



Introduction

Our education and care service is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff and any other persons attending the service by:

- responding to the needs of the child or adult who presents with symptoms of an infectious disease or infestation while attending the service;
- complying with current exclusion schedules and guidelines set by the Public Health Unit; and
- providing up-to-date information and resources for families and staff regarding protection of all children from infectious diseases and blood-borne viruses, management of infestations and immunisation programs.

The way that children interact with each other and with adults in education and care services means that diseases can quickly spread in a variety of ways. Whilst it is not possible to prevent the spread of all infections and diseases, minimising the risk is enhanced through:

- effective hand hygiene;
- exclusion of ill children, educators and other staff; and
- immunisation.

Policy

Effective Hygiene

Our Preschool will maintain and promote effective hygiene practices, including:

- correct handwashing technique;
- using standard precautions when handling blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions, dried blood and other body substances.
- cleaning toys and other items that children are likely to put in their mouths, after use;
- raking sandpits often and/or securely covering them when not in use;
- disposing of soiled items in a container that is inaccessible to children;
- washing rubbish bins and nappy buckets regularly; and
- actively promoting handwashing and other hygiene practices with children and families.

Exclusion of Children, Educators and Other Staff Infectious Diseases

In order to prevent the spread of infectious diseases through interpersonal contact, our service will adhere to the exclusion period table, published by the National Health and Medical Research Council. www.nhmrc.gov.au, please also refer to www.healthdirect.gov.au/schoolexclusion-for-health-reasons

Infectious Disease

Fever In children, a temperature over 38°C indicates a fever.

A fever is usually caused by an infection somewhere in the body. Some types of infections that lead to fever include:

- viral (caused by a virus) – around nine out of ten children with a fever will have a viral illness, such as cold, flu or gastroenteritis
- bacterial (caused by bacteria) – such as some ear infections, pneumonia or urine infections.

In order to prevent the spread of infection and ensure wellbeing, children with a temperature above 38°C will be excluded from the service.

Immunisation

Our service's practice is guided by our states department of health in relation to child immunisations. We will share resources and information from government bodies and recognised authorities to support families access information regarding immunisations. Parents who wish to enrol their child are required to provide at the time of enrolment their child's immunisation status. This may be an AIR Immunisation History Statement or Form based on regulatory requirements. We are able to refuse other forms of documentation based on the above.

A NOTE ON IMMUNISATION Immunisation requirements vary based on each state and territory's health legislation. Each child's record must include the immunisation status of the child (R162(f)). The National Law and Regulations do not specify how this information must be obtained, except for at services located in NSW and VIC (R162(h) and (i)). A service should include as part of its health practices and procedures a written process to obtain information from families about their children's current immunisation status. Practices and procedures should include any jurisdictional requirements about immunisation. For national and state legislation in relation to immunisation requirements for education and care services (such as No Jab, No Play) please refer to: www.ncirs.org.au/public/no-jab-no-play-no-jab-no-pay

Exclusion Periods

The Public Health Unit will be advised as soon as the service is aware that a child or educator has contracted a vaccine-preventable disease and any directions will be followed accordingly.

Any child or educator that is not fully immunised may be excluded for a period of time if there is a case of a vaccine preventable disease at the service, or if the child or educator has been in contact with someone outside the Service who has a vaccine preventable disease. We will consider the Exclusion Periods recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council and act on any directions provided by Public Health Unit.

It is the responsibility of families to inform the Service that their child has come into contact with someone with a vaccine preventable or infectious disease.

Responsibilities

The Approved Provider will:

- Ensure that where there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at the service, reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of that infectious disease (Regulation 88(1)).
- Ensure that where there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at the service, a parent/guardian or authorised emergency contact of each child at the service is notified of the occurrence as soon as is practicable (Regulation 88(2)).
- Ensure that information from the Public Health Unit about the recommended minimum exclusion periods is displayed at the service, is available to all stakeholders and is adhered to in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease (as designated by the Department of Health).
- Ensure that the parent/ guardian and Public Health Unit are notified as soon as possible, after being made aware that an enrolled child:
 - has one of the following vaccine preventable diseases, or
 - is reasonably suspected of having come into contact with a person who has one of these vaccine preventable diseases and the enrolled child has no evidence of immunisation lodged to show that the child is immunised against, or acquired immunity by infection from, that disease.
 - a) Pertussis, or
 - b) Poliomyelitis, or
 - c) Measles, or
 - d) Mumps, or
 - e) Rubella, or
 - f) Meningococcal C, or
 - g) Diphtheria, or
 - h) Haemophilus influenza Type b (Hib), or
 - i) Tetanus
- Ensuring that any directions provided by Public Health Unit are followed regarding the possible exclusion of a child or educator who is not immunised against a vaccine preventable disease.
- Notifying the regulatory authority within 24 hours of a serious incident including when a child becomes ill at the service or medical attention is sought while the child is attending the service.
- Ensuring that appropriate and current information and resources are provided to staff and parents/guardians regarding the identification and management of infectious diseases, blood-borne viruses and infestations.
- Keeping informed about current legislation, information, research and best practice.
- Ensuring that any changes to the exclusion table or immunisation schedule are communicated to staff and parents/guardians in a timely manner.

Infectious Disease

Nominated Supervisor will:

- Contact the parents/guardians of a child suspected of suffering from an infectious or vaccine- preventable disease, and requesting the child be collected as soon as possible.
- Notify a parent/guardian or authorised emergency contact person when a symptom of an excludable infectious illness or disease has been observed.
- Ensure that a minimum of one staff with current approved first aid qualifications is in attendance and immediately available at all times the service is in operation.
- Establish good hygiene and infection control procedures, and ensuring that they are adhered to by everyone at the service.
- Ensure the exclusion requirements for infectious diseases are adhered to as per the recommended minimum exclusion periods, notifying the Approved Provider and parents/guardians of any outbreak of infectious disease at the service, and displaying this information in a prominent position.
- Advise parents/guardians on enrolment that the recommended minimum exclusion periods will be observed in regard to the outbreak of any infectious diseases or infestations.
- Advise the parents/guardians of a child who is not fully immunised on enrolment that they may be required to keep their child at home when an infectious disease is diagnosed at the service, dependent on directions from the Public Health Unit.
- Request that parents/guardians notify the service if their child has, or is suspected of having, an infectious disease or infestation.
- Provide information and resources to families to assist in the identification and management of infectious diseases and infestations.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Provide relevant sourced materials to families.
- Ensure that an “Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness” record is completed as soon as practicable or no later than 24 hours of the illness occurring.

Educators will:

- Ensure that any children that are suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times;
- Implement appropriate health and safety procedures, when tending to ill children;
- Ensure that families are aware of the need to collect their children as soon as practicable to ensure the child’s comfort;
- Advise families that they will need to alert the service if their child is diagnosed with an Infectious Illness;
- Maintain their own immunisation status;
- Provide varied opportunities for children to engage in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice;
- Take into consideration the grouping of children to reduce the risk of acquiring an infectious illness when planning the routines/program of the day;

Infectious Disease

- Implement the services health and hygiene policy including:
 - hand washing – washing and drying thoroughly
 - routine and daily cleaning of the service;
 - wearing gloves (particularly when in direct contact with bodily fluids); and
 - proper handling and preparation of food.
- Maintain currency with regard to Health and Safety by attending appropriate professional development opportunities.

Families will:

- Advise the service of their child's immunisation status, and provide written documentation of this for the service to copy and keep with the child's enrolment records;
- Advise the service when their child's immunisation/medical condition is updated and provide this information to the service to ensure that enrolment records are up to date; and
- Have the opportunity to provide input into the review and effectiveness of policies and procedures of the service via various methods.
- Keeping their children at home when an infectious disease has been diagnosed at the service and their child is not fully immunised against that infectious disease if directed to do so by the Public Health Unit.
- Informing the service if their child has an infectious disease or has been in contact with a person who has an infectious disease.

Related Documents

Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care (5th edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2012),