Children's and Youth Services, compliance with police check requirements and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 will be the minimum standard required. The Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011 have requirements for the approved provider of a service to ensure staff and educators have approved qualifications in First Aid, CPR, Asthma management and Anaphylaxis management (Reg 136).

Greater Shepparton City Council has a duty of care to provide all persons who enter the service premises with a safe and healthy environment.

Police Check

GUIDELINES

All staff who are likely to come in contact with children in the course of their employment or registration with Greater Shepparton City Council (management, administration, family day care, fun group, kindergarten, long day care, occasional care, outside school hours care, relief educators) will be required to undergo a police check using the following procedure.

New Early Childhood Educators

- Where they will come into contact with children, no person will be employed by Greater Shepparton City Council without having completed a police check (current within 6 months). This will be regardless of the service they are seeking employment in.
- Applicants will be made aware of this requirement by notification in position descriptions and discussion at interview. Potential time issues with this process shall be considered as part of the staffing process.
- An educator on the current relief register who commences a new position in Children and Youth Services will not be required to present a new police check.

Relief Early Childhood Educators

- All educators who wish to be placed on council's relief register, regardless of the service they wish to work in, will be required to have undergone a police check, valid within 6 months of presentation to council's contact person.
- This will be required to be updated on a 3 year basis if the educator wishes to remain on the relief register.
- Educators who are ceasing current employment and wish to be placed on the relief register may have their police check carried over, as long as they have been successfully appointed to the new position prior to the ceasing employment. If not, they will be required to present an updated police check (current within 6 months) before they can be placed on the relief register.

Students/Volunteers

- Students/volunteers involved in services provided by Children and Youth Services section will not be required to have undergone a police check as they are to be under the direct supervision of an educator at all times and never left alone with the children (reg.70).

GENERAL

1. A representative of council will be responsible for administering police checks and ensuring the security of the results of record checks.
2. All police checks will be sighted by a representative and the reference number, date and place of issue will be recorded on the staff record.
3. New police checks on existing educators will be conducted every three years or on re-registration of the service.
4. Educators are to ensure they maintain a current police check.
5. Educators will be given a reminder. If a successful check is not received within 6 weeks of the date the educators will be suspended.

APPLICATIONS

1. A representative shall read and consider a notification of an employee's police check (issued within 6 months).
2. Offers of employment will be subject to the completion of a satisfactory police check.
3. Where the subject has no police record, the recipient may receive either a certificate to this effect, or the subject's consent form stamped to this effect.
4. Where a record check identifies that the subject has a police record, a certificate to this effect will be forwarded to the recipient.
5. The representative will manage the assessment process (as outlined under section "Assessment of Police Checks") for any applicant returning a positive check.
6. An applicant who may be denied a position because of his/her criminal history record must be given the opportunity to discuss the details of the record in a personal interview with the Manager, Children and Youth Services.
7. Information released by Victoria Police to Greater Shepparton City Council under these guidelines will be regarded as strictly confidential. It will not be forwarded to any other individual or organisation, incorporated into any manual or electronic database or filing system, and must be either destroyed or returned to the applicant once the selection process is complete. Children and Youth Services will retain a record of the police check reference number, date of issue and place of issue only.
8. All police checks (original and photocopies) will be returned to the staff member/applicant.

ASSESSMENT OF POLICE CHECKS

Assessment Criteria

1. An applicant should not be automatically precluded from a position on the basis of having a criminal record.

2. When assessing an applicant's suitability for a position, consideration is to be given to the relevance of the criminal offence in relation to the position for which the applicant is being considered.
3. When considering prospective staff, important factors to consider are:
 - The scope of the applicant's criminal history. This includes, but is not limited to, a history of sexual offences, matters of violence including assaults and robberies, repeated drug use or dishonesty offences all of which will be deemed as unacceptable.
 - The nature of the offence and the relationship of the offence to the particular position/profession for which the applicant is being considered.
 - The period of time since the offence took place.
 - Whether the person was convicted or found guilty and/or placed on a bond.
 - Evidence of an extended criminal history e.g. number of offences committed. An accumulation of individual minor offences may be sufficient to warrant rejection. The question to be decided is whether or not the offences are considered to establish a pattern of behaviour which renders the applicant unsuitable for the position.
 - Whether the offence was committed as an adult or a juvenile. Offences of a minor nature committed during youth may be viewed differently to the same offences committed by a person of mature years. In these instances, consideration should be given to the period of time which has elapsed since the last offence.
 - Severity of any penalty imposed.
 - Whether the "offence" is still a crime, ie. Has the offence now been decriminalised?
 - In a limited number of circumstances, there are other factors that may be relevant to consideration.
These are: Mitigating or extenuating circumstances which might be revealed in relation to the offence(s) committed i.e. provocation, peer group pressure at the time of the offence and the circumstances in which the offence was committed, or effect of alcohol. Mitigating circumstances however, may not necessarily always be in favour of the applicant.

