

Early Learning

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy

Overarching Statement

The *Keeping Children Safe Policy* of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (refer to *Sources*) is the overarching whole of church policy to be implemented by individuals and entities involved with or connected to the Uniting Church. All children who are involved in any of the Church's activities, events or programs have a right to feel and be safe. The Church is committed to provide safe environments where children are cared for, respected, nurtured and sustained.

Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children attending the service;
- meeting its duty of care obligations under the law;
- the circumstances in which written authorisation is required from parents or an authorised person;
- procedures for managing authorisations;
- procedures to be followed when refusing authorisation from a parent or authorised person.

Executive Summary

A fundamental requirement of an early childhood service is to ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazard likely to cause injury, in the absence of their parent/s. Parent's written authorisation for a variety of circumstances will enable service staff to meet their obligations set out in the law.

Authorisations in writing, signed and dated by a parent or authorised person must be obtained and properly maintained in relation to a child: being administered medication while attending the service; participating in an excursion or leaving the service premises and emergency notification if parents are unable to be contacted.

All parents must complete the authorisation section of their child's enrolment form (refer to *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*), and sign and date this before the child is enrolled at the service.

There may be circumstances where a service refuses to accept an authorisation if it does not meet the requirements. In such a case, reasons why the authorisation cannot be accepted must be explained immediately and an appropriate alternative authorisation provided as soon as possible.

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Current Environmental Context

If authorisation is refused by the service, details to be documented include: the details of the authorisation, reason for refusal and actions taken by the service.

Attachment 18a: Responsibilities relating to Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy

Attachment 18b: Procedures for refusing an authorisation

Attachment 18c: Examples of circumstances in which authorisation might be refused

Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

Keeping Children Safe Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Approved June 2015:

<https://www.victas.uca.org.au/UCA%20Resources/Documents/Keeping%20Children%20Safe%20Policy.pdf>

Administration of Medication Policy	Anaphylaxis Policy
Asthma Policy	Child Safe Policy
Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy	Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
Diabetes Policy	Emergency and Evacuation Policy
Enrolment and Orientation Policy	Epilepsy Policy
Excursions Regular Outings and Service Events Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- Children’s Services Act 1996: Section: 26
- Children’s Services Regulations 2009: Regulations: 33, 73, 83
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 96, 99, 102, 160, 161, 168(2)(m), 170
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au/
- Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) *Acceptance and refusal of authorisations policy*. National Quality Framework, Fact sheet July 2015

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning on: 18TH July 2017

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by: 18 July 2018

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Attachment 18a: Responsibilities relating to the Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy

National Regulations & Act

AP=Approved Provider

NS=Nominated Supervisor

CS=Certified Supervisor

Victorian Regulations & Act

L=Licensee

PN=Primary Nominee

N=Nominee

Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS, N and Educators	Parents
Ensure that all service policies are available for inspection at the service	x	x		
Ensure that the Nominated Supervisor/Primary Nominee, staff and volunteers follow the policies and procedures of the service	x	x		
Ensure that all parents complete the authorisation section of their child's enrolment form, and that the form is signed and dated before the child is enrolled at the service (refer to <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>)	x	x		
Ensure that an attendance record is maintained to account for all children attending the service	x	x		
Keep a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure	x	x		
Ensure that written authorisation is provided by a parent or an authorised person prior to an excursion (refer to the <i>Excursions, Regular Outings and Service Events Policy</i>)	x	x		
Ensure that where children require medication to be administered by educators/staff, this is authorised in writing, signed and dated by a parent or authorised person, and included with the child's medication record (refer to <i>Administration of Medication Policy</i>)	x	x		
Ensure that medication is not administered to a child without the authorisation of a parent or authorised person, except in the case of an emergency, including: an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency	x	x		
Ensure that a child is allowed to participate in an excursion only with the written authorisation of a parent or authorised person including details required by legislation	x	x		
Ensure that a child is allowed to depart from the service only with a person who is the parent or authorised nominee (refer to <i>Glossary</i>), or with the written authorisation of one of these, except in the case of a medical or other emergency	x	x		

