

WCS Children's Services

HEALTH - Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy

Background

Parents, educators and visitors to children's services need to co-operate 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 *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy* is made available to parents/guardians when they enroll their child in the Service. Information about infectious conditions and minimum exclusion periods for these conditions is available to families and displayed at the Service.
- Educators are informed of the symptoms of excludable illnesses and disease and of infection control through educator meetings and professional development, and are provided with educational materials. 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 children's infectious diseases and illnesses are recorded in the Illness and Infectious Disease Register, where applicable, so that they may be tracked and any spread minimised. The Register is accessible.
- Educators intentionally teach children health and safety practices to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.
- The Service strictly adheres to the National Health and Medical Research Council's recommended minimum exclusion periods for infectious conditions.

The NHMRC Poster detailing these periods is displayed prominently in the Service or made available to families.

- If an outbreak of an infectious disease occurs in the Service, parents/guardians are informed verbally, by email and/or by notices displayed throughout the Service. Information given to parents/guardians will include the nature of the illness, symptoms, incubation and infectious periods and the Service's exclusion requirements for the illness.
- In the case of serious ill health or hospitalisation, the child or educator may be asked to provide a medical certificate verifying that they are sufficiently recovered to return to the Service. However, the supervisor/educator has the final say on whether the child or educator may return.
- Parents/guardians are asked not to bring any unwell child into the Service, and are asked not to enter the Service if they are unwell themselves. The supervisor/educator can refuse entry to any child or adult (including an educator) who comes to the Service clearly unwell.
- Should a child become unwell during the day, the parents/guardians or authorised person are contacted immediately to collect the child. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign the Incident Form.
- Educators who become ill during the day are sent home and replaced if required. In Family Day Care the educator needs to notify the office that they are unable to work.
- To ensure the safety of other children, educators and visitors, parents and guardians are asked to inform the Service if their child has been exposed to any infectious disease.

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- 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 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

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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 |

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| | 88 | Infectious diseases |
| | 90 | Medical conditions policy |
| | 162 | Health information to be kept in enrolment record |

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| 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. |
| | 2.1.3 | Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child. |
| | 2.2.2 | Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented. |
| | 6.1.3 | Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing. |
| | 7.1.2 | Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service. |

Sources, further reading and useful websites

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 2017
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing diseases in childcare. 4th edition.*
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf>
[accessed 6 March 2012](#)
- National Quality Standard 2018
- Public Health Act 2005
- Queensland Health. (2010). *Time Out Poster.*
http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout_poster.pdf
[accessed 15 March 2012](#)
- Dr. B. Abbey and P. Maclean, NQS - the complete system of policies, procedures and forms, [www.childcarebydesign](http://www.childcarebydesign.com.au).

Further reading

- NCAC. (2011). *NCAC Factsheet for Families: Immunisation and child care.*
http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/pcf-articles/P24_FFImmunisation_June11.pdf accessed 5 March 2012
- Queensland Health. (2000). *Germ Busters Kit.*
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/germbusters/documents/23197.pdf>

Useful websites

- Service for Community Child Health – www.rch.org.au
- Immunise Australia Program – www.immunise.health.gov.au
- National Health and Medical Research Council – www.nhmrc.gov.au
- Queensland Health – www.health.qld.gov.au/

Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be monitored and reviewed as issues are identified. Proposed changes will be circulated and discussed by all programs and any external stakeholders for approval.

Person Responsible for Review:

Manager, Children's Services

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| Implementation Date: | 3 November 2014 | Review Date: | July 2020 |
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Modification History

| Date | Sections and/or Paragraphs | Source | Details |
|------------|----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| 2016/08/31 | Whole Policy | WCS | New Format |
| 2018/01 | Quality Areas | Revised National Quality Standard 2018 | |
| 2018/07 | Whole policy | | Wording changes |

Approved by Susan Henderson, Manager, Children's Services.



Date: 16 January 2017