

INFECTIOUS AND VIRAL DISEASES POLICY

AIM: To minimize the risks to children's and staff health whilst at this preschool.

The Nominated Supervisor of the preschool must ensure all members of staff observe strict health practices, and be aware of their responsibility for their own and the children's health.

Viral and other infectious diseases are transmitted in three ways:

1. Through bodily fluids, i.e. saliva, urine, blood, fecal matter and vomit.
2. Through airborne droplets, i.e. coughing and sneezing.
3. Direct contact

Some germs can spread directly from person to person: others can spread from the infected person to the environment. Many germs can survive on hands, and on objects such as toys, door handles and bench tops.

The way children interact in education and care services means that diseases can quickly spread. This means that actions to limit the spread of infections in our centre is an important part of protecting children and their families.

Procedures:

Listed below are some strategies to control the hazard of infectious diseases:

Hand hygiene: All educators and other staff and children should do hand hygiene regularly.

Have an adequate supply of soap, hand sanitizer and gloves on hand at all times. Ensure these are stored safely around children.

When washing your hands, ensure that you do so thoroughly with soap or a medical wash. Make sure you wash between your fingers and all the surfaces of your hands.

Promote the washing of hands to children through example and with posters.

Ensure that you wash your hands, particularly before handling food or between going from one child to another (particularly when assisting with toileting) and blowing of noses.

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth before washing hands.

Promote the covering of nose and mouth when anyone sneezes or coughs, (coughing into their elbow is a useful strategy).

When assisting toileting, cleaning up vomit or blood ALWAYS WEAR DISPOSABLE GLOVES. Many serious diseases such as Hepatitis A and B and HIV are transmitted through bodily fluids. Remember to always wash hands after removing disposable gloves.

A Healthy Environment:

Clean surfaces and disinfect them regularly. These include taps, all sinks, and kitchen surfaces, including refrigerator and all doorknobs and equipment.

Ensure robust infection control and cleaning procedures are in place in response to an outbreak of an infectious disease.

Follow guidelines in Staying Healthy 6th Ed. Section 3.2 for cleaning. Review these guidelines annually with staff.

Immunisations:

Promote the annual influenza vaccine for staff, children and their families.

All educators and other staff should be vaccinated according to the recommendations in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#). This includes additional vaccines recommended for people at occupational risk, including those working in children's education and care.

Managing Infections:

If a child or staff member becomes ill while at the preschool, they will be sent home as soon as possible. While awaiting collection by their carer, the symptomatic child will be cared for in an area that is separate from other children, to prevent the spread. Anything the child or staff member has touched will need to be thoroughly cleaned.

No one (staff or children) who is sick with influenza-like symptoms, even with mild symptoms, should attend the preschool.

During an outbreak of an infectious disease, cancel any planned activities outside the preschool and any large gatherings at the preschool. Notify parents and staff of the outbreak, include how many children/ staff affected, the symptoms and what action has been taken.

Staff and children will have their temperature taken daily upon arrival should there be an outbreak of an infectious disease.

The Exclusion Procedure:

The minimum exclusion periods recommended here aim to reduce the spread of infectious diseases between children, educators and other staff, and families visiting early education and care services. The exclusion periods are based on how long a person with a specific disease is likely to be infectious.

Symptom/ condition	Exclude/Not Exclude	Notifiable to Public Health Unit
Diarrhea or vomiting	Exclude until clear for 24 hours	
Gastroenteritis	Exclude until clear for 48 hours	If 2 or more people affected
Eye discharge	Exclude until clear	

Fever/ temp over 38 C	Exclude until temp is normal and not being managed by paracetamol or any pain relief medicine.	
Respiratory symptoms (cough, runny or blocked nose, sore throat)	Exclude if symptoms are severe or getting worse. See fact sheet on respiratory symptoms in Staying Healthy 6 th Ed.	
Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried	
COVID 19	Exclude until symptoms have cleared, or you test negative	If considered an outbreak
diphtheria Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b) Measles meningococcal disease mumps, poliomyelitis, rubella (German measles), tetanus, whooping cough (pertussis)	Exclude until cleared by a Doctor	If 1 or more people affected

For more detail see Section 4.3 in Staying Healthy 6th Ed.

The Nominated Supervisor will contact the public health unit immediately on 1300 066 055, if notified that a child or staff member at the preschool has been diagnosed with any infectious disease as per table above.

If directed to close by NSW Health, notify the Regulatory Authority as soon as possible via NQAITS or call 1800 619 113.