

DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES

OVERVIEW

This policy outlines roles/responsibilities of staff and parents regarding management of infectious diseases. It also covers use of DECD documents relating to infectious diseases including '[Staying Healthy in Childcare](#)' and recommended hygiene practices. It should be used alongside site specific hygiene policies such as the 'Nappy Change Policy' and handwashing guidelines.

INSTRUCTIONS

Risk assessment and identification of illness should follow [DECD Infectious Disease Control Procedure](#).

Leadership will:

- Oversee implementation of this policy and ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- Ensure educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- Ensure all new employees are provided access to this policy as part of their induction process
- Ensure Families are aware of the Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy upon enrolment
- Ensure a copy of each child's current immunisation record that shows that the child's immunisation is up-to-date or on catch up schedule with a future end date is received prior to enrolment unless evidence that a child has an approved exemption from the Chief Public Health Officer is provided.
- Provide information for staff regarding immunisation and follow DfE protocols around immunisations for staff.
- Communicate with families who have exemptions from immunisation legislation.
- Oversee and update site illness policies and procedures in line with advice from SA Health and Staying Healthy in Childcare guidelines.
- Ensure exclusion periods are observed when a child has been diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease, referencing information from the Public Health Unit (PHU) and Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services.
- Notify the local PHU by phone as soon as possible after if they are made aware that a child enrolled at the Service is suffering from one of the following vaccine preventable diseases and following all appropriate incident reporting processes (as per incident, illness, trauma and injury policy)
- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Poliomyelitis
- Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib)
- Meningococcal disease
- Rubella ('German measles')
- Measles
- Pertussis ('whooping cough')
- Tetanus
- Ensure as soon as practical, that families of each child enrolled in the Service is notified of any infectious diseases that are reported.
- Ensure educators and staff routinely role model hand washing, hand drying, cough and sneeze etiquette
- Ensure effective environmental cleaning policies and procedures are adhered to all times
- Ensure all educators are mindful and maintain confidentiality of individual children's medical circumstances
- Ensure educators or staff who have diarrhoea, or an infectious disease do not handle food for others and are not to return to work until they have been symptom free for 48 hours
- Maintain up to date knowledge on DfE protocols for the management of Covid 19 and ensure they are implemented.

Educators will:

- Ensure that any child suspected of having an infectious illness is responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times
- Ensure that appropriate health and safety procedures are implemented when treating ill children- wear disposable gloves, face mask or other PPE if needed.
- Ensure opportunities are provided for children to participate in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice such as hand washing, sneezing and cough etiquette
- Ensure they follow all Covid 19 protocols recommended by DfE.
- Notify other staff if advised by a parent their child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease.
- Photocopy and display relevant information from 'Staying Healthy' outside the rooms, along with the number of cases identified at the Centre, once the potential illness is identified.
- Tell administrative staff that 'Staying Healthy' factsheet has been displayed and how many cases are present in the room. Whoever displays the factsheet will inform admin.
- Monitor signs of illness in children as outlined on the illness flowchart and illness record.
- Contact the parents of any children who exhibit any symptoms identified as possibly contagious in 'Staying Healthy' e.g. vomiting, loose bowels, high temperature, rash, cold sores.
- Ensure children who are sent home are accompanied by an illness record outlining their symptoms, any required exclusionary period and if a medical clearance is requested.
- Ensure they adhere to personal handwashing practices, daily cleaning practices and recommendations regarding use of gloves as recommended by NHMRC 2024 as follows:

Who	Before	After
Educators and other staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting work, so harmful germs are not introduced into the service • Eating or handling food • Giving medication • Putting on gloves • Applying sunscreen or other lotions to children • Going home, so harmful germs are not taken home with you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating or handling food • Using the toilet • Helping children use the toilet • Taking off gloves • Changing a nappy (see section 2.5 Nappy changing and toileting) • Cleaning the nappy change area • Wiping a child's nose or your own nose • Cleaning up body fluids such as faeces, urine, vomit or blood • Handling garbage • Coming in from outside play • Applying sunscreen or other lotions to children • Touching animals

Type of gloves	When to wear them	How to maintain them	Examples
Disposable gloves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When there is a chance you may come in contact with body fluids, including faeces, urine, vomit or blood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No maintenance – use them once and throw them away; do not reuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing nappies Managing cuts and abrasions Cleaning spills of body fluids
Utility (reusable) gloves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When cleaning the education and care service When preparing bleach solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean according to the manufacturer's instructions Hang up to dry after use, preferably outside Store dry between uses Replace when showing signs of wear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General cleaning duties

It is important to note that gloves should be removed and disposed of immediately after use, and handwashing should be performed both before and after using gloves.

- Ensure routine cleaning is maintained as per NHMRC 2024 including
 - surfaces are cleaned to clean surfaces first with detergent and water before using disinfectants. (Disinfectants cannot kill germs unless areas are clean)
 - mops used for toilet accidents are to be soaked in disinfectant in a bucket in the laundry sink and then air-dried
 - that a daily clean is carried out on other surfaces that may transmit germs such as high touch objects including doorknobs, tables, light switches, handles, remotes, play gyms, low shelving, etc. This will be increased to several times a day if an outbreak of an infectious disease/virus has been recorded in the Service or to minimise the risk of transmission of a virus such as COVID-19
 - that if a child has a toileting accident, the items are placed in a plastic bag with the child's name on it. The plastic bag will be labelled for parents to take home
 - cloths and mops are colour coded so that a separate cloth or mop is used to clean floors, bathroom, art and craft, and meal surfaces
 - that any toy that is mouthed by a child is placed immediately in the 'toys to be washed' basket located on the top shelf in the nappy change area and washed with warm soapy water at the end of the day.
 - All washable toys out on display for the children are to be washed on a weekly basis to decrease the risk of cross contamination and recorded with the date and a signature as evidence.
 - toys and equipment (that are difficult to wash) will be washed with detergent (or soap and water) and air-dried in sunlight
 - washable toys and equipment will be washed in detergent and hot water or the dishwasher and aired to dry (toys will not be washed in the dishwasher at the same time as dishes). All toys and equipment that have been cleaned will be recorded on the toy cleaning register.
 - all cleaning procedures will be recorded on the Service's Cleaning Checklist
 - all cushions, including floor cushions, should have removeable cushion covers and will be laundered regularly as well as whenever they are visibly dirty or contaminated
 - floor surfaces will be cleaned on a daily basis after each meal and at the end of each day
 - toilets/bathrooms will be cleaned in the middle of the day, the end of the day and whenever needed throughout the day using detergent and water followed by disinfectant and paper towel

- when cleaning up spills of faeces, vomit or urine off beds, floors, bathrooms etc. educators will use disinfectant on the surface after cleaning it with detergent and warm water
- Beds will be cleaned daily. Linen will be stored individually and washed weekly unless used by a child with a contagious illness in which case it will be washed after use.

Families will:

- Ensure adhere to the Service's policies regarding *Dealing with Infectious Diseases, Immunisation, Sick Children Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* and exclusion requirements
- adhere to the Service's restrictions of entry into the Service in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease or virus
- adhere to the Service's policy regarding *Hand Washing*
- exclude their child from care if they display symptoms of an infectious illness or disease or in the event of a vaccine preventable disease occurs in the Service and their child is not immunised fully
- alert the Service if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness, including COVID-19
- advise the Service of their child's immunisation status, by providing a current Immunisation History Statement recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) for the Service to copy and place in the child's file
- advise the Service when their child's medical management plan is updated
- provide sufficient spare clothing, particularly if the child is transitioning from nappies to underwear
- adhere to the Service's risk minimisation strategies if their child has complex medical needs in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease or virus.
- Maintain central storage for dummies (for example a basket) requiring all children that use a dummy to place the dummy in an individual container, small zip locked plastic bag, or a protector with the child's name clearly to reduce the risk of cross contamination when the dummy is not in use.

Administration will:

- Notify parents of cases of infectious diseases via email.
- Collect immunisation records from families and manage reminders and filing of records.

Links to National Quality Standards:

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

2.1 Health: Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.

2.1.1 Wellbeing and comfort: Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.

2.1.2 Health practices and procedures: Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

2.2 Safety: Each child is protected.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS	
Sec. 172	Offence to fail to display prescribed information
Sec.174(2)(a)	Serious incident- any emergency for which emergency services attended
12	Meaning of serious incident
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs

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
89	First aid kits
90	Medical conditions policy
92	Medication record
93	Administration of medication
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
172(2)(g)	a notice stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the premises
173	Prescribed information to be displayed
175(2)(c)	Prescribed information to be notified to the Regulatory Authority- (2) any circumstance arising at the service that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or children attending the service

Related policies

Administration of Medication Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

Governance and Management of Service Policy

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Nappy Change Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Work Health and Safety Policy

Child Safe Environment Policy

Preschool Enrolment Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy

Toileting Policy

Safe Sleep and Rest Policy

Implemented: November 2013

Reviewed: November 2024

Next Review: November 2025

Resources and forms

- Forbes Children's Centre Illness Record
- Forbes Children's Centre Illness Flow Chart
- Staying Healthy in Childcare, 6th Edition 2024 <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-guidelines?auNHMRC=CoDyM0C7XpjUKxObBCc9rzqOwivEBnqdfzatGLXRAHQ>
- [COVID-19 positive case, close contact and outbreak management advice \(edi.sa.edu.au\)](https://www.edi.sa.edu.au/COVID-19-positive-case-close-contact-and-outbreak-management-advice)
- [Staff immunisation early childhood - Search \(bing.com\)](https://www.bing.com/search?q=Staff+immunisation+early+childhood)
- [Protecting children against vaccine preventable diseases procedure](https://www.edi.sa.edu.au/protecting-children-against-vaccine-preventable-diseases-procedure)
- [Immunisation flow chart - July 2021 \(edi.sa.edu.au\)](https://www.edi.sa.edu.au/immunisation-flow-chart-july-2021)
- [Immunisation requirements and early childhood services \(edi.sa.edu.au\)](https://www.edi.sa.edu.au/immunisation-requirements-and-early-childhood-services)

- The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE can be accessed and downloaded from: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-immunisation-program-schedule-portrait>
- Early childhood services and immunisation requirements *No Jab No Play*
- <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account>
- <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/conditions/immunisation/immunisation+programs/early+childhood+services+and+immunisation+requirements>
- Preschool and kindergarten services <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/early-childhood-education-and-care/preschool-and-kindergarten>
- Telephone: (08) 8226 6000
- Immunise Australia National Hotline: 1800 671 811
- Australian Government, Department of Human Services: