

Managing Infectious Diseases

Background

Parents, staff and visitors to childcare Services need to cooperate to ensure anyone entering the Service is in good health so that the possibility of infections spreading to others is minimised.

Policy statement

The Policy details the Service's practices for managing unwell children and adults at the Service to minimise the spread of infection to others.

Strategies and practices

- The *Managing Infectious Diseases Policy* is explained to parents when they enrol their child in the Service, and their attention is specifically drawn to their responsibilities under the Policy. Information about infectious conditions and minimum exclusion periods for these conditions is included in the Parent Handbook provided to parents at enrolment. QA 2.1.4
- Educators are informed of the symptoms of excludable illnesses and disease and of infection control. They are alert to the signs of illness in children and respond accordingly. The signs include:
 - severe, persistent or prolonged coughing
 - breathing difficulties (e.g. noisy, wheezy)
 - yellowish skin or eyes
 - irritated eyes, eye lining red, pus from eyes
 - unusual spots or rashes
 - vomiting and/or diarrhoea
 - temperature over 38 degrees Celsius
 - behaviour exhibited that is not 'normal' for the child (e.g. sleeping, being unable to participate in the daily activities as usual). QA 2.1.4
- The Service's roster ensures sufficient educators with first aid qualifications are on site at all times children are present. QA 2.1.4
- All instances of illnesses and infectious diseases (children and staff) are recorded in the Illness and Infectious Disease Register so that they may be tracked and any spread minimised. The Register is kept in the main office. QA 2.1.4
- Educators intentionally teach children health and safety practices to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. QA 2.1.4
- The Service strictly adheres to the National Health and Medical Research Council's recommended minimum exclusion periods for infectious conditions. The Queensland Government – Time Out Poster detailing these periods is displayed prominently in the foyer. QA 2.1.4
- If an outbreak of an infectious disease occurs in the Service, parents are informed verbally and by notices displayed throughout the Service. Information given to parents will include the nature of the illness, symptoms, incubation and infectious periods and the Service's exclusion requirements for the illness. QA 2.1.4, 7.3.1

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- In the case of serious ill health or hospitalisation, the child or staff member may be asked to provide a medical certificate verifying that they are sufficiently recovered to return to the Service. However, the Nominated Supervisor has the final say on whether the child or a staff member may return. QA 2.1.4
- Parents are asked not to bring any unwell child into the Service, and not to enter the Service if they are unwell themselves. The Nominated Supervisor can refuse entry to any child or adult (including a staff member) who comes to the Service clearly unwell. QA 2.1.4
- Should a child become unwell during the day, the parents or authorised person are contacted immediately to collect the child. The parent will be asked to sign the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record. QA 2.1.4, 7.3.1
- Staff who become ill during the day are sent home and replaced. QA 7.3.1
- To ensure the safety of other children, staff and visitors, parents are asked to inform the Service if their child has been exposed to any infectious disease. QA 2.1.4

Responsibilities of parents

- To keep the Service informed of their child's current immunisation status.
- To provide, if requested, a medical certificate verifying that the child who has been unwell has sufficiently recovered to return to the Service.
- To keep unwell children away from the Service.
- To remain away from the Service when they themselves are unwell.
- To arrange prompt collection of their unwell child if contacted by the Service.
- To inform the Service at any time their child has been exposed to an infectious disease.

Links to other policies

- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Immunisation for Children and Staff Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

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| Regs | 77 | Health, hygiene and safe food practices |
| | 85 | Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures |
| | 86 | Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness |
| | 87 | Incident, injury, trauma and illness record |
| | 88 | Infectious diseases |
| | 90 | Medical conditions policy |

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| | 162 | Health information to be kept in enrolment record |
| QA | 2.1.1 | Each child's health needs are supported |
| | 2.1.3 | Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented |
| | 2.1.4 | Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines |
| | 7.3.1 | Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements |

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services. 5th edition.* http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_child_care_5th_edition_0.pdf accessed 6 February 2016
- Queensland Health. *Public Health Act 2005.* <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/PublicHealthact/> accessed 6 February 2016
- Queensland Health. (2014). *Time Out Poster.* https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout_poster.pdf accessed 6 February 2016

Further reading and useful websites

- Department of Health (Australian Government). *Immunise Australia Program.* <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/> accessed 6 February 2016
- National Health and Medical Research Council – <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/> accessed 6 February 2016
- NCAC. (2011). *NCAC Factsheet for Families: Immunisation and child care.* http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/pcf-articles/P24_FFImmunisation_June11.pdf accessed 6 February 2016
- Queensland Health – <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/> accessed 6 February 2016
- Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – <http://www.rch.org.au/home/> accessed 6 February 2016

Policy review

Bella Grace Early Learning Centre encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Date reviewed: July 2017

Next review Date: July 2018