

4.2 Infectious Diseases Policy

The service strives to remove immediate and/or serious risks to the health of the children, from possible cross-infection, by adopting appropriate procedures for dealing with infectious diseases*, whilst respecting the rights of individual privacy. Accordingly, all people, including children, educators and parents, with infectious diseases will be excluded from attending the service to prevent the diseases spreading to others.

* When **infectious disease** is referred to in these policies and procedures, it means communicable diseases and notifiable diseases (see Commonwealth Department of Health at www.health.gov.au)



Relevant Laws and other Provisions

The laws and other provisions affecting this policy include:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011*
- *Duty of Care*
- *National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'Staying Healthy in Childcare' 6th edition*
- *National Quality Standard 2.1 Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted*
- *Policies: 4.1 – General Health and Safety, 4.3 – Hygiene, 4.4 – Preventative Health and Wellbeing, 4.14 – Infectious Disease Response Strategy, 8.16 – Employee Immunisation, 9.2 – Enrolment.*



Procedures

Monitoring

The Coordinator will ensure they keep up to date with information on infectious diseases within the community through accessing the Commonwealth Government Department of Health (see www.health.gov.au) and Queensland Health (www.health.qld.gov.au).

The current NHMRC resource 'Staying Healthy in Childcare' will be referred to when making decisions in regards to communicable diseases and/or exclusion periods. Fact sheets may also be accessed through Queensland Health at <http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthConditions>

Reporting

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform the Coordinator of any infectious disease that their child, or other immediate family members may be suffering.

Parents/carers will be advised through the enrolment process and the Family Handbook that children who are ill are not to be brought to the service.

It is the responsibility of educators to inform the Coordinator of any infectious disease that the staff member, or their other immediate family members, may be suffering.

This service is responsible for reporting to the State Health Authorities all notifiable diseases (as per requirements of the Commonwealth Government Department of Health) and to report this to parents of other children in this service as appropriate, having regard to the privacy of individuals concerned.

A notice of an occurrence of an infectious disease will be displayed for families at the service.

The Coordinator will notify the Approved Provider in writing when a report of notification has been made to the Department of Health.

Records regarding infectious disease will be maintained by the Coordinator. These records will include the child's name, age, symptoms, date and time when educators first noticed the illness, date and time the record was made and any action taken (see 4.5.2). This record will not be available to other parents/guardians in view of the sensitive nature of a child's health information (see Policy 10.8 – Information Handling (Privacy and Confidentiality)).

The rights of individual privacy will be always respected, and in particular the Privacy Policy of the Service (see Policy 10.8 – Information Handling (Privacy and Confidentiality)) will be observed by all staff implementing these procedures relating to infectious diseases.

Exclusion

All people, including children and educators, who are suffering from any infectious diseases need to be excluded from the service to prevent others from being introduced to the infection. When any such person is found to be showing signs of any infectious disease:

- *For children, their parents/carers will be asked to immediately collect their child and seek medical advice;*
- *For educators and staff, they will immediately be released from work to seek immediate medical attention and for the period of the infectious disease;*
- *For parents or other adults, they will be required to leave the premises of the service immediately and not re-enter the premises unless and until they are no longer suffering from the infectious disease; and*
- *If a duly qualified and registered medical practitioner diagnoses an infectious disease, the child/educator shall be excluded for the recommended period (as per NHMRC guidelines).*

For diseases which are published as requiring a doctor's certificate clearing the child/educator, the doctor's certificate will be provided before the child/educator is re-admitted to the service. Information can be obtained from the Department of Health at www.health.gov.au and the National Health and Medical Research Council at www.nhmrc.gov.au.

Immunisation

All children must meet the Australian Federal Government's immunisation requirements or have a valid exemption for the family to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

Parents will be asked to verify their child's immunisation status.

Non Immunisation

Children and educators will be excluded from the service if there is an outbreak of an infectious disease against which they have not been immunised. The period of exclusion will be in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's recommendations (www.nhmrc.gov.au).

Reference

"Staying Healthy in Childcare 2024"

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/clinical%20guidelines/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>

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