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH POLICE CHECKS

1. Payment for police checks for new employees and family day care educators is the responsibility of the employee/educator.
2. Payment for police checks for employees changing positions and re-registration of services will be made by council.
3. Where an employee is coming from the relief register into a new position they will be required to pay for a new police check.
4. Payment for a new police check to go on the relief register will be made by the current employee where they have failed to submit their current police check prior their finishing date.

Working with Children Check

GUIDELINES

Any staff that are likely to have contact with children in the course of their work will be required to produce a current WWC Check (reg.70).

Relief Staff

All staff who wishes to be placed on Council's relievers register, regardless of the service they wish to work in, will be required to produce a current WWC Check (reg.70).

Office based staff, including Family Day Care Coordination Unit staff

Any office based staff who are likely to have contact with children in the course of their work will be required to produce a WWC Check.

New staff

- No staff member will be employed by Children and Youth Services without a current WWC Check (receipts will not be accepted, unless it is in the process of renewal – see Renewal of WWC Checks below).
- If an applicant has a volunteer WWC Check (card to be sighted and current status to be confirmed on the relevant website), a receipt for the WWC Check (employment category) will be accepted and the applicant can commence employment.
- Applicants will be made aware of this requirement by notification in all advertisements for positions, position descriptions and discussion at interview. Potential time issues with this process shall be considered as part of the staffing process.

Volunteers and Students

Volunteers and students are exempt from obtaining a WWC Check, as they are to be under the direct supervision of an educator at all times and will never be left alone with the children.

www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

APPLICATIONS

- WWC Check application forms are available at approved Australia Post Offices.
- Individuals must apply in person at an approved Post Office in order to meet the identity requirements.

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WWC CHECK

- For all existing full time, part time staff and family day care educators, council will reimburse the application costs associated with the WWC Check. This does not include the cost of a passport photo.
- New staff will be responsible for all costs relating to obtaining their WWC Check Card.
- Relief staff will be responsible for all costs relating to obtaining their WWC Check Card, including renewal.

Where costs are to be met by Council, the individual will be required to pay up front costs when they lodge their application. Costs of the application (excluding costs of passport photo) shall be reimbursed upon presentation of the WWC receipt.

INTERIM NEGATIVE NOTICE (INN), NEGATIVE NOTICE (NN) AND STATUS “UNABLE TO DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY TO WORK WITH CHILDREN.”

If an INN, NN or undetermined status is received then the following will apply:

Council has an obligation to ensure all relevant industrial procedures are followed but also has legal requirements under the Working with Children Act 2005, namely that Council would be guilty of an offence to employ anyone to work with children who does not have a WWC.

- If an INN is received discussions will occur with the staff member concerned in relation to the suitability of this person to be engaged in child related work.
- If a NN is received then the staff member would no longer be able to undertake any work that involved contact with children. In these circumstances it will be considered that an employee is unable to meet the inherent requirements of their job and this may lead to termination of employment.
- Status unable to be verified- educator will be suspended.

Current Relief Staff

They will be informed in writing that due to an INN or NN being received Council will no longer be able to accept them on the relief staff register until it is rectified.

Current Office based staff (including all administration positions)

If an INN or NN was received then this staff member would no longer be able to undertake any work located at a children's service. Discussions shall take place regarding the possibility of non-child work continuing.

Volunteers

If Council receives an INN regarding a volunteer then discussion will occur with the volunteer in relation to the suitability of this person continuing to be engaged in child related work. This may involve ceasing voluntary duties until a WWC Check is issued. If a NN is received voluntary duties shall cease immediately.