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			Policy No. 018

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Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS, N and Educators	Parents
Ensure that there are procedures in place if an inappropriate person (refer to <i>Glossary</i>) attempts to collect a child from the service (refer to Attachment 4c – Procedures to ensure the safe collection of children in <i>Delivery and Collection of Children Policy</i>)	x			
Develop procedures for refusing an authorisation that does not meet the requirements outlined in service policies (refer to Attachment 18b)	x			
Understand and comply with the policies and procedures of the service		x	x	x
Check that parents or authorised persons sign the attendance record as their child arrives at the service			x	
Check that parents or authorised nominees (refer to <i>Glossary</i>) sign the attendance record as their child departs from the service			x	
Check that parents, or authorised persons, sign and date permission forms for excursions			x	
Do not allow a child to participate in an excursion without the written authorisation of a parent or authorised person			x	
Administer medication only with the written authorisation of a parent or authorised person, except in the case of an emergency, including an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency			x	
Allow a child to depart from the service only with a parent, authorised nominee (refer to <i>Glossary</i>), or with the written authorisation of one of these, except in the case of a medical or other emergency			x	
Follow procedures if an inappropriate person (refer to <i>Glossary</i>) attempts to collect a child from the service. (Refer to Attachment 4c – Procedures to ensure the safe collection of children in <i>Delivery and Collection of Children Policy</i>)			x	
Follow procedures for refusing an authorisation (refer to Attachment 3) when the authorisation does not meet the requirements outlined in service policies		x	x	
Complete and sign the authorisation section of their child's enrolment form before their child commences at the service (refer to <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>)				x
Sign the attendance record (refer to <i>Glossary</i>) as their child arrives at and departs from the service				x
Sign and date permission forms for excursions				x
Provide written authorisation where a child requires medication to be administered by educators/staff, and sign and date it for inclusion in the child's medication record				x

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Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS, N and Educators	Parents
Provide authorisation where a child requires a medical management and communication plan				x

Note: Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

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Attachment 18b: - Procedures for refusing an authorisation:

On receipt of an authorisation that does not meet the requirements outlined in relevant service policies:

- immediately explain to the parent that the authorisation contravenes service policy, and that it cannot be accepted
- ensure that the parent is provided with a copy of the relevant service policy and that they understand the reasons for the refusal of the authorisation
- request that an appropriate alternative authorisation is provided by the parent that complies with the requirements of the relevant service policy
- ensure that procedures outlined in the relevant service policy are followed where a parent cannot be immediately contacted to provide an alternative authorisation
- follow-up with the parent, where required, to ensure that an appropriate authorisation is obtained.
- document the process of refusal including:
 - details of the authorisation
 - why the authorisation was refused
 - actions taken by the service (e.g. if the service refused an authorised nominee named in the child’s enrolment record to collect the child from the service because they were under the influence of alcohol, what action was taken to ensure that the child was collected)
 - inform the Approved Provider/Licensee

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Attachment 18c:- Examples of circumstances in which an authorisation might be refused

Decisions to refuse an authorisation will be made on a case by case basis by the service.

Following are some examples of why an authorisation might be refused.

Delivery and Collection of Children:

The service could refuse to accept an authorisation if:

- the sibling or older child authorised to take another child out of the service does not appear to be capable.
- the child is given authorisation to leave the service alone, however they do not appear to be capable or the environment they would be in alone is unsafe..
- the parent or authorised person does not appear to be fit to take care of the child.

Administration of Medication:

The service could refuse to accept an authorisation if:

- someone who has not been authorised to consent to the administration of medication to the child asks the service to administer medication to that child
- the service is asked to administer medication to a child that is not in accordance with the legislative requirements, for example the medication is not in its original container, does not have the original label with the child's name, or has passed the expiry date.

Excursions

The service could refuse to accept an authorisation if:

- the authorisation received for the excursion does not appear to have been signed by a person authorised to sign.

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