

Infectious Diseases Policy

BELLA GRACE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

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 *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.
- 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).
- The Service's roster ensures sufficient educators with first aid qualifications are on site at all times children are present.
- All instances of illnesses and infectious diseases (children and staff) are recorded in the Illness Register so that they may be tracked and any spread minimised. The Register is kept in the main office.
- Educators intentionally teach children health and safety practices to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.
- The Service strictly adheres to the Queensland Health Time Out Recommendations with minimum exclusion periods for infectious conditions. The Time Out Poster – Queensland Health details exclusion periods. This schedule is accessible in the foyer of the Service or https://www.health.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0022/426820/timeout_poster.pdf
- If an outbreak of an infectious disease occurs in the Service, parents are informed by notices displayed in the foyer of the Service and may be informed verbally. Information given to parents

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will include the nature of the illness, symptoms, incubation and infectious periods and the Service's exclusion requirements for the illness.

- Where an outbreak is a vaccine preventable disease, the Service will notify the relevant health authority, and will follow that authority's recommended guidelines and directives. Children and staff who are not immunised may be excluded from the Service for the duration of the outbreak. Refer to the Service's *Immunisation for Children and Staff Policy*.
- 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.
- 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.
- If a child has a temperature or appears unwell at home before coming to the Service, parents are not to administer pain relief as this may mask symptoms of a possible contagious or serious illness. If a parent believes that a temperature or other symptom is due to something non-contagious (eg. teething), they are to provide a letter from a medical practitioner confirming this fact. If a child is unwell, parents are to keep their child at home where they can recover and limit the spread of illness to other children.
- 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*.
- Staff who become ill during the day are sent home and replaced.
- 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.

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

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
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record

QA	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented

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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.* https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_childcare_5th_edition_0.pdf accessed 24 December 2017
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Recommended minimum exclusion periods.* https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55e_exclusion_period_poster_130701.pdf accessed 24 December 2017

Further reading and useful websites

- Department of Health (Australian Government). *Immunise Australia Program.* <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/> accessed 24 December 2017
- National Health and Medical Research Council – <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/> accessed 24 December 2017
- Queensland Health – <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/> accessed 24 December 2017
- Queensland Health. (2014). *Time Out Poster.* https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout_poster.pdf accessed 24 December 2017
- Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne – <http://www.rch.org.au/home/> accessed 24 December 2017

Policy review

The Service 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.

REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
January 2018	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 Feb 2018
April 2018	Policy reviewed. Minimal wording changes. Information unchanged.
May 2018	Added information to inform parents that they are not to administer pain relief medications in the morning before delivering their child to the Service. Symptoms of illness must be supported by a Doctor’s letter to confirm it is non-contagious.