REVOKING OF A WWC

Council will be informed by the Department of Justice if a WWC Check is revoked. It is a requirement that the staff member will also inform their service leader.

An employee/educator/administration officer whose WWC Check is revoked cannot undertake child related work. In these circumstances it will be considered that the employee is unable to meet the inherent requirements of their job and this may lead to termination of employment.

RENEWAL OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

- WWC Checks are valid for 5 five years, unless a relevant change in circumstances results in a Negative Notice being issued before the expiry date.
- Employees must ensure that they keep their WWC Check valid by renewing it as required and advising their manager when their check has been renewed so the details can be recorded.
- Staff/Educators are to apply for and receive confirmation of currency, a new Assessment Notice before the expiry date on their WWC Check card. A renewal application form shall be sent by the Department of Justice to the staff member's last postal address provided 8 weeks prior the expiry date of a WWC Check card.
- Failure to hold a valid WWC Check at any time will result in the employee being unable to perform their role until they hold a valid WWC Check card.

- It is an offence to continue to undertake 'child-related work' if a staff member does not hold a valid Assessment Notice.

MONITORING

On an annual basis managers will monitor the status of WWC Checks via the Department of Justice website.

Card Holders:

- Must advise the Department of Justice in writing within 7 days of any 'relevant change in circumstances', including being charged with, or found guilty, of a relevant offence, being supervised by or having to report to authorities under the sex offenders' laws and having disciplinary findings made against you by one of the professional bodies listed in the Act.
- Must advise the department in writing within 21 days if there has been a change (including addition) to their employer, volunteer organisation or agency details, including the name, address and telephone number of the new or changed employer, volunteer organisation or agency.
- Should advise the department in writing within 21 days of any change of name, address or telephone number.

REQUIREMENT FOR POLICE CHECKS

The Working with Children Check does not replace the requirement for a current police check to be produced for certain positions within Council. Refer to HR Policy "Conducting Police Checks" (Trim: M09/6134).

First Aid

First Aid Policy, procedures and practices are designed to support educators to:

- Ensure that ill or injured persons are stabilised and comforted until medical help is available
- Ensure that the environment is safe and that other persons are not in danger of becoming ill or injured.
- Apply further first aid strategies if the condition does not improve
- Monitor ill or injured persons in the recovery stage
- Preserve life where possible within the parameters of staff training and skills

GUIDELINES

1. All educators must hold a current Level 2 First Aid Certificate and successfully complete an annual CPR update.
2. Educators will be suspended if their First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis or Asthma has expired, or not completed within designated time frame.
3. Ensure that current CPR signage is clearly displayed in prominent positions in rooms and in exterior play areas.
4. All educators must hold a current certificate in Anaphylaxis Management. This shall be updated every 3 years. Ensure that current Anaphylaxis Management signage is clearly displayed in a prominent positions in rooms and exterior play areas.

5. Educators shall undertake other emergency management training as required e.g. Asthma, diabetes.
6. At least one educator on duty at the service requires a current certificate in Asthma management.
7. In the event of an accident involving bleeding, immediate assistance and comfort must be given, but every precaution must be taken to protect against exposure to blood until personal protective equipment e.g. gloves, goggles, plastic apron etc. can be obtained.
8. Ensure that all staff (relief or casual) knows where the First Aid kits are located in each room or educator home. They must be clearly labeled, in view and out of reach of children.
9. Disposable protective devices for mouth to mouth resuscitation (expired air respiration) will be available in all First Aid kits.
10. The First Aid kits must be appropriately stocked at all times in accordance with recognized authority guidelines. Educators will review the contents of all First Aid kits regularly or at a minimum of six months completing the OHS My Safety, First Aid Kit Checklist Children's Services (Appendix 22.1). Educators should check all use by dates on all items in the First Aid kits and replace any items that have expired.
11. It's the responsibility of all educators to familiarize themselves with the contents of the First Aid kits in each service.

