

Infectious Diseases

Policy introduction

Weldon Children's Services as the approved provider and ALL of our staff consider ensuring the health and safety of children, and staff, and supporting children's ongoing wellbeing, is a core focus of the delivery of an Education and Care Service. Infectious diseases are disorders caused by organisms — such as bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites. Many organisms live in and on our bodies. They're normally harmless or even helpful. But under certain conditions, some organisms may cause disease.

Our policy in action

We will:

- Minimise children's exposure to infectious diseases by:
 - our programs following all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases
 - promotion of practices that reduce the transmission of infection
 - the exclusion of sick children and staff
 - program support for child immunisation
 - the implementation of safe & effective hygiene practices

Strategies for policy implementation

As the Approved Provider we will:

- Ensure that all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases and/or changes in the exclusion table or immunisation record is sourced from a recognised authority, such as: *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th Edition)*, *National Health and Medical Research Council (2013)* and the NSW Ministry of Health, or NSW public hospitals websites
- Implement the recommendations from *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th Edition)* to ensure reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at our programs
- Ensure that if there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at a program parents will be notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable that describe the:
 - nature of illness
 - incubation period
 - infectious and exclusion periods
- Ensure that children are reasonably protected from harm by working with the nominated supervisor and educators on developing, implementing and reviewing policy and procedures that will guide health and safety procedures within the programs
- Ensure that minimum number of Educators hold first aid qualifications within the program

Our nominated supervisors in charge will:

- Develop and implement procedures for:
 - maintaining a hygienic environment
 - providing families and staff with relevant infectious diseases, health and hygiene information
 - guiding children's understanding and use of health and hygiene throughout the daily program
 - ensuring staff are aware of the relevant immunisation guidelines for children and themselves

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- maintaining relevant records regarding the current status of the immunisation of children at the programs, as well as any relevant medical conditions of children at the program
- Provide relevant sourced materials to families and educators about:
 - the current *Australian Immunisation* schedule for children
 - exclusion guidelines for children that are not immunised or have not yet received all of their immunisations in the event of an infectious illness at the service
 - advice and information regarding any infectious diseases in general, and information regarding any specific infectious illnesses that are suspected/present in the programs
 - providing information on illnesses (as soon as practicable after the occurrence of an infectious disease)
- Ensure that an *incident, injury, trauma and illness record* is completed as soon as practicable or no later than 24 hours of the illness occurring
- Ensure communication processes are in place to make educators aware of individual children's circumstances
- Exclude children and/or adults with an infectious disease from the program for the exclusion period
- Ensure the *enrolment tracker* is completed and reviewed before enrolment or as needed
- Maintain confidentiality with regards to children's individual medical circumstances, by putting procedures in place to safeguard children and families information
- Seek advice from our health department, or local Public Health Unit where a potentially serious infectious disease or major outbreak occurs and follow the advice prescribed by the health department, or local health unit
- Implement the advice of the health department, or local health unit regarding infectious diseases as required
- Notify our local **Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055** in the event we have an occurrence of any of the following infectious diseases:
 - Rotavirus – diarrhoea (if several children in one group are ill)
 - HIB Haemophilus
 - Hepatitis A
 - Hepatitis B (recent illness only)
 - Measles
 - Meningococcal infection
 - Parovirus B19
 - Pertussis – whooping cough
 - Roseola – (if 2 or more children in one group are ill)
 - Scarlet Fever
 - TB – Tuberculosis
 - Or any publicly announced infectious disease i.e SARS, MERS, COVID-19

Our educators will:

- Ensure that any children suspected of having an infectious disease are responded to and their health and emotional needs are supported at all times
- Implement appropriate health and safety procedures, when tending to ill children
- Ensure that families are aware of the need to collect their children as soon as practicable to

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ensure the child's comfort

- Advise families that they will need to alert the program if their child is diagnosed with an infectious disease
- Maintain their own immunisation status, and advise us (the approved provider) or the nominated supervisor of any updates to their immunisation status
- Provide varied opportunities for children to engage in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice
- Take into consideration the grouping of children to reduce the risk of acquiring an infectious disease when planning the routines/program of the day
- Implement and document appropriate health and hygiene practices including:
 - hand washing – washing and drying thoroughly, ensuring participation by everyone in the program
 - routine and daily cleaning of the program physical environment
 - nappy changing procedures
 - wearing gloves when advisable
 - proper handling and preparation of food
 - cleaning of toy & equipment
- Maintain currency with regard to Health and Safety by attending appropriate professional development opportunities
- If feeling ill or have an infectious disease they are to stay at home and adhere to the any exclusion period recommended by the NSW Department of Health. Provide a clearance letter from a medical practitioner before returning to work

Our families will:

- Advise the program of their child's immunisation status, and provide written documentation of this for the program to copy and include with the child's enrolment records
- Advise the program when their child's immunisation/medical condition alters and ensure that the information provided ensures that the child's records are up to date at all times
- Keep their children at home if they are ill or have an infectious disease and adhere to the any exclusion period recommended by the NSW Department of Health. Provide a clearance letter from a medical practitioner before returning to care
- Advise the program that their child has come into contact with someone with a preventable or infectious disease

Personal hygiene including hand washing

Personal hygiene is the practice of keeping oneself and one's living and working condition clean in order to prevent disease and to maintain good health. The daily habit of ensuring cleanliness and a hygienic lifestyle will help prevent future health care issues.

Our educators and staff will:

- Wash their hands using the recommended hand washing procedure outlined in Staying Healthy in Childcare (National Medical Research Council 5th Edition)
- Role model hand washing to children and encourage hand washing throughout the day
- Promote effective hand washing to families

Immunisation

Immunisation is compulsory when attending Weldon Children's Services in accordance with the *National Immunisation Program*

- If a child's immunisation record is not provided upon enrolment and it is not updated by the parents/guardians as part of the *National Immunisation Program* or on a catch-up schedule the child will be unable to attend Weldon Children's Programs
- To be fully immunised a child needs to have received all of the vaccines recommended for their age as part of the *National Immunisation Program*. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register
- Homeopathic immunisation is not recognized as part of the *National Immunisation Program*

Immunisation related payments for parents

The Childcare Subsidy (CCS) benefit applies to children who are

- Fully immunised or are on a recognised catch-up schedule
- Have an approved exemption from immunisation
- Have had a disease and have a natural immunity
- Where a particular vaccine is unavailable

Educator immunisation

- All educators and staff are encouraged to be fully immunised as recommended by NHMRC, receiving vaccination as required against:
 - Hepatitis A
 - MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
 - Pertussis
 - Influenza
 - Whooping cough

Managing a Child with Acute Fever

This procedure reflects the Managing a Child with Acute Fever Policy as detailed in the publication: *NSW Health and Safety in Children's Services Model Practices and Procedures*.

Our practice:

We do not administer paracetamol

We will:

- With the on-set of a temperature we will contact the parents/guardians and request the child be collected from the program as soon as possible
- We will make the child as comfortable as possible and cool the child by removing heavy outer garments, providing regular drinks of water, sponging a child with a cool cloth until the parent/guardian/authorised person attends the program to collect the child
- We will call an ambulance if:
 - If the parent/guardian/authorised person cannot be contacted or does not attend the program within one hour of contact
 - If after all attempts within one hour to cool the child there is no drop in the child's temperature

Managing a child at risk of febrile convulsion

Parents will:

At enrolment or as the condition is diagnosed advise the program of medication requirements, provide an emergency plan signed by a medical practitioner and a completed medication administration form.

Managing a child who has a febrile convulsion while in care

If in any circumstance a child has a convulsion (regardless of whether it is febrile convulsion or a seizure due to another cause), and even if it stops, Educators will immediately call 000 for an ambulance and notify the parent/guardian or authorised person.

Procedures

The following list of procedures supports the implementation of this policy.

- Enrolment procedure
- Hand washing
- Work Health & Safety checklists
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
- Medication
- Communication
- Administration of medication
- Infection control

Links to other policies

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Medical Conditions
- Administration of medication
- Weldon Fees Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Work Health and Safety
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, Illness

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard



The National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: section 167 – Regulation 77, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 93, 103, 162, 168

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care:

QA 2-Standard 2.1: Element 2.1.1, 2.1.2 QA 3-Standard 3.1 Element: 3.1.2 6-Standard 6.1 Element: 6.1.3, 6.2 QA 7-Standard 7.1 Element: 7.1.2

Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being & Becoming

Framework for School Age Care: My Time Our Place

Sources

- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 5th Edition (2013)
- The Department of Health
- Mayo Clinic
- National Health and Medical Research Council – www.nhmrc.gov.au/
- NSW Ministry of Health
- Childcare centre desktop
- NSW Government Department of Health. Vaccination requirements for childcare
- Public Health Amendment Act 2017
- Department of Human Resources: National Immunisation Program Schedule
- Immunisation Handbook - Australian Government – Department of Health and Ageing – National Health and Medical Research Council

Policy Details

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