

Policy title	Children's Services
Responsible manager(s)	Divisional Manager Community and Participation Development
Contact officer(s)	Divisional Manager Community and Participation Development
Directorate	Community, Arts and Recreation Services
Approval date	26 April 2022
Outcome area	2. Our community that welcomes, celebrates, and supports everyone.
Strategy	2.3 Provide rich learning opportunities and experiences
Delivery program	2.3.3 Develop and provide early education services and programs that promote learning and development
Operational plan	2.3.3.4 Coordinate and implement the Children's Services Priority Action Plan

Purpose

This policy is designed to ensure that Council continues to meet the needs of children, families and their educators via effective service provision in the Eurobodalla Shire.

The policy aims to:

- Promote an integrated framework for dealing with Children's Services.
- Ensure consistency and fairness in the manner in which the Council deals with children families, educators and staff.
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements under the *Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010*.
- Promote awareness of the requirements of the Act with respect to *The Education and Care Services National Regulations*.
- Take such steps as are appropriate to ensure education and care provided to children is safe and appropriate to the needs of children and their families.
- Make the council's policies and requirements for Children's Services readily accessible and understandable to the public.

Policy statement

1	Application This policy applies to Council's Children's Services including Family Day Care and After School and Vacation Care Services, and other externally funded children and family projects.
2	Legislation Eurobodalla Shire Council will comply with the <i>Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010</i> and <i>The Education and Care Services National Regulations</i> . https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2010-104 https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653
3	Standards Eurobodalla Shire Council Children's Services will be assessed and rated against the National Quality Standards For Education And Care Services that consist of 7 quality areas, 18 standards and 58 elements. The 7 quality areas are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational program and practice 2. Children's health and safety

	<p>3. Physical environment</p> <p>4. Staffing arrangements</p> <p>5. Relationships with children</p> <p>6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities</p> <p>7. Leadership and service management.</p>
4	<p>Eurobodalla Shire Council's Policy Framework acknowledges that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's best interests are the primary consideration in the provision of services; • Children have the right to care and education for individual development and participation in society; • High quality children's services and education is an investment which develops and enhances the social, spiritual and economic wellbeing of the entire community; • Community participation in decisions about services for families and children is essential for the development of responsive services that meet local needs. • Eurobodalla Shire Council is committed to ensuring the availability of a range of responsive and quality children's services to the community by provision of land, buildings and office space, employment of staff, application of government funds, the provision of financial advice and participating in the management of individual services.
5	<p>Code of Practice</p> <p>Details of the acceptance and management of Children's Services against <i>The Education and Care Services National Regulations</i> are provided in the Children's Services Policies and Procedures and Guidelines, which outlines all aspects of service delivery and reporting, in line with The Education and Care Services National Regulations and Federal Department of Education, skills and employment funding agreement.</p>
6	<p>Complaints</p> <p>Complaints received regarding the provision of Children's Services will be entered into Council's Privacy Management System and will remain Confidential, in accordance with Council's Privacy Management Plan and funding requirements. Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with Council's Complaint Policy and <i>The Education and Care Services National Regulations</i>.</p>

Implementation

Requirements	Responsibility
<p>1 Code of Practice</p> <p>This policy will be implemented by following Council's Children's Services Policies and Procedures and Guidelines, which specifies in detail the plan, procedures and matters to be considered.</p>	Council officers
<p>2 Staff</p> <p>Under supervision, applicable Council staff will be responsible for ensuring that policies are implemented appropriately within their work area, after they have received relevant training to do so.</p>	Children's Services staff Family Day Care educators
<p>3 Concerns</p> <p>Concerns received by Council in relation to this policy will be recorded on Council's records system and handled in accordance with Council's Customer Service or Complaints policy. These records will be used to determine follow up actions and analyse the history of concerns.</p>	Council officers

4	Consultation Consultation regarding this policy may occur as relevant and may involve other agencies, relevant legislation, and public comment.	As relevant
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Review

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years. It may also be reviewed and updated as necessary if legislation requires it; or when Council's related policies, functions, structure or activities change; or when technological advances or new systems change the way that Council manages children's services.

The policy may be revoked at the expiration of twelve months after the declaration of the poll for the next general NSW local government election, unless Council updates or revokes it sooner.

Reviews of the effectiveness of this policy could include the following:

Performance indicator	Data source(s)
Complaints	Council Records
Customer Feedback Survey Responses	Surveys
Internal or external audit	Audit
Assessment and Rating against National Quality Standards For Education And Care Services	Children's Services records

Governance

This policy should be read in conjunction with any related legislation, codes of practice, relevant internal policies, and guidelines.

Related legislation and policies

Name	Link
Code of Practice	https://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/145959/Code-of-Conduct-Policy.pdf
Local Government Act 1993	www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/lga1993182/
Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010	https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2010-104
The Education and Care Services National Regulations.	https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653

Related external references

Name	Link
Division of Local Government	www.olg.nsw.gov.au
Department of Education	https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care
Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	http://acecqa.gov.au

Change history

Version	Approval date	Approved by	Minute No	File No	Change
1	24 Nov 2009	Council	09/369	E96.0152 E09.3418	Policy reviewed and adopted – report G09/145
2	23 Jul 2013	Council	13/172	E96.0152 E13.7095	Updated to new Policy Template, updated review date, updated references and links – report O13/112
3	13 Jun 2017	Council	17/181	E96.0152 E16.0297	Reviewed and readopted in new Council term.
4	26 Apr 2022	Council	22/91	E96.0152 E16.0297	Reviewed & updated at new Council term. Report GMR22/046.

Internal use

Responsible officer		Director, Community Arts & Recreation			Approved by	Council
Min no	22/91	Report no	GMR22/046	Effective date	26 April 2022	
File No	E96.0152 E16.0297	Review date	Feb 2022	Pages	4	