Family Day Care

1. All new Family Day Care educator applicants and other household members (aged 17 years and over) will be required to undergo a police check before the educator can be registered (reg. 69).
2. Volunteers accompanying educators on an outing/excursion will not require a police check as they are under the direct supervision of an educator at all times and never to be left alone with the children.
3. All new Family Day Care educator applicants and other household members (aged 18 years and over) will be required to produce a current WWC Check before the educator can be registered (reg.70).
4. Volunteers accompanying FDC educators on an outing/excursion will not require a WWC Check as they are to be under the direct supervision of the educator at all times and will never be left alone with the children.
5. Immediate household members of current educators: If an INN is received then all necessary steps will be taken to ensure that particular person has no contact with any children in care. If a NN is received, discussions will take place with Children and Youth Service Management in regard to the circumstances. Unless exceptional circumstances apply, the family member will not be able to be present while children are in care. If this will not be possible, then the educator will either be suspended until this can happen or deregistered.
6. Potential Educators: If an INN is received, registration shall be suspended until a cleared WWC is provided or ceased in the case where a NN is returned.

7. If a Family Day Care Educator's WWC Check is revoked, the educator will be deregistered. If a family member's WWC Check is revoked discussions will take place with Children and Youth Service Management in regard to the circumstances. The family member is not to reside at the premises or be present with children in care. If this will not be possible, then the educator will either be suspended until this can happen or deregistered.
8. Educators will be suspended from providing care if First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis or Asthma certificates expire.
9. Once registered, Greater Shepparton Family Day Care will pay the reoccurring costs of Educators Working with Children Checks and Police checks. Educators will be responsible for the costs of all other family members or residents WWC and police checks.

Related Policies

- Emergency Situations
- Infectious Diseases and Immunisations
- Relief Early Childhood Educators
- Staff from Other Agencies
- Recruitment and Orientation of Staff
- Confidentiality and Records Storage
- Staffing

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD AREA: 2 & 4

Sources and Reference Tools

- Department of Justice www.justice.vic.gov.au - viewed 12/8/13
- WWC Check Renewals FAQ Information Sheet - viewed 12/8/13
- WWC Check Information Line 1300 652 879 www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au - 12/3/14
- Greater Shepparton City Council
 - Procedure for Conducting Police Records Check policy – Human Resources
 - Human Resources Department
 - Privacy Committee
 - Executive Management Team
- Procedure for Obtaining a National Police Certificate www.police.vic.gov.au – viewed August 2013
- Information Sheet, Victoria Police www.police.vic.gov.au – viewed August 2013
- Information Release policy: National Police Certificate Victoria Police www.police.vic.gov.au
- Department of Justice www.justice.vic.gov.au – viewed 12/8/13
- John Haines (2009), Emergency First Aid Edition 13, 2012 www.victoriafirstaid.com.au – viewed 12/8/13
- www.stjohn.org.au – viewed 12/8/13
- Greater Shepparton City Council: OH&S Representative
- Greater Shepparton City Council: Risk Management/Insurance
- www.health.vic.gov.au/prevention - viewed 12/8/13
- First Aid Requirements www.acecqa.gov.au - viewed 12/8/13
- Education and Care Services National Law 2010 and National Regulations.
- Children's Services Act 1996 (as amended) and Children's Services Regulations 2009

Reviewed: February 2014

Next review by: February 2016

APPENDICES

1. Access in Children's Services

Appendix 1.1 – Privacy Statement (M14/26034)

Appendix 1.2 – www.education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places

Appendix 1.3 – Request for care/ waiting list (M13/18002)

Appendix 1.4 – Confirmation of place on centre waiting list (M14/23772)

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Appendix 4.2 – Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm (2015/22762)

Appendix 4.3 – Guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST (2014/89004)

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5. Discontinue Education and Care

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6. Emergency Situations

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Appendix 6.3 – ACECQA Notification of Serious Incident form (M12/13578)

Appendix 6.4 – Emergency Drill or Lockdown Report Checklist (M10/100470)

Appendix 6.5– Emergency Procedures Flow chart (M14/69329)

Appendix 6.6 – Emergency contact numbers (M14/33523)

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Appendix 7.2 – Excursion Flow Chart (M14/69434)

Appendix 7.3 –Excursion Log form (M13/36285)

8. Fees

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Appendix 8.3 – Agency payment Agreement (M15/8176)
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Appendix 8.7 – Outstanding Account letter (2015/33960)

9. Home Visits

Appendix 9.1 – Home visit schedule (M13/65759)
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11. Infectious Diseases and Immunisations

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Appendix 11.3 – Grace period eligibility assessment form (2016/2696)

12. Leave for Educators

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13. Medical Conditions

Appendix 13.1– Anaphylaxis Action Plan (M14/25640)
Appendix 13.2 – Asthma Action Plan (M14/25548)
Appendix 13.3 – Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan (M14/25994)
Appendix 13.4 – Medical Authorisation form (M14/30327)
Appendix 13.5 – Medical Standing Order form (M10/103975)

14. Nutrition, Food Safety and Oral Health

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Appendix 14.2– Introduction to Solid Foods Chart (M14/50568)
Appendix 14.3 – Heating Bottles Using a Microwave (M14/25919)

15. Physical Play

Appendix 15.1 – National Physical Activity Recommendations for children 0-5 year (2014/88787)

16. Recruitment, Selection and Orientation of Educators

Appendix 16.1– Greater Shepparton Children and Youth Services Induction checklist (M10/55108)

Appendix 16.2 – Service Agreement (M14/29525)

17. Re-registration and Appraisal of an Educator

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18. Safety and Hygiene checks

Appendix 18.1 – Greater Shepparton Family Day Care Annual Safety and Hygiene Check (M14/810)

Appendix 18.2 – Safety and Hygiene check (M10/31656)

Appendix 18.3 – Smoke alarm check (M10/31843)

19. Safe Sleeping and Rest Time

Appendix 19.1 SIDS and Kids safe sleeping poster (2015/44719)

Appendix 19.2 – SIDS and Kids safe sleeping checklist and guidelines for Education and Care Services (2015/44718)

20. Students, Volunteers and Visitors

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Appendix 20.2 – Student/volunteer Placement form (M11/55134)

Appendix 20.3– Service expectations for students and volunteers (M14/25611)

Appendix 20.4– Student Attendance Record (M15/6551)

Appendix 20.5 – Supplier Registration form (M11/2306)

21. Transport and Road Safety

Appendix 21.1– National Practices For Early Childhood Road Safety Education (2015/75489)

Appendix 21.2– Unaccompanied travel to and from School (M10/31840)

22. Work Requirements

Appendix 22.1 – OHS My Safety First Aid Checklist Children's Services (M15/16399)

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Appendix 2. Animals

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Appendix 4. Child Safe

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Appendix 4.2 – Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm (2015/22762)

Appendix 4.3 – Guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST (2014/89004)

Appendix 4.4 – Confidential Record (M15/32063)

Appendix

5. Discontinue Education and Care

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Appendix 5.2– Submission of a Change of Preference form (M14/76257)

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6. Emergency Situations

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Appendix 6.2 – OHS Incident/Near Miss/Hazard form (M10/102423)

Appendix 6.3 – ACECQA Notification of Serious Incident form (M12/13578)

Appendix 6.4 – Emergency Drill or Lockdown Report Checklist (M10/100470)

Appendix 6.5 – Emergency Procedures Flow chart (M14/69329)

Appendix 6.6 – Emergency contact numbers (TRIM M14/33523)

Appendix 7. Excursions

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Appendix 7.2 – Excursion Flow Chart (M14/69434)

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Appendix 8.4 – Family Leave form (M15/34907)

Appendix 8.5 – Cease of care letter (M14/3084)

Appendix 8.6 – Outstanding fee letter (M14/4032)

Appendix 8.7 – Outstanding Account letter (2015/33960)

Appendix 9. Home Visits

Appendix 9.1 – Home visit schedule (M13/65759)

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10. Hygiene and Infection Control

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11. Infectious Diseases and Immunisations

Appendix 11.1 – Exclusion Chart (2014/84019)

Appendix 11.2 – Outbreak Case List form –DHS (M14/69447)

Appendix 11.3 – Grace period eligibility assessment form (2016/2696)

Appendix 12. Leave for Educators

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Appendix 13. Medical Conditions

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Appendix 13.2 – Asthma Action Plan (M14/25548)

Appendix 13.3 – Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan (M14/25994)

Appendix 13.4 – Medical Authorisation form (M14/30327)

Appendix 13.5 – Medical Standing Order form (M10/103975)

Appendix

14. Nutrition, Food Safety and Oral Health

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