

Authorisations Policy

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Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.			
DCC Network/All Organisation Information/Policies/Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership			

1. Policy Statement

River Region Early Education (RREE) has comprehensive processes in place for managing authorisations that are sensitive to the needs of children and families. Written authorisations from parents or authorised nominees help to ensure that the health, safety, wellbeing and best interests of all children are met. Through the authorisation process, parents are informed of risks associated with a matter and can make an informed choice whether or not to proceed.

2. Rationale

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to the acceptance and refusal of authorisations. This includes authorisations related to enrolment, the administration of medication, children leaving education and care premises, excursions, and transportation. River Region Early Education also requires signature authorisation related to medical and modified diet management, incident reporting, first aid and medical emergencies, emergency drills, and photography of children. In addition, the Privacy Act and Australian Privacy Principles require organisations to only solicit and collect sensitive information and disclose personal information with consent. This policy gives guidance for employees and families as to how authorisations and consents are requested, collected, and recorded and the potential consequences of refusal of authorisation.

The following policies have further details about authorisations:

- NQS2.30 Administration of Medication Policy,
- NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children,
- NQS2.90 Excursion and Incursion Policy,
- NQS2.23 Safe Transport and Arrival Policy,
- NQS2.12 Medical Conditions Policy,
- NQS2.11 Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy,
- NQS2.80 Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy,
- NQS2.14 Nutrition and Food Safety Policy,
- NQS6.40 Enrolment and Orientation Policy, and
- NQS7.56 Governance and Organisation Management Policy

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, including part-time, full-time and casual employees, students, trainees, and volunteers, including Board members.

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board as Approved Provider to ensure that:

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- A medication record is kept that includes the authorisation to administer medication signed by a parent or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication for each child to whom medication is or is to be administered by the service as outlined in *NQS2.30 Administration of Medication Policy* (regulation 92),
- A child who is being educated and cared for by the education and care service only leaves the service premises if given into the care of a parent of the child, or an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record, or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record to collect the child from the premises; or leaves the premises in accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record as outlined in *NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children Policy* (regulation 99),
- A child being educated and cared for by the service is not taken outside the education and care service premises on an excursion unless written authorisation has been provided as outlined in *NQS2.90 Excursion and Incursion Policy* (regulation 102),
- A child being educated and cared for by the service is not transported by the service or on transportation arranged by the service unless written authorisation has been given as outlined in *NQS2.23 Safe Transport and Arrival Policy* (regulation 102D),
- The authorisations to be kept in the enrolment record for each child enrolled at an education and care service include an authorisation, signed by a parent or a person named in the enrolment record as authorised to consent to the medical treatment of the child, for the approved provider, a nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and transportation of the child by an ambulance and, if relevant, an authorisation given under regulation 102 for the education and care service to take the child on regular outings; and, if relevant, an authorisation given under regulation 102D(4) for regular transportation of the child service as outlined in *NQS6.40 Enrolment and Orientation Policy* (regulation 161),
- The service has in place policies and procedures in relation to the acceptance and refusal of authorisations (regulation 168),
- Nominated supervisors and staff members of, and volunteers at, the service follow the policies and procedures required under regulation (regulation 170),
- Copies of the current policies and procedures required under regulation are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, and volunteers, and are readily available for inspection at the education and care service premises at all times that the service is educating and caring for children or otherwise on request (regulation 171), and
- Parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure referred to in regulation that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care or a family's ability to use the service, or as soon as practicable if the notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health, or wellbeing of any child enrolled in the service (regulation 172).

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to:

- Carry out or delegate the responsibilities of the Board as detailed above,
- Ensure systems are established and maintained to collect and retain authorisations, and
- Support employees where required in their communication with families where an authorisation has been refused.

It is the responsibility of the Administration team to:

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- Collect and record authorisations relevant to enrolment in enrolment records, and
- Notify families and Nominated Supervisors where an authorisation does not meet requirements and update Nominated Supervisors when a valid authorisation has then been received and recorded.

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisors to:

- Ensure that authorisations are collected and recorded in accordance with regulations 92, 99, 102, 102D and the organisation's policies and procedures,
- Support educators to ensure that children do not leave the education and care premises without authorisation, including for excursions,
- Support educators to ensure that children are not transported by the service without authorisation,
- Support educators to ensure that medication is not administered to children without authorisation,
- Support educators and other staff to ensure that photographs and videos of children are only taken, disclosed and/or published with consent from a parent or guardian,
- Support educators and other staff to refuse authorisations where they do not meet the requirements of regulation or the organisation's policies and procedures or where there is a risk to the safety or wellbeing of a child, and
- Communicate with families where an authorisation has been refused or is disputed and support collaborative resolution so that requirements for authorisations are met.

It is the responsibility of educators to:

- Be aware of and follow the requirements for authorisations and consents outlined in RREE policy and procedure,
- Ensure that children do not leave the education and care premises without authorisation, including for excursions,
- Ensure that children are not transported by the service without authorisation,
- Ensure that medication is not administered to children without authorisation,
- Ensure that photographs and videos of children are only taken, disclosed and/or published with consent from a parent or guardian,
- Refuse authorisations where they do not meet the requirements of regulation or the organisation's policies and procedures or where there is a risk to the safety or wellbeing of a child, and
- Support families so that requirements for authorisations are met.

5. Definitions

Authorised nominee - A person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect the child from the service.

6. Guidelines

a) Authorisations

Authorisations are verbal or written consent from a parent, or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent for a particular action or activity.

River Region Early Education collects the following authorisations during enrolment and enrolment updates and records them in the child's enrolment record. Consent for:

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- Emergency contacts to collect the child, authorise the administration of medication, authorise participation in an excursion, and/or authorise transportation (regulation 99),
- Additional authorised nominees to collect the child (regulation 99),
- The service to seek medical treatment from a medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance if the parent cannot be contacted and/or in an emergency,
- Transportation by an ambulance in an emergency,
- The administration of first aid,
- The administration of medication as requested,
- The administration of emergency asthma or anaphylaxis medication,
- The application of sunscreen,
- The service to take photographs or videos of children,
- The service to share photographs or videos of children within the service, with families, and/or publicly,
- The service to share personal information with the Department of Education or with other agencies as required,
- Participation in incursions, and
- Participation in regular emergency drills, including evacuation outside the service's premises.

River Region Early Education collects the following authorisations annually or as needed and records them in the child's enrolment record:

- Administration of medication (regulation 92),
- Excursions including regular outings (regulation 102),
- Transport of children (regulation 102D).
- Publication of photographs or videos where children can be reasonably identified, and
- Disclosure of a child's personal information where this is not legally required, or families would not expect the disclosure.

Written authorisations will contain all information required under the National Regulations - refer to specific policies for more details.

Emergency contacts and authorised nominees must be adequately identified before they will be able to collect a child from service premises - see *NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children Policy* for more information.

b) Written authorisations and signatures

In New South Wales, electronic signatures are legal if they meet the requirements of the Electronic Transactions Act 2000. This means that the signature must identify the signer and indicate their agreement to the document or matter.

To be a valid written authorisation, River Region Early Education requires:

- The name of the person,
- A signature that can be written or electronic and if electronic, can be via a digital signature platform, drawn, typed, uploaded as an image, or a marked check box,
- The date the authorisation is being made, and
- An indication of what is being authorised, for example in written text, a marked check box or in a document that details the authorisation.

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The authorisation is determined to be genuinely from the person if it meets the criteria above and is received:

- By hand from the person or a trustworthy delegate,
- By an email or phone number associated with the person,
- With other proofs of identity, such as identity documents or information, or
- In a platform where the person has a unique login or has been directly given access.

Where authorisations are received in other ways or there is doubt about the identity of the person or authorisation, an amendment or confirmation will be requested before the authorisation is considered valid.

c) Verbal authorisations

Verbal authorisations will be acceptable in the following situations:

- There is a medical emergency (medication may be administered for asthma and anaphylactic emergencies without authorisation as per regulation 94),
- A parent or authorised nominee is unable to collect a child before the service closes and authorises an alternate person to do so.

Where a verbal authorisation has been accepted, a written authorisation by text or email or on a relevant form such as an Incident Form will be requested as soon as practicable and will be printed and filed in the child's enrolment record.

d) Refusal of authorisations

The health and safety of children is a priority and there are some situations where an authorisation might be refused.

- The written authorisation does not meet the requirements of the relevant policy and/or regulations,
- The authorisation is given by someone who is not a parent, guardian or a person authorised by a parent,
- The identity of the person giving the authorisation can't be determined,
- A court order or parenting order prohibits the person from giving authorisations, or
- There is a concern about the health, safety or wellbeing of a child if the authorisation is accepted, for example a person authorised to collect a child does not appear to be capable of safeguarding the child (see *NQS2.50 Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*).

If an authorisation is refused, the parent or authorised nominee will be informed of the reason for refusal, given a copy of the relevant policy if applicable and given an opportunity to provide a valid authorisation.

A record will be kept in the child's enrolment record of the refusal of authorisation and will include the details of the authorisation, reason for refusal, any actions taken, and an Incident Record if required.

If a parent or authorised nominee cannot be contacted and the authorisation is time-critical, services will follow relevant policy and procedure and will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children.

7. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

Privacy Act 1988	
14	Australian Privacy Principles
Electronic Transactions Act 2000 No 8	
9	Signatures
Education and Care Services National Regulation	
92	Medication record
93	Administration of medication
94	Exception to authorisation requirement – anaphylaxis or asthma emergency
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102	Authorisation of excursions
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
160	Children enrolment records to be kept by approved provider
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures
National Quality Standards	
2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.
Child Safe Standards	
3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes	
Early Years Learning Framework Principles	

	Secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships
	Partnerships
Early Years Learning Framework Practices	
	Holistic, integrated, and interconnected approaches

8. Related Documents

Doc #	Attachments

Doc #	Intersections with other key documents
NQS6.40	Enrolment and Orientation Policy
NQS2.30	Administration of Medication Policy
NQS2.12	Medical Conditions Policy
NQS2.80	Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy
NQS2.11	Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy
NQS2.14	Nutrition and Food Safety Policy
NQS2.90	Excursion and Incursion Policy
NQS2.50	Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
NQS2.23	Safe Transport and Arrival Policy
NQS7.56	Governance and Organisation Management Policy
NQS7.64	Photography Policy
NQS7.60	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

9. Document Control

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NQS7.43	Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy	1	March 2019	March 2021
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