

ST. CATHERINE'S EARLY EDUCATION CENTRE

INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

Our Service will minimise children's exposure to infectious diseases by adhering to all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases, promoting practices that reduce the transmission of infection, ensuring the exclusion of sick children and educators, supporting child immunisation, and implementing effective hygiene practices.

National Quality Standards:

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
88	Infectious diseases
90	Medical conditions policy
93	Administration of medication
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
172(2)g	a notice stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the premises
173	Prescribed information to be displayed
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.
EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW	
172	Offence to fail to display prescribed information

Aim

Our Service has a duty of care to ensure that children families, educators, and visitors of the Service are provided with a high level of protection during the hours of the Service's operation. We aim to

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manage and prevent the spread of illness and infectious disease throughout the service. Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting individuals against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. Immunisation not only protects individuals, but also others in the community, by reducing the spread of disease.

Related Policies

Educator and Management Policy
Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Sick children Policy
Food Nutrition and Beverage Policy
Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Immunisation Policy
Medical Conditions Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

Implementation

Our Service is committed to minimise the spread of infectious diseases and viruses by implementing recommendations as stated in the *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (Fifth Edition)* developed by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council and advice provided from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC).

We are guided by decisions regarding exclusion periods and notification of infectious diseases by the *Australian Government- Department of Health* and local Public Health Units in our jurisdiction as per the Public Health Act.

The need for exclusion and the length of time a person is excluded from the Service depends on:

- how easily the infection can spread
- how long the person is likely to be infectious and
- the severity of the infectious disease or illness.

This policy must be read in conjunction with our other Quality Area 2 policies:

- Immunisation Policy
- Sick Children Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy and
- Handwashing Policy

Management will closely monitor health alerts and guidelines from Public Health Units and the Australian Government- Department of Health for any advice and emergency health management in the event of a contagious illness outbreak

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The Approved Provider must also notify the Regulatory Authority of any incidence of a notifiable infectious disease or illness. [acecqa contact regulatory authority](#)

Immunisation Requirements

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, before enrolling a child, early childhood services must first obtain evidence that the child is:

- fully immunised for their age OR
- on a recognised vaccination catch-up program OR
- unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons.

'Conscientious objection' is not an exemption under the 'No Jab No Play' legislation.

Note homeopathic immunisation is not recognised.

Refer to Immunisation Policy for more information

Management will ensure:

- That all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases is sourced from a recognised health authority.
- The implementation of recommendations from *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.
- Children are protected from harm by ensuring relevant policies and procedures are followed regarding health and safety within the Service.
- They collect, maintain, and appropriately store the required enrolment documents and enrolment information, including health and immunisation records of children in the Service.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible person will ensure:

- A hygienic environment is maintained.
- Cleaning charts are completed each day and signed by the Educator.
- Children are supported in their understanding of health and hygiene throughout the daily program and routine.
- Educators and Staff are aware of relevant immunisation guidelines for children and themselves.
- Information is collected on enrolment and maintained regarding each child's immunisation status, and any medical conditions.
- Families are provided with relevant sourced materials and information on infectious diseases, health, and hygiene including:
 - The current VIC Immunisation Schedule.

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- Exclusion guidelines in the event of an infectious illness at the Service for children that are not immunised or have not yet received all their immunisations.
- Advice and information regarding any infectious diseases in general, and information regarding any specific infectious illnesses that are suspected/present in the Service.
- Families are provided with information about an infectious disease by displaying and emailing the Infectious Diseases Notification Form and details.
- That an illness record form is completed no later than 24 hours of an illness occurring.
- All educators are mindful and maintain confidentiality of individual children's medical circumstances.
- Children's enrolment records are updated with regards to immunisation as required, (i.e. as children reach age milestones for immunisation), or at least twice a year.
- Staff are advised of the recommended immunisations for people working with children
- Educators are familiar with procedures for exclusion of educators as well as children in the event of an infectious illness occurring at the Service.
- That opportunities for educators to source pertinent up to date information from trusted sources on the prevention of infectious diseases and maintaining health and hygiene are provided.
- To notify and implement the advice of the health department, or local health unit regarding Infectious Diseases as required
- Children do not attend the Service if they are unwell. If a child has been sick they must be well for 48hrs before returning to the Service. For example, if a child is absent due to illness or is sent home due to illness they will be unable to attend the next day as a minimum.
- To complete the register of illness and/or document incidents of infectious diseases. Some diseases require your state authority to be notified.
- Cloths are colour coded so that a separate cloth is used for floors, bathroom, art and craft, and meal surfaces.
- Toys and equipment that are hard to clean will be washed with detergent and air-dried in sunlight.
- Washable toys and equipment will be washed in detergent and hot water or the dishwasher and aired to dry (toys will not be washed in the dishwasher at the same time as dishes). All toys and equipment that have been cleaned will be recorded on the toy cleaning register.
- A 'Dummy container' is to be used with the child's name clearly stated to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- All cleaning procedures will be recorded on the Service's Cleaning Checklist.

