

Policy 7: Dealing with Infectious Diseases

Rationale: The centre will plan for and respond effectively to minimise children's exposure to infectious diseases. Ensuring the health and safety of children, and staff, and supporting children's ongoing wellbeing, is a core focus of the delivery of our preschool. Educators need to be aware of the likelihood of young children being exposed to an infectious illness whilst in care. Maintaining hygiene practices within the service and teaching young children about health and hygiene will assist in the prevention of infectious diseases. Providing families with timely and current information will further support this process.

Aims:

Children's exposure to infectious diseases will be minimised by:

- our service 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;
- service support for child immunisation; and
- implementation of effective hand washing procedures.

Procedure:

- Children are not to attend Kindergarten when unwell, e.g. cold and flu like symptoms, raised temperature, gastro, pale and/or lethargic.
 - Parents are to notify the Kindergarten if their child is to be absent.
 - Parents are to keep their child at home until well or a doctor has given the all clear to attend Kindergarten.
- Please keep your child away from Kindergarten for at least 48 hours after vomiting or diarrhea episodes to prevent the spread of infection.**
- When a child shows symptoms of illness whilst at Kindergarten, staff will care for them and contact the parent or emergency contact number.
 - If there is an infectious disease at PPWCC, the staff will ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of the infectious disease at the service.
 - If there is an infectious disease reported to the centre – all parents and staff will be notified via SMS/phone calls/emails and on the Private Facebook page.

Port Pirie West Children's Centre will:

- ensure that all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases is sourced from a recognised health authority, such as: *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition),
- implement the recommendations from *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at the service;
- ensure that children are reasonably protected from harm by working with the Nominated Supervisor and educators on developing, implementing and reviewing policy that will guide health and safety procedures within the service; and
- collect, maintain, and store appropriately the required enrolment documents and enrolment information of children in the service.
- Develop procedures for:
 - maintaining a hygienic environment;
 - providing families with relevant infectious diseases, health and hygiene information;
 - guiding children's understanding of health and hygiene throughout the daily program;
 - ensuring staff are aware of relevant immunisation guidelines for children and themselves; and
 - maintaining relevant records regarding the current status of the immunisation of staff and children at the service, as well as any relevant medical conditions of children at the service.
- Develop an enrolment procedure that captures all required information regarding the children's immunisation status, Immunisation History Statement and any medical conditions.
- Provide relevant sourced materials to families about:
 - No child shall attend until they have received all of their immunisations, upon induction 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 service; and
 - providing information on illnesses (as soon as practicable after the occurrence of an infectious disease).
- Provide information to families as soon as practicable of the occurrence of an infectious disease that describe the:
 - nature of illness;

- incubation period; and
- infectious and exclusion periods.
- This information will be sourced from a reliable source such as, *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2012).
- Ensuring that an "Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness" record is completed as soon as practicable or no later than 24 hours of the illness occurring;
- Maintaining confidentiality with regards to children's individual medical circumstances, by putting procedures in place to safeguard children and family's personal information;
- Provide regular reminders to families to keep information in children's enrolment records up to date (immunisation), ensuring that this occurs as required;
- Advising staff of the recommended immunisations for people working with children as per DfE recommendations
- Providing opportunities for educators to source relevant up to date information on the prevention of infectious diseases, and maintaining health and hygiene from trusted sources;
- Ensuring opportunities for educators and families to be involved in the review of the policies and procedures regarding children's health and safety; and
- Inform and implement the advice of the health department, or local health unit regarding infectious diseases as required.

Educators will:

- Ensure that any children who are suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs 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 ensure the child's comfort;
- Advise families that they will need to alert the service if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness;
- Provide varied opportunities for children to engage in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice;
- Implement the service's health and hygiene policy including:
 - hand washing – washing and drying thoroughly;
 - routine and daily cleaning of the service;
 - nappy changing procedures (when necessary);
 - wearing gloves (particularly when in direct contact with bodily fluids); and
 - proper handling and preparation of food.
- Provide opportunities for staff, children and families to have access to health professionals by organising visits/guest speakers to attend the service to ensure that practices in place at the service are correct

Families will:

- Advise the service of their child's immunisation status, and provide an up-to-date Medicare 'Immunisation History Statement' for the service to copy and keep with the child's enrolment records;
- Advise the service when their child's immunisation/medical condition is updated and provide this information to the service to ensure that enrolment records are up to date; and
- Have the opportunity to provide input into the review and effectiveness of policies and procedures of the service via various methods.

Evaluation

Infection control is effectively managed at the service to ensure children remain healthy and transmission of infectious diseases is minimised.

Sources

Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th edition) 2012

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