

Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy

Quality Area 2



1. Purpose

The service is committed to providing an environment that fosters the growth, independence and development of children while protecting their health, safety and well-being. This includes the implementation of policies and procedures for dealing with infectious diseases.

The purpose of this policy is to protect children, staff, volunteers, visitors and families that attend the service by preventing and minimising the spread of infectious diseases.

2. Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, volunteers and visitors at this service.

3. Background

Infectious diseases are common in children and adults may also be susceptible. Children are at a greater risk of exposure to infections in a children's service than at home due to the amount of time spent with a higher number of children.

4. Principles

MACSEYE is committed to:

- providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff and any other persons attending the service.
- responding to the needs of the child or adult who presents symptoms of an infectious disease or infestation while attending the service.
- adhering to evidence-based practice in infection prevention and control procedures.
- preventing the spread of infectious and vaccine-preventable diseases.
- complying with the current exclusion schedules and guidelines set by the Victorian Department of Health (DH)
- providing up-to-date information and resources to families and staff regarding the protection of all children from infectious diseases and blood-borne viruses, management of infestations and immunisation programs.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Approved Provider will:

- ensure compliance with any requirements or advice from the DH regarding infectious diseases.
- ensure the implementation of rigorous hygienic practices at the service, such as effective hand washing, cough and sneeze etiquette, appropriate use of gloves, the exclusion of children and staff when they are unwell or displaying symptoms of an

infectious disease or virus, effective environmental cleaning, adequate ventilation, and encouraging children and staff to see medical attention and testing if they show symptoms of an infectious disease or virus.

- ensure children being enrolled in kindergarten are up to date with all vaccinations in line with the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation. Grace period provision of up to 16 weeks is available to families who meet the set criteria as outlined here <https://www.vic.gov.au/child-immunisation>
- recommend that children being enrolled in outside school hours care are up to date with all vaccinations.
- For kindergarten enrolments, collect upon enrolment an Immunisation History Statement for each child, and then ensure the record is maintained regarding the child's immunisation status (AIR).
- for OSHC services, require parents to provide the current immunisation status of the child upon enrolment in order to identify which children may be required to be excluded in the event of a vaccine preventable infectious disease at the service.
- follow all advice and instructions from DH regarding recommended exclusion periods for children and staff who have been diagnosed with an infectious disease
- display at the front of the service, appropriate documentation, and alerts for families in the case of a diagnosed infectious disease at the centre, including information on the illness/disease, symptoms, infectious period, and the exclusion period for those infected.
- in the case of a vaccine-preventable disease occurring in the service, exclude children who have not been fully immunised from care, unless a valid exception applies
- request that children suffering from diarrhea stay away from the service for 48 hours after symptoms have ceased.
- report to the Public Health Unit (PHU) of DH as soon as possible if they are aware that a child enrolled at the service is suffering from diphtheria, mumps, poliomyelitis, haemophilus influenza, meningococcal disease, rubella (german measles), measles, pertussis (whooping cough) or tetanus, or any outbreak of 2 or more people with gastrointestinal or respiratory illness.
- ensure daily attendance records for staff, children and visitors are up to date at all times.
- ensure children are supported in their understanding of appropriate health and hygiene practices throughout the daily program and routine and have access to resources and tools to support this.
- When required, provide families with access to relevant sourced materials and information on infectious diseases, health, and hygiene, including the current National Immunisation Schedule, exclusion guidelines for infectious diseases and vaccine-preventable illnesses, and general advice and information regarding infectious diseases.
- ensure the confidentiality of an individual child's medical circumstances is maintained, as far as is reasonably practicable.
- provide opportunities for staff to source up-to-date information from relevant sources on the prevention of infectious diseases and maintaining health and hygiene
- when required, facilitate opportunities for staff, children, and families to have access to health professionals to visit the service to promote and confirm best practice.
- ensure completion of the register of Incident, Injury, Trauma, or Illness and document incidents of infectious diseases no later than 24 hours after an illness or infectious disease is confirmed in the service.
- ensure staff with either an infectious disease or diarrhea do not handle food for others or return to work until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours.
- minimise any risk to any child or adult at the service with complex medical needs in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease or virus, including making a risk

assessment regarding the suitability of attendance at the service of the child or adult at this time.

- In the event an outbreak of headlice is suspected ensure the confidentiality, dignity and rights of the child are upheld and judgements are withheld.
- ensure parents/guardians are supported in the management and treatment of any outbreak of infestation, illness or virus with dignity, respect and without judgment.

Educators of the Service will:

- ensure that any child suspected of having an infectious disease is responded to with dignity and respect and that their health and emotional needs are supported at all times.
- ensure that any child suspected of having an infectious disease is isolated from other children and supervised whilst waiting for collection by a parent/guardian.
- ensure that appropriate health and safety procedures are implemented when treating unwell children.
- inform parents/guardians that their unwell child will need to be collected from the service as soon as practicable.
- ensure thorough cleaning and disinfection of all resources, equipment or items that may have been in contact with the child with a suspected illness.
- Notify the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor of any known pregnancy to provide support or reduce any potential exposure to outbreaks of disease that may cause harm to the baby or the pregnant person.
- Role model appropriate best practices of health and hygiene practices.
- Adhere to the health and hygiene policy.

Families will:

- adhere to the service's restrictions or exclusion periods in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease, virus, or epidemic.
- adhere to the service's requirements on appropriate hand washing and health and hygiene procedures when attending the service.
- exclude their child from care if they display symptoms of an infectious disease, or in the event of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the service and their child is not fully immunised.
- Notify the service if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness and adheres to the Staying Healthy in Child Care recommended exclusion period or if symptoms are no longer present.
- advise the service of their child's immunisation status by providing a current Immunisation History Statement for the service to copy and place in the child's file.
- advise the service when their child's medical management plan has been updated.
- 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.

6. Related policies

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Medical Conditions and Administration of Medication Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy

7. Legislative requirements

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Quality Area 2 | Children's Health And Safety |
|----------------|------------------------------|

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW ACT

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Section 172 | Offence to fail to display prescribed information |
| Section 174(2)(a) | Serious incident - any emergency for which emergency services attended |

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW REGULATIONS

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Regulation 12 | Meaning of serious incident |
| Regulation 77 | Health, hygiene and safe food practices |
| Regulation 83 | Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs |
| Regulation 85 | Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures |
| Regulation 86 | Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness |
| Regulation 87 | Incident, injury, trauma and illness record |
| Regulation 88 | Infectious diseases |
| Regulation 89 | First aid kits |
| Regulation 90 | Medical conditions policy |
| Regulation 92 | Medication record |
| Regulation 93 | Administration of medication |
| Regulation 162 | Health information to be kept in enrolment record |
| Regulation 168 | Education and care service must have policies and procedures |
| Regulation 170 | Policies and procedures to be followed |
| Regulation 172(2)(g) | a notice stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the premises |
| Regulation 173 | Prescribed information to be displayed |
| Regulation 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 LEGISLATIONS

| |
|---|
| Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017 (Cth) |
| Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) |

Public Health & Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab No Play) Act 2015 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)

8. Definitions

| Term | Meaning |
|--|--|
| Adequate supervision | Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation• knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently. |
| Approved first aid qualifications | <p>A qualification that includes training in the matters set out below, that relates to and is appropriate to children, and has been approved by ACECQA and published on the list of ACECQA's approved first aid qualifications and training.</p> <p>Matters are likely to include: emergency life support and cardiopulmonary resuscitation; convulsions; poisoning; respiratory difficulties; management of severe bleeding; injury and basic wound care; and administration of an auto-immune adrenalin device.</p> |
| Approved provider | A person who holds a provider approval (National Law). A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions. |
| Education and care service premises | In relation to a centre-based service, means each place at which an education and care service operates or is to operate. |
| Infectious disease | A disease that is designated under a law of a relevant jurisdiction or by a health authority as a disease that would require a person with the disease to be excluded from an education and care service. |
| MACSEYE | Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Early Years Education Ltd, a subsidiary of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd established to conduct early childhood education and care services. |
| National Law | Unless otherwise specified, the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. This applied law system sets a national standard for children's education and care across Australia. See the ACECQA website for the Application Act or legislation that applies in each jurisdiction. |
| National Regulations | The Education and Care National Regulations. The National Regulations support the National Law by providing detail on a range of operational requirements for an education and care service. |
| Nominated supervisor | In relation to an education and care service, means a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is nominated by the approved provider of the service under Part 3 to be a nominated supervisor of that service; and• unless the individual is the approved provider, has provided written consent to that nomination (National Law). |
| Person in day-to-day charge | A person is in day-to-day charge of an education and care service if: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the person is placed in day-to-day charge by the approved provider or a nominated supervisor of the service; and• the person consents to the placement in writing (National Regulations). There are minimum requirements for the person in day-to-day charge. |
| Person with management or control | In relation to an education and care service, means: |

| Term | Meaning |
|------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the provider or intended provider of the service is a body corporate, an officer of the body corporate within the meaning of the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth who is responsible for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or if the provider of the service is an eligible association, each member of the executive committee of the association has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or if the provider of the service is a partnership, each partner who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or in any other case, a person who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service (National Law). |

9. Policy information

| Policy information | | | |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Policy title: | Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy | Version: | 2.0 |
| Authorised Executive: | Director, Quality, Safety and Compliance | Responsible Manager: | General Manager, WHS, Wellbeing |
| Approving authority: | Managing Director | Approval date: | 06/09/2024 |
| Effective date: | 06/09/2024 | Review date: | 06/09/2025 |
| Review approval date: | 28/01/2026 | Next review date: | 28/01/2027 |

| Version control | | |
|-----------------|------------|---|
| Version | Date | Changes |
| 1.0 | 06/09/2024 | Policy developed and approved |
| 1.1 | 06/01/2026 | Annual review of Policy undertaken, which includes updates/ amendments which are minor and administrative in nature, focusing on improved clarity, formatting, and alignment with MACSEYE's approved policy standards |
| 2.0 | 28/01/2026 | Policy approved |