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- Furnishings, fabric tablecloths and pillowcases will be laundered at the end of each week and hung out to dry. This will be increased to every day if the child is ill or during an outbreak of illness in the Service.
- Floor surfaces will be cleaned on a daily basis after each meal and at the end of each day.
- Toilets/bathrooms will be cleaned in the middle of the day, the end of the day and whenever needed throughout the day using disinfectant and paper towel or chux.
- Disposable paper towel and disinfectant are used to clean bodily fluids off beds, floors, bathrooms, etc.
- Pregnant staff have the option not change nappies or assist in toileting or cleaning up toileting accidents to prevent unexpected cross contamination and risk to pregnancy and are advised to get tested for cmv.

Educators will ensure:

- That any child suspected of having an infectious illness is responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times.
- That appropriate health and safety procedures are implemented when treating ill children.
- (if possible) Isolate the child from other children.
- Families are aware of the need to collect their unwell child/ children as soon as possible.
- Families are advised that they must alert the Service if their child is diagnosed with an Infectious Illness.
- Their own immunisation status is maintained, and the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor is advised of any updates to their immunisation status.

** The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommend that educators should be immunised against -*

- *Hepatitis A.*
- *Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR).*

Educators born during or since 1966 who do not have vaccination records of two doses of MMR, or do not have antibodies for rubella, require vaccination.

- *Varicella if they have not previously been infected with chickenpox.*
- *Pertussis. An adult booster dose is especially important for those educators caring for the youngest children who are not fully vaccinated.*
- *Hepatitis B if caring for unimmunised children with intellectual disabilities (although the risk is low).*

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- Opportunities are provided for children to participate in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice.
- Consideration is given to the combination of children to decrease the risk of attaining an infectious illness when planning the routines/program of the day.
- They adhere to the Service's health and hygiene policy including:
 - Hand washing
 - Daily cleaning of the Service
 - Wearing gloves (particularly when in direct contact with bodily fluids)
 - Appropriate and hygienic handling and preparation of food
- They maintain up to date knowledge with respect to Health and Safety through on-going professional development opportunities.
- That children beds are set up with an appropriate gap to avoid cross infection while resting or sleeping.
- Each child will have their own bedding, when used by one child is washed before it is used by another child all sheets are washed weekly. This will increase if the child is unwell or during an outbreak of illness in the Service.
- Infant cot bedding is washed after each use.
- Sleep mats and mattress' to be cleaned with disinfectant after each child's use.
- That any toy that is mouthed by a child is placed immediately in the toy's washing bucket/basket to be washed with warm soapy water at the end of the day. All washable toys out on display for the children are to be washed on a weekly basis to decrease the risk of cross contamination and recorded with the date and a signature as evidence.
- That all play dough is made fresh every week. If there is an outbreak of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, or any other contagious communicable disease, play dough is to be discarded at the end of each day and a new batch made each day for the duration of the outbreak. Children are to wash their hands before and after using the play dough.
- That mops used for toilet accidents are to be soaked in disinfectant in a bucket in the laundry sink and then air-dried.
- That a weekly clean is carried out on other surfaces that may transmit germs such as doorknobs, low shelving, etc. This will be increased if an outbreak has been recorded in the Service.
- That if a child has a toileting accident, the items are placed preferably in a wet bag or a plastic bag with the child's name on it. The plastic bag will be stored in a sealed container labelled

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'soiled/wet clothing' for parents to take home.

Families will:

- Advise the Service of their child's immunisation status, by providing approved written documentation for the Service to copy and place in the child's file.
- Advise the Service when their child's immunisation/medical condition is updated to ensure that immunisation and medical records are up to date.
- Provide sufficient spare clothing, particularly if the child is toilet training.
- Families are advised that they must alert the Service if their child is diagnosed with an Infectious Illness.
- Are encouraged to use the antibacterial hand gel located in the foyer before entering the service.

Recommended Minimum Periods of Exclusion

National Health and Medical Research Council .

Staying Healthy -Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services
5th edition, Commonwealth of Australia 2012.

Children who are unwell should not attend the service.

The definition of 'contacts' will vary according to disease. Please refer to specific Fact Sheets in the Staying Healthy Publication for the definition of "contacts"

Campylobacter

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Candidiasis ("Thrush) oral

Children under 3 years will be excluded until all signs of illness have disappeared. Children in this age group frequently mouth toys and can transmit the infection to children who may not already be infected). Centre has guidelines in parent handbook.

Chickenpox (Varicella)

Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash first appeared in unimmunised children and less in immunised children.

Exclusion of contacts - Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded.

CMV (Cytomegalovirus infection)

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Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Conjunctivitis

Exclude until discharge from the eyes has ceased for 24 hours.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Cryptosporidium

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.
Exclusion of Contacts – Not excluded.

Diarrhoea (No organism identified)

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Fungal infections of the skin or nails (eg ringworm, tinea)

Exclude until the day after starting appropriate anti-fungal treatment.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

German measles (See 'Rubella')

Giardiasis

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Glandular fever (Mononucleosis, EBV infection)

Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

Exclude until all blisters have dried.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)

Exclude until the person has received appropriate antibiotic treatment for at least 4 days.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Head lice (Pediculosis)

The centre has own policy

Hepatitis A

Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received and until at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded. Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about treating or vaccinating children in the same room or group.

Hepatitis B

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Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Hepatitis C

Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Herpes simplex (cold sores, fever blisters)

Exclude until the sores are dry. Sores should be covered by a dressing where possible.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS)

Exclusion is NOT necessary. If the person is severely immunocompromised, they will be vulnerable to other people's illnesses.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Human Parvovirus B19 (fifth disease, erythema infectiosum, slapped cheek syndrome)

Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Hydatid disease

Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Impetigo (school sores)

Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has commenced. Any sores on exposed skin should be covered with a watertight dressing.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Influenza and influenza-like illnesses

Exclude until well.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Listeriosis

Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Measles

Exclude for 4 days after the onset of the rash.
Exclusion of Contacts - Immunised and immune contacts are not excluded. For non-immunised contacts, contact a public health unit for specialist advice. All immunocompromised children should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case.

Meningitis (viral)

Exclude until well.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

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Meningococcal infection

Exclude until appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded. Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about antibiotics and /or vaccination for people who were in the same room.

Molluscum contagiosum

Exclusion is NOT necessary.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Mumps

Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Norovirus

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion or vomiting for 48 hours.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Pertussis (See 'Whooping Cough')

Pneumococcal Disease

Exclusion until person is well.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Roseola

Exclusion is NOT necessary.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Ross River virus

Exclusion is NOT necessary.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Rotavirus infection

Children are to be excluded from the service until there has not been a loose bowel motion or vomiting for 48 hours.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

In the case of a gastroenteritis outbreak the first sign of a loose bowel motion and or vomiting parents will be called to collect child immediately.

Rubella (German measles)

Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of the rash.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Salmonellosis (Salmonella infection)

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.

Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

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Scabies

Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Shigellosis

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Streptococcal sore throat (including scarlet fever)

Exclude until the person has received antibiotic treatment for at least 48 hours and feels well.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Toxoplasmosis

Exclusion is NOT necessary.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded

Tuberculosis (TB)

Exclude until medical certificate is produced from an appropriate health authority.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded. Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about screening, antibiotics or TB clinics.

Varicella See 'Chickenpox'

Viral gastroenteritis (viral diarrhoea)

Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

Whooping cough (pertussis)

Exclude until 5 days after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment or for 21 days from the onset of coughing.

Exclusion of Contacts - Contact a public health unit for specialist advice about excluding non-vaccinated contacts, or antibiotics.

Worms

Exclude if loose bowel motions are occurring. Exclusion is not necessary if treatment has occurred.
Exclusion of Contacts - Not excluded.

If the cause is unknown, possible exclusion for 48 hours until the cause is identified. However, educators and other staff who have a food handling role should always be excluded until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 48 hours.

Source

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

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- Department of Human Resources: National Immunisation Program Schedule: <https://beta.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program>
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
- Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020).
- Medicare Australia (Department of Human Services): <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/medicare>
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/>
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services.*
- No Jab No Play: <https://beta.health.gov.au/resources/publications/no-jab-no-pay-new-requirements-fact-sheet>
- NSW Government Department of Health. Vaccination requirements for child care: https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare_qa.aspx
- *Public Health Act 2010*
- *Public Health Amendment Act 2017*
- Public Health Regulation 2012
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Review

The policy will be reviewed regularly.

The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
July 2014	Policy was updated in January 2016 to comply with the NO JAB NO PLAY legislation	October 2016
October 2017	Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard	June 2019
July 2019	Policy was reformatted for easier understanding. Addition information added to points	July 2021
Oct 2020	Additional information relating Covid 19 was added	July 2021
Sep 2021	Minor changes throughout, Addition of reg 172(2)(g) and 174(2)(a)	June 2023
Oct 2023	Covid 19 notification to the department section removed Additional regulations have been added Covid 10 management policy has removed from the read in conjunction with other policy	Oct 2025
Dec 2023	No major updates	Oct 2025

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	Reworded for better understanding Exclusion periodeds updated to 48 hours	
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