

Infectious Diseases Policy



Purpose

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

In order to prevent the spread of infectious diseases through interpersonal contact, our service will adhere to the exclusion period table, published by the Department of Health.

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55e_exclusion_period_poster_130701.pdf

Responsibilities of the Approved Provider

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 including:
 - Ensuring 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.
 - Ensuring 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.
 - Ensuring that information from the Department of Health 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.
 - Ensuring that the parent/guardian and Secretary are informed within 24 hours of becoming aware that an enrolled child is suffering from:
 - Pertussis, or
 - Poliomyelitis, or c) Measles, or
 - Mumps, or
 - Rubella, or
 - Meningococcal C
 - Ensuring that a child who is not immunised against a vaccine-preventable disease does not attend the service when an infectious disease is diagnosed, and does not return until there are no more occurrences of that disease at the service and the recommended minimum exclusion period (refer to Definitions) has ceased (of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009).
 - 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 families and staff immediately.

Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor

- Contacting the parents/guardians of a child suspected of suffering from an infectious or vaccine- preventable disease, or of a child not immunised against a vaccine-preventable disease that has been detected at the service, and requesting the child be collected as soon as possible.

- Notifying a parent/guardian or authorised emergency contact person when a symptom of an excludable infectious illness or disease has been observed.
- Ensuring 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.
- Establishing good hygiene and infection control procedures, and ensuring that they are adhered to by everyone at the service.
- Ensuring 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.
- Advising parents/guardians on enrolment that the recommended minimum exclusion periods will be observed in regard to the outbreak of any infectious diseases or infestations.
- Advising the parents/guardians of a child who is not fully immunised on enrolment that they will be required to keep their child at home when an infectious disease is diagnosed at the service, and until there are no more occurrences of that disease and the exclusion period has ceased
- Requesting that parents/guardians notify the service if their child has, or is suspected of having, an infectious disease or infestation.
- Providing information and resources to families to assist in the identification and management of infectious diseases and infestations.
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times.
- Provide relevant sourced materials to families.
- Ensuring that an “Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness” record is completed as soon as practicable or no later than 24 hours of the illness occurring

Responsibilities of the Educators

- 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.
- Maintain their own immunisation status, and advise the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor of any updates to their immunisation status.
- Provide varied opportunities for children to engage in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice.
- Observing signs and symptoms of children who may appear unwell, and informing the Nominated Supervisor.
- Providing access to information and resources for parents/ guardians to assist in the identification and management of infectious diseases and infestations.
- Monitoring any symptoms in children that may indicate the presence of an infectious disease.
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times

Responsibilities of the Families

- Providing Immunisation documentation upon enrolment and as the child receives subsequent immunisations.
- Keep their children at home if they are unwell or have an excludable infectious disease.
- Keep 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, until there are no more occurrences of that disease and the exclusion period has ceased.
- Inform the service if their child has an infectious disease or has been in contact with a person who has an infectious disease.

Definitions, Terms & Abbreviations

Term	means
Infectious	Likely to spread or influence others in a rapid manner
Infestation	Unusually large number of insects or animals typically to cause disease (Lice)
Exclusion	Deny access to a place or group

Related Statutory Obligations & Considerations

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

Department of Education - <http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care>

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) - http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

<http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653>

Department of Health - <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Pages/default.aspx>,

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/controlguideline/Pages/default.aspx>

National Quality Framework (NQF) - <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/>

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) –

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55e_exclusion_period_poster_130701.pdf

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 - <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2000/40/whole>

Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children attending Child Care Facilities) Bill 2013

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Related Telephone Numbers

- Early Childhood Directorate 1800-619-113
- Department of Health 1800-020-103
- Emergency Services 000

Amendment History

Version	Amendment	Short Description
1.1.2018	Clarification of responsibilities	Additional resources to support 24hr exclusion
Date:	2 nd January 2018	
Version:	1.1.2018	
Last Amended By:	Heather Sheridan	
Next Review:	January 2019	
Position:	Nominated Supervisor	

This policy will be updated to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements every year. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulation*, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.