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Dealing with Infectious Disease

Policy

South Turrumurra OOSH (OOSH/service) will provide a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health and wellbeing of the children in our care. We will take all reasonable steps to prevent and manage the spread of infectious disease by implementing procedures that are consistent with guidelines from NSW Department of Health and related authorities.

Legislative Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: 167, 172, 174
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 85, 86, 87, 88, 103, 162, 168(2)(c), 170, 171, 172, 173, 175
- National Quality Framework: Quality Area 2.1.2, 3.1.2, 7.1.2
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Australian Federal Government
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, State Government of New South Wales
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Australian New Zealand Food Safety Code (FSANZ)

Definitions

Exclusion Period

- Families keeping their children at home in the event of illness or disease within the service. The aim is to reduce the spread of infectious diseases in the service, as the less contact there is between people who have an infectious disease and people who are at risk of catching the disease, the less chance the disease has of spreading.

Immunisation

- Immunisation can prevent some infections. It works by giving a person a vaccine – often a dead or modified version of the germ – against a particular disease. This makes the person's immune system respond in a similar way to how it would respond if they actually had the disease, but with less severe symptoms. If the person comes in contact with that germ in the future, their immune system can rapidly respond and prevent the person becoming ill. Immunisation also protects other people who are not immunised, such as children who are too young to be immunised, or people whose immune systems did not respond to the vaccine. This is because the more people who are immunised against a disease, the lower the chance that a person will ever come into contact with someone who has the disease (also known as herd immunity). For families to receive the Child Care Subsidy and Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A, their child must meet the immunisation requirements. Jurisdictional requirements may also prevent children who are not immunised from attending a service.

Infectious Disease

- A disease that is designated under a law of a relevant jurisdiction or by a health authority as a disease that would require a person with the disease to be excluded from an education and care service.

Implementation Strategies – how will it be done?

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure that **notification requirements to the Regulatory Authority are met** in relation to an outbreak of an infectious disease that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children attending the service.
- **ensure exclusion periods** for people with infectious diseases recommended by Government Authorities are implemented for all staff, children, parents, families, and visitors.
- ensure the **premises, furniture and equipment are kept safe, clean, and well maintained**, including high risk areas, e.g. bathroom, toilet, furniture, clothing, linen, and equipment (e.g. toys, carpets, mats).
- **implement advice and recommendations from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and Safe Work Australia** when possible.
- ensure **required enrolment information, including health and immunisation records of enrolled children, is collected, maintained, and appropriately and securely stored.**
- the **Public Health Unit is notified in the event of an outbreak of notifiable illness.** Management must document the number of cases, dates of onset and duration of symptoms.
- ensure that **appropriate and current information and resources are provided to staff and parent/guardians** regarding the identification and management of infectious diseases, blood-borne viruses, and infestations.
- regularly **communicate with the team about South Turrumurra OOSH's commitment and collective responsibility for child safety.**
- ensure that **reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of any infectious disease** at OOSH.
- ensure that **parents/guardians** or an authorised emergency contact of children attending **are notified of the occurrence of an infectious disease as soon as practicable** and in a manner that is not prejudicial to the rights of any child, educator or staff member.
- **display a notice and email each parent stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease** at the premises.
- **meet NSW and Commonwealth requirements relating to the enrolment or attendance of children who are not up to date with their scheduled vaccinations.**
- **promote hygiene practices** with all children, families, educators and staff.
- **support children to understand the importance of health and hygiene practices** throughout the daily program and routine (handwashing, hand drying, cough and sneeze etiquette).
- **ensure educators and staff are aware of relevant immunisation guidelines** for children and themselves.
- **ensure an Immunisation History Statement for each child is collected on enrolment and maintained/updated** regarding the child's immunisation status (AIR) and any medical conditions.
- **provide parents/guardians with relevant sourced materials** and information on infectious diseases, health, and hygiene including:
 - the current NSW Immunisation Schedule.
 - exclusion guidelines in the event of a vaccine-preventable illness at the Program 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 program.
- ensure **parents/guardians are advised that they must alert the service if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness and advise them to keep children at home if they are unwell.** If a child has been sick, they must be symptom free for 24hrs before returning to the service. The Nominated Supervisor may approve the child's return if parents/guardians provide a doctor's certificate/clearance certifying that the child is no

longer contagious and is in good health. As it is not always possible to obtain a doctor's certificate or clearance for suspected cases of an illness, the decision to approve a child's return rests on the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor.

- ensure all educators are **mindful and maintain the confidentiality of individual children's medical circumstances.**
- provide **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.
- **complete the register of Incident, injury, trauma and illness to document incidents of infectious diseases** no later than 24 hours of an illness or infectious disease occurring.
- **ensure educators or staff who have diarrhoea, or an infectious disease do not return to work until they have been symptom-free for 48 hours.**
- **minimise any risk to a child or adult with complex medical needs in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease or virus.** This may require a risk assessment and decision-making regarding the suitability of attendance of the child or staff member during this time.
- ensure that a **minimum of one staff with current approved first aid qualifications is in attendance and immediately available at all times the service is in operation.**

Educators and Staff will:

- **monitor children's health, safety and wellbeing** daily and manage accordingly.
- **be immunised against infectious diseases** as recommended by recognised authorities.
- **stay at home if unwell or have an excludable infectious disease.**
- **employ and role model good hygiene practices** for cleaning hands, toileting and food handling.
- **integrate infection control awareness, hygiene and protective practices** into educational programming and planning.
- **communicate with families about infectious diseases** in general and specific expectations within the service, e.g. exclusion periods.
- **respond to any child suspected of having an infectious illness** and support their health and emotional needs.
- **isolate any child suspected of having an infectious illness from other children** and supervise whilst waiting for collection by parents/guardians.
- **ensure that appropriate health and safety procedures are implemented when treating ill children.**
- **ensure parents/guardians are aware of the need to collect their unwell child/children** as soon as practicable from OOSH.
- **ensure all resources or items touched by a child with a suspected illness are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.**

Procedures

Prevention

- Universal precautions will be consistently applied across OOSH practices to ensure prevention of the spread of infection is effective.
- Department of Health guidelines on infectious disease will be used as reference by staff, management and families and can be accessed any time, via the Health NSW website.
- If a child is showing symptoms of an infectious disease whilst at home, families are not permitted to bring the child to OOSH.
- Children who appear unwell when being signed in in the morning will not be permitted to be left at OOSH. Parents/guardians will instead be advised to take the child home or to a doctor. Children who appear unwell when being signed in in the afternoon will be isolated and their parents/guardians will be called to come and collect the child. The child will remain in isolation from other children until collection.

- Hand washing will be practiced by all educators and children upon entering the premises, before preparing or eating food and after all dirty tasks such as toileting, cleaning up any items, wiping a nose, before and after administering first aid, playing outside or handling an animal. In addition, educators will wash their hands before leaving the premises.
- South Turrumurra OOSH will be cleaned daily and checklists maintained as evidence of the cleaning tasks being undertaken.
- All toilet facilities will have access to a basin with running water, soap and paper towels for washing and drying hands. OOSH toilets have access to warm water, but school toilets only have access to cold.
- Women and girls will have access to proper feminine hygiene products and disposal.
- Soap and paper towel will be available at the staffroom and bathroom handwashing sinks and hand sanitiser in multiple locations of the OOSH premises, including entry/exits and food service locations.
- All toilets, hand basins and kitchen facilities used by OOSH will be cleaned and disinfected daily. General surfaces will be cleaned with warm, soapy water after each activity and at the end of the day. All contaminated surfaces will be disinfected.
- Toys will be washed, cleaned and disinfected with material items such as dress ups, soft toys and cushion covers being laundered once a week, when in use. Toys and fabric items are also to be cleaned if a member of staff suspects a child has put any of the items in their mouth or if it has touched any other bodily fluids, or if they appear dirty.
- Educators will maintain and model appropriate hygiene practices and encourage the children to adopt effective hygiene practices. To promote children to take 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 regularly, either individually or as a group through conversations, planned experiences, routines and signage. Health and hygiene practices will be highlighted to parents; educators will use information sheets or posters to support these practices.
- Educators will aim to provide a non-judgmental approach to differences in hygiene practices and standards between families to support children's developing sense of identity. Where practices differ to the standards expected in OOSH, remind children that these are practices to be followed while at OOSH, even if they are different for them at home.
- Staff dealing with open sores, cuts and bodily fluids will wear disposable gloves and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Staff with cuts, open wounds or skin diseases such as dermatitis should not handle food or administer first aid but when there is no one else to do so, they should cover their wounds with appropriate plasters and/or bandages and wear disposable gloves while handling food or administering first aid.
- Disposable gloves will be properly and safely discarded, and staff are to wash their hands after doing so.
- If a child has an open wound, it will be covered with the appropriate dressing.
- If bodily fluids or blood touch 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 bleeding and wash in cold or tepid soapy water.
 - In case of mouth exposure, promptly spit out and rinse mouth with water several times.
 - In the event of exposure to the eyes, promptly rinse gently with cold or tepid tap water or sterile saline solution.
 - In all events of bodily fluid transfer, seek medical advice.
- In the event of having to perform CPR, disposable sterile mouth masks are to be used if available. The staff member in charge of the first aid kit will ensure that masks are available in all first aid bum bags and first aid kits.

Management

- Children and staff with an infectious disease will be excluded from OOSH for at least the period recommended by the Department of Health.
- If a parent informs a staff member that a child has had an infectious disease, that staff member is responsible for communicating this to the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor.

- 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 via email, signs and notices. OOSH will maintain confidentiality when issuing the notification and ensure it is not prejudicial or identifies any children.
- In the event of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease at OOSH or school, children who are not immunised will be required to stay home for the duration of the outbreak, for their own protection.
- If a child develops symptoms of a possible infectious disease whilst at OOSH, their family will be contacted to take the child home. Where they are not available, emergency contacts will be called to ensure the child is removed from OOSH promptly.
- Any exposure to blood from open wounds, or exposure to saliva or blood by mouth or eyes, should be reported to the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor to ensure proper follow up procedures occur.
- When assisting children with toileting and soiled clothing, staff will ensure that they wear gloves and wash their hands afterwards. Staff will also direct the child to wash their hands.
- Staff will consider age and gender appropriateness when assisting school-age children with toileting and in the event that assistance is required with toileting, parental permission will be sought prior and two educators will be present during assistance.
- Any soiled clothing will be handled using disposable gloves and placed in a sealed plastic bag for the parents to take home for laundering. OOSH will never rinse soiled clothing.
- Any blood or bodily fluid spills will be cleaned up immediately, using gloves. The area will be fully disinfected. Cloths used in cleaning will be wrapped in plastic bags and properly disposed of according to current infection control guidelines.
- Turramurra Public School and Hornsby Public Health unit will be notified by phone (1300 066 055) as soon as possible after OOSH is made aware that a child enrolled at the school or facility is suffering from one of the following diseases (as stated by NSW Health):
 - Diphtheria
 - Mumps
 - Poliomyelitis
 - Haemophiles influenzae Type B (Hib)
 - Meningococcal disease
 - Rubella (German measles)
 - Measles
 - Pertussis (Whooping cough)
 - Tetanus
- The decision to exclude or re-admit a child or staff member will be the responsibility of the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor 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.
- The Coordinator or staff members have the right to refuse access if concerned about someone's health condition.
- Children and staff with diarrhea or vomiting will be excluded for 24 hours after the symptoms disappear, or 48 hours if an infectious disease is present in the community.
- A doctor's clearance certificate will be required before a child may return to OOSH for all infectious diseases requiring exclusion from childcare, as listed above.
- OOSH will keep a log of all notified cases of infectious diseases. This register will be kept for at least 12 months and stored digitally in OOSH records.
- In the case of the NSW Government announcing a state (or nation) wide pandemic or state of Health emergency, OOSH will follow the guidelines set in place by the school and the NSW Health response measures as found on the NSW Health website.

Management of HIV/AIDS/Hep B and C

- Under the Disability Discrimination Act and the Anti-discrimination Act, there will be no discrimination based on a child's/family/educator's HIV status.

- A child with AIDS will be treated the same as any other child and will have the same level of physical contact with educators as other children at OOSH.
- Where educators are informed of a child, family member or another educator who has HIV/AIDS or Hep B or C, this information will always remain confidential. OOSH has no obligation to advise other families attending OOSH of a child or educator's HIV status.
- Proper safe and hygienic practices will always be followed and procedures to prevent cross infection as identified in this policy will be consistently implemented.
- Educators and families will be encouraged to participate in AIDS and Hepatitis education if deemed necessary.

Response to exposure

Full details of any exposure to a body fluid spill and abrasion must be recorded in an incident, injury, illness and trauma report following any incident which a staff member believes may have resulted in exposure to HIV/AIDS or hepatitis, the staff member should seek the advice of a qualified medical practitioner immediately