Dealing with Infectious Diseases – Policy

Rationale:

Children's Services has a duty of care to provide all persons with a safe and healthy environment, and to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of protection from infections, through the implementation of procedures that are consistent with guidelines of NSW Health. These guidelines have been updated to include COVID-19

Definitions:

Protection: - can include:-

- Notifying children, families, staff, local community or the relevant health authorities of a diagnosed infectious illness or disease reported at the Centre
- Ensuring educators have adequate relevant equipment or products, such as disposable gloves, detergents and soaps
- Maintaining procedures, such as correct treatment when body fluids are present
- Maintaining educator awareness of hygienic human contact and physical interaction with others
- Increasing educator awareness on manners of cross infection
- Maintaining a hygienic and healthy environment.

Universal Precautions as relevant to Children's Services:-

- Handwashing
- Cough etiquette
- Not attending the Service when showing signs of being unwell.
- Hygienic cleaning techniques
- Using protective products and equipment, such as gloves
- Safe handling and disposal of bodily fluids
- Safe storage of materials that have come into contact with bodily fluids
- Maintaining a hygienic environment
- Parents should notify the service when their child has been diagnosed with an infectious disease or illness.

Universal Precautions support the assumption that all bodily fluids are potentially infectious, therefore all persons are treated equitably and equally when implementing hygiene practices to minimise cross infection and protect everyone.

Disinfectant / Sanitiser: Products that are provided at the Centre for personal use and also products used for cleaning have current MSDS sheets and safety ratings for use with children

Sick Children: A child will be considered sick if they:-

- Sleeps at unusual times, is lethargic
- Has a fever greater than 38degrees
- Is crying constantly from discomfort
- Vomits or has diarrhoea
- Is in need of constant one to one care
- Has symptoms of an infectious disease
- Trouble breathing
- Unexplained or persistent coughing
- Seems dehydrated and refusing to drink
- Complains of a stiff neck, persistent headache or light hurting their eyes
- Is causing the educator or parent to worry for any reason.
- Displays and of the COVID-19 symptoms as outlined on the NSW Government website.

Cleaning:

- Cleaning means to physically remove germs (bacteria and viruses), dirt and grime from surfaces using a detergent and water solution. A detergent is a surfactant that is designed to break up oil and grease with the use of water. Anything labelled as a detergent will work.

Disinfecting:

- Disinfecting means using chemicals to kill germs (bacteria and viruses) on surfaces. It's important to clean before disinfecting because dirt and grime can reduce the ability of disinfectants to kill germs. The following disinfectants are suitable for use on hard surfaces (that is, surfaces where any spilt liquid pools, and does not soak in): alcohol in a concentration of at least 70%, chlorine bleach in a concentration of 1000 parts per million, oxygen bleach, or wipes and sprays that contain quaternary ammonium compounds. These chemicals will be labelled as 'disinfectant' on the packaging and must be diluted or used following

the instructions on the packaging to be effective.

The Centre promotes hygienic practices and prevents the spread of infection by implementing the following strategies:-

- Using Universal Precautions as relevant to Children's Services
- Knowledge of infectious diseases and exclusion guidelines
- Identifying and excluding sick children, staff and educators
- Promoting children and educator/staff immunisations
- Adhering to Hygiene Procedures for the Centre as outlined in this policy

Educators will ensure that they maintain, and model current best practice hygiene procedures as advised by NSW Health Authorities.

Educators will encourage children to adopt effective hygiene practices. As part of children taking increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing, educators should acknowledge children who are modelling good hygiene practices.

Informal education in proper hygiene practices will be conducted on a regular basis, either individually or as a group through conversations, planned experiences, inclusion in service routines and reminders. Health and hygiene practices will be highlighted to families, and where appropriate information sheets or posters will be used by educators to support these practices.

Educators will aim to provide a non-judgemental approach to differences in hygiene practices and standards between families in order to support children's developing sense of identity. Where practices differ to standards expected in the service, educators will remind children that these practices are to be followed in the service, but they may differ at home.

All educators will be advised upon appointment to the position to maintain their immunity to common childhood diseases, tetanus and Hepatitis B through immunisation with their local health professional.

<u>Effective Handwashing</u>

If performed often, this is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infections.
15 / 20 seconds needs to be spent washing hands using ordinary soap and running water. Warm water is ideal but cold water is acceptable.
All surfaces of the hands must be cleaned, including the sides and between the fingers. Dirty fingernails should be scrubbed with a nail brush.
Hands should be dried on individual paper towels, not cloth towels.

Educators and children to wash their hands:

- On arrival at the Centre
- After toileting
- After wiping a nose
- Before and after first aid
- Before and after giving medicine
- After cleaning
- Before eating, preparing or serving food (when preparing and serving food it is advisable to wear disposable gloves if possible when skin is broken)
- After playing with toys or outside.
- When hands are visibly dirty
- After patting any animal.
- After removing gloves.

Posters and signs will be used around the Centre to promote handwashing.

Educators will remind and encourage children to wash their hands throughout the day.

Wet ones / Hand Sanitiser will be provided for children and staff to clean their hands when handwashing facilities are not available i.e. excursions/ oval visits.

Hygiene Procedures

All toilet facilities at the Centre have soap and paper towels provided for washing and drying hands

Women and girls will have access to feminine hygiene disposal in the upstairs staff toilet

Toilets and handbasins will be cleaned and disinfected, floors swept and mopped with hot soapy water each day

Soap and paper towels are available in the kitchen area

An educator will be responsible for monitoring the supply of soap and paper towels to ensure they don't run out.

Educators with cuts, open wounds or skin conditions such as dermatitis should cover their wounds and wear disposable gloves. Used gloves will be disposed of safely.

Surfaces will be cleaned and sanitised after each activity.

Any contaminated surfaces will be disinfected

Kitchen facilities will be cleaned and sanitised each day / after every use.

Toys and other equipment will be washed in hot soapy water or put through the dishwasher and/or disinfected, and left in the sun to air dry on a regular basis adhering to the schedule in the WHS Schedule and Building & Equipment Maintenance Policy
Every toy and surface in use must be cleaned once per day. Toys that have been in close contact with a child, particularly face/mouth, must be cleaned before being used by another child.

Dress Ups will be washed after use

Children should not share hats – All OOSH hats will be washed each day

Paint shirts will be washed after every use.

Tea towels and tablecloths will be washed daily

Tables and chairs will be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned regularly

Cupboards, windowsills, shelves will be wiped down and cleaned regularly

Reusable plates, cups, bowls and cutlery are used at the centre. They are washed in the dishwasher on the hottest setting, if possible.

Children will be reminded not to share drinks & utensils or to use items that have been dropped on the floor

Cups, plates and utensils will be put through the dishwasher where possible any other food items used will be washed in hot soapy water and air dried.

Kitchen rubbish and any bin with food scraps will be disposed of daily. Inside garbage bins are to be emptied daily, where applicable lids are to remain on bins. Bins will be wiped down with disinfectant daily.

All outdoor cement areas to be swept and kept free of litter at all times. Paths and outdoor eating areas will be hosed when necessary.

Any animals / pets within the Centre are to be kept clean and maintained in a healthy condition.

There is to be NO SMOKING by staff, parents or at the Centre or in the Centre grounds. The Centre is a SMOKE FREE ZONE.

Sick Children

The needs of a sick child cannot be met without dramatically reducing the general level of supervision of the other children or risking the other children's health. Families are asked not to bring sick children to the centre and to collect children who are unwell.

Educators have the right to refuse access to care if concerned about a child's health.

All care and consideration will be given to a child who becomes unwell at the centre. The family of the child will be contacted and asked to collect their child as soon as possible. The child will be comforted, cared for and placed in a quiet area with adult supervision until the child's parent or other authorised adult takes them home.

Management of Bodily Fluids

All educators dealing with bodily fluids, open sores and cuts will wear disposable gloves and practice universal precautions

If a child has an open wound it will be covered with a dressing and securely attached

If bodily fluids or blood gets on the skin but there is no cut or puncture wash away with hot soapy water

In the event of exposure:-

- through cuts or chapped skin, promptly wash away the fluid, encourage the bleeding and wash in cold or tepid soapy water
- to the mouth, promptly spit it out and rinse mouth with water several times
- to the eyes, promptly rinse gently with cold or tepid tap water or saline solution

Any exposure should be reported to the Team Leader/Coordinator (Nominated Supervisor) and management to ensure proper follow up procedures occur

When assisting children with toileting, educators will ensure that they wear gloves and wash their hands afterwards. The child is required to wash their hands with soap before returning to play. Educators will consider the resources they are using when assisting children with toileting, ensuring that they are age appropriate and maintaining privacy for the child.

Any soiled clothing shall be handled using disposable gloves and be placed in a sealed plastic bag for the parents to take home for laundering. The service will

not rinse soiled clothing.

Any blood or bodily fluid spills will be cleaned up immediately, using gloves and the area fully disinfected. Cloths used in cleaning will be wrapped in plastic bags and properly disposed of according to current infection control guidelines.

Management of Infectious Diseases

Children and staff with infectious diseases will be excluded from the service for the period recommended by the Department of Health

Where there is an outbreak of an infectious disease, each enrolled child's family/emergency contact will be notified within 24 hours under ordinary circumstances. The service will maintain confidentiality when issuing the notification and ensure it is not prejudicial or identify any children.

In the event of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease at the service or school attended by children attending the service, parents of children not immunised will be notified that their child is required to remain away from the Centre for the duration of the outbreak, for their own protection. Educators will refer to the Immunisation Record to identify families to be notified.

The service will aim to maintain current Immunisation records for all children attending the service detailing their immunisation status. On enrolment families are required to provide documentation which will be attached to their Xplor profile. When a family permanently leaves the Centre the immunisation record will be deleted. (NB: It is not a regulation requirement for OOSH services to maintain Immunisation records, it is the Centre's best practice).

The Public Health Unit will be notified if any child contracts a vaccine-preventable disease.

Payment of fees will be required for children absent during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, unless arrangements discussed and agreed to by the management committee, have been made.

The decision to exclude or re-admit a child or staff member will be the responsibility of the Coordinator or Team Leader based on the child's symptoms, medical opinion and Department of Health guidelines for children who have an infectious disease or who have been exposed to an infectious disease.

Children and staff with diarrhea will be excluded for 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared or after a normal stool.

A doctor's clearance certificate will be required for all infectious diseases such as measles, mumps, diphtheria, hepatitis A, polio, tuberculosis, typhoid, and

paratyphoid before returning to the service.

The following people will be excluded from entering the service.

- Any staff or child who has a temperature over 38 degrees.
- Any staff or child presenting unwell
- Any staff or child who has been outside of Australia within the last 14 days if showing signs of illness.
- Additional Risk Minimisation strategies and considerations must be implemented for staff who are defined as vulnerable or have care responsibilities for a vulnerable person. Vulnerable is defined as:
    - Suffering from a chronic medical condition
    - Suffering from a chronic autoimmune condition
    - Aged 70 years or older
    - High risk pregnancy.

If a staff member is concerned that the service is not complying with the guidelines, this should be reported to the Coordinator. If the issue cannot be resolved immediately, the coordinator or staff member can make contact with. PMNC Neighbourhood Services

Management of HIV/AIDS/Hep B & C

Under the Federal Disability Act and the Equal Opportunity Act, there will be no discrimination based on a child's/family/educator's HIV status.

A child with AIDS shall be treated as any other child and will have the same level of physical contact with educators as other children in the centre.

Where educators are informed of a child, family member or another educator who has HIV/AIDS or Hep B or C, this information will remain confidential at all times. The service has no obligation to advise other families attending the service of a child or educator's HIV status.

Proper safe and hygienic practices will be followed at all times and implementation of procedures to prevent cross infection as identified in this policy will be consistently implemented

Educators will be encouraged to participate in AIDS and Hepatitis education as required.

Management of Head Lice

If an educator suspects a child may have head lice, they will discreetly examine the child's head to look for eggs (nits) or lice near the scalp

Educators will ensure that a child suspected of being infested does not have close contact with other children for the rest of the day

When families come to collect their child, they will be asked to commence treatment and keep their child away from the service until the day after appropriate treatment has been started, and the lice are removed. If they begin treatment prior to the next day exclusion is not necessary

A child may return to the service the day after treatment has commenced and all live head lice have been removed. A few remaining eggs are not a reason for continued exclusion. However, the family must continue treatment until all the eggs and hatchlings have been removed, usually over the following ten days.

When an incident of head lice occurs at the service, a notice will be displayed on the parent noticeboard advising parents to check their children. It is recommended that children with long hair have their hair tied back to reduce the chance of infestation.

Educators with long hair are advised to wear their hair tied up whilst at the service. This will help to prevent them from becoming infected in the event of an outbreak.

Where an educator becomes infected with eggs or lice, they will be required to commence treatment on their hair that evening.

Related Regulations and References:

National Education and Care Regulations	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
88	Infectious diseases
89	First Aid Kits
90	Medical conditions policy
91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
93	Administration of Medication
95	Procedure for administration of medication
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
168 -2: c	Education and Care service must have policies and procedures Dealing with infectious diseases, including procedures complying with Regulation 88

National Quality Standard (NQS)
Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

2.1	**Health**	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.2	**Health practices and procedures**	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented

References

- Network of Community Activities – Policies in Practice
- NCAC – Hygiene and Infection Control Policy Template
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2005)– Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care (5th Edition)
- NSW Department of Health guidelines available from the NSW Heath Website www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/Infectious/a-z.asp
- PSC National Alliance – Health, Hygiene and Infection Control Sample policy
- National Outside School Hours Services Alliance.

Related Centre Policies & Procedures

- Work Health & Safety Policy
- Food & Nutrition Policy
- Incident, Injury and Illness Policy
- Medication Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Building & Equipment Maintenance Policy