

POLICY NO 24: DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Key Policy Contact Person: Manager, Our Village Family Childcare

- CRITICAL INFORMATION:**
- Notifying children, families, staff/Educators and/or the relevant health authorities of a diagnosed infectious illness or disease.
 - Ensuring staff/Educators have adequate equipment or products, such as disposable gloves, detergents, and soaps.
 - Maintaining procedures, such as correct handling of body fluids.
 - Maintaining staff/Educators’ awareness of hygienic human contact and physical interactions with others.
 - Increasing staff /Educators’ awareness and knowledge of cross infection; and
 - Maintaining a hygienic and healthy environment, such as cleaning daily and ensuring that the environment is well ventilated.
 - Only enrolling immunised children under the No Jab No Play legislation.

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PURPOSE:

Our village Family Childcare (OVFC) has a responsibility to families using the service to maintain safe and hygienic environments by implementing the following:

- Effective hand washing.
- Hygienic cleaning techniques.
- The safe handling, storage, and disposal of body fluids.
- Maintenance of a hygienic environment.
- Knowledge of infectious diseases and exclusion guidelines.
- Identifying and excluding sick children and staff/Educators

It is understood by staff/Educators, children, and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and other stakeholders to accept and implement the hygiene and infection control policy as a high priority.

OUTCOME:

OVFC seeks to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of protection during the hours of the service’s operation. The service is committed to best practice in dealing with infectious diseases and works in accordance with guidelines from the Victorian Government and National Medical Research Council.

Protection can include:

- Notifying children, families, staff/Educators and/or the relevant health authorities of a diagnosed infectious illness or disease.
- Ensuring staff/Educators have adequate equipment or products, such as disposable gloves, detergents, and soaps.
- Maintaining procedures, such as correct handling of body fluids.
- Maintaining staff/Educators’ awareness of hygienic human contact and physical interactions with others.
- Increasing staff /Educators’ awareness and knowledge of cross infection; and
- Maintaining a hygienic and healthy environment, such as cleaning daily and ensuring that the environment is well ventilated.
- Upon enrolment, under the No Jab No Play legislation all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Vicotria will be required to provide evidence that the child is:
 - Fully immunised for their age by supplying an up to date Immunise History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) OR
 - Eligible for the “Support Period” (also known as the 16week grace period) OR
 - Unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons.

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:

This document applies to the Educators, Families, and Coordination Unit Staff of OVFC.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQA+) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

DEFINITIONS:

Children	For the purpose of this policy, the term ‘children’ includes both children in care and the Educator’s own children
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<p>Infectious Disease</p>	<p>Is in relation to a participating jurisdiction, means and infectious disease that is designated under a law of that jurisdiction or by a health authority (however described) as a disease that would require a person with the disease to be excluded from an education and care service.</p>
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PROCEDURES:

OVFC will ensure

- Each child has evidence within their enrolment details that confirm they are fully immunised for their age or have a medical reason not to be immunised. Evidence provided **must** be an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).
- Regular communications with families to ensure consistent communication when providing immunisation updates.
- Families are notified when an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease had occurred – via multiple forms of communication:
 - Email
 - Letter from the Coordination Unit
 - Sign or note displayed at the entry of the residence.
- The Regulatory Authority is notified.
- Ensure any child with an infectious disease is excluded from care as recommended within the Exclusion Periods Table as per the Department of Health [“ School exclusion table for primary schools and children’s services”](#) to protect children and prevent further spread of infection. This exclusion includes Educators own child/ren.
- Ensure supports in place for the child to be able to return to care on the advice of a qualified medical practitioner, and when the exclusion requirements have been met. Please note a medical clearance may be requested at this stage.
- Notify relevant managers and the SCCH Safety and compliance team via VHIMS.

Educators

- Where the Educator of an occupant of the residence has become ill, all parents and guardian should be contacted of the children in care as soon as possible, this enables alternate care to be provided, if possible, by the service.
- Where alternative care arrangements are not able to be made, the Educator under no circumstances is able to provide care for the children.
- Immediately the Educator will let families know of any confirmed case of an infectious disease and ensure any further information is provided to the family as requested. A sign will be displayed at the point of entry to the Educator’s residence as a notification the infectious disease.
- All exclusion periods for the infectious disease will be followed and will only allow the child to return to care when the exclusion time has ceased.

Families

- All families will ensure they adhere to the Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy and Procedure.
- All families will ensure they provide the service with a copy of:
 - An Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement which indicates the child is up to date with their schedule vaccinations OR

- An AIR Immunisation History Statement Form which indicates the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule OR
- An AIR Immunisation Medical exemption Form which has been certified by a GP.
- All families will provide the service with an updated copy of their child's current immunisation record when the next scheduled immunisation has been completed.
- All families will support their child's exclusion from the service if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease or they come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease, even if there has not been an outbreak at the service.

Infectious Disease

If there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at a family childcare residence, as an approved provider we must ensure that a parent or an authorised emergency contact of each child being educated and cared for at the residence is notified of the occurrence as soon as possible (Education and Care Services National Regulations, (updated version July 1, 2023) part 4.2 – Children's Health and Safety, regulation 88 (3))

Exclusion of Children with Infection/Infectious Disease

- Children with specific infectious diseases are to be excluded from education and care for the period stated under as per the Department of Health "[Minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's services for infectious disease cases and contacts](#)"
- Some children may need to be excluded under special circumstances, i.e., non-immunised children may need to be excluded during an epidemic or local outbreak of an infectious disease.

Non-exclusion

Children known to be carriers of blood-borne viruses, such as Hepatitis B or C or HIV are not excluded from care unless there is some problem that would exclude any other child.

Immunisation

Immunisation as recommended by the Department of Health is supported.

Infection Control Practices

- The risk to children and staff/Educators can be greatly reduced if simple hygiene practices are followed.
- These practices are often referred to as *Body Substance Precautions* – highlighting the fact that infection is transmitted in body secretions such as blood, urine, faeces, substances including nasal secretions, sputum, saliva, and pus.
- All *Body Substance Precautions* should be used as a routine.

HYGIENIC PRACTICES

Hand Washing

- Hand washing is described as the single most effective infection-control measure.
- Hands should be washed with warm running water and soap:
 - After toileting
 - After nappy changes
 - Before preparing food
 - Before eating and drinking
 - After wiping noses

- After contact with bodily fluids
- Hands should be dried on individual or disposable paper towels.
- Communal hand towels are not to be used. Taps should be turned off using paper towel.
- In instances where warm running water and soap are not available, e.g., excursions moist towelettes or anti-microbial hand rub that does not need water should be used.

Gloves – Disposable Latex or Vinyl Gloves

- Disposable gloves should be available in all settings and should be worn when contact with body fluids is unavoidable.
- Gloves should also be worn to clean spills of body fluids.
- Substances are to be removed with paper towel or wipes and disposed of into sealable waste bags.
- Wash the area with detergent and warm water.
- A bleach – type disinfectant should also be used where possible.
- Follow the same procedure for cleaning soiled cots.
- To remove gloves, peel back from the wrists and drop into a sealable waste bag - **Do not reuse disposable gloves.**
- Wash hands after removing the gloves using the procedures outlined in item 1, Hygienic Practices

Cleaning & Disinfection

- Cleaning is an important for prevention of transmission of infection.
- In most cases this can be achieved with detergent and warm water
- In some instances, however, the use of disinfectant is recommended – *after the area has been cleaned.*
- Toilets should be checked after use and cleaned when necessary.
- Change table, high-chairs, benches, and impervious washable surfaces should be wiped with warm water and detergent after each use and allowed to air dry.
- Strollers and other washable equipment should be cleaned with water and detergent whenever necessary.

Washing

Soiled clothing or linen should be rinsed with cold water and washed in hot or warm water and detergent.

Waste Disposal:

All soiled articles such as disposable nappies and tissues should be placed in bags which can be tied or sealed and disposed of in line with local by-laws.

Cleaning Floors

- Wash daily with detergent and water, ensuring areas such as under tables and benches are also washed – it is not necessary to use disinfectant on floors.
- Carpeted areas should be vacuumed, and spills of body fluids dealt with immediately.

Sand Pits

- Must be kept clean, raked over to ensure no animals are soiling the area.
- Sand should be changed as needed.

Linen

- Each child must have their own bedding, which is laundered at least weekly or when soiled.
- Individual face cloths and towels should be laundered daily.

Potties

Potties are not recommended for use in the service.

FIRST AID

- All staff/Educators are to complete first aid training prior to commencement in the service and HLTAID012 – Provide First Aid in an Education and Care Setting
- Each certificate is to be updated prior to the expiry date.
- In the event of an accident involving bleeding, immediate assistance and comfort must be given but every precaution should be taken to protect against exposure to blood in the best way possible
- Disposable gloves should be available when dealing with bleeding.
- Mouth to mouth resuscitation (expired air respiration) – protective devices are available which may lessen the very low risk of acquiring infection and should be included in the First Aid Kit

It is recommended that staff/Educators should be immunised against the following.

- whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine
- measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine (if nonimmune)
- chickenpox (varicella) vaccine (if nonimmune)
- hepatitis A vaccine
- hepatitis B vaccine
- seasonal influenza vaccine
- COVID 19

Educators should refer to their own doctor for current booster requirements.

Staff/Educators should know their Whooping Cough, Chickenpox and Rubella status.

PROVISION of SAFE and CLEANABLE TOYS for CHILDREN

- Infection control in relation to this area is important as the social, physical, and economical cost of illness in children, staff and Educators can be debilitating. It is important to prevent the spread of all diseases and implementing work practices to minimise the spread of disease cannot be overstated.
- Where appropriate washing toys in the dishwasher is the most effective method of cleaning them. Otherwise, toys should be washed in warm, soapy water on a regular basis and when a baby sucks on a toy, wash it as soon as practicable.

REFERENCES:

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations, \(updated version July 1, 2023\)](#)
- [Department of Health – Victoria School exclusion table for Primary schools and children’s services 05 June 2023](#)

- [The Blue Book: Guidelines for the Control of Infectious Diseases. Department of Human Services](#)
- [Vaccination for Children: No Jab, No Play](#)
- [Vaccination for People Working with Children](#)
- [ACECQA First Aid Qualifications & Training - Family Day Care](#)

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:

- Health and Safety – Administration of First Aid – 48
- Sleep, rest, and Bedding - 9
- Educator Health - 12
- Occupational Health and Safety – 28
- Health & Safety – Nutrition, Food Beverages, Dietary requirements, and Food Handling - 20
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness – 14
- Animals and Domestic Pets - 30
- Pandemic – 53
- Nappy Changing, Toileting and Bathing – 26
- Active Supervision – 52
- SCCH Client Empowerment policy and Procedure
- SCCH COVID – 19 Contact and Confirmed Case Policy and Procedure
- (SCH Legacy) Pandemic/Epidemic Policy
- Our Village Family Childcare Playgroups Work Instruction

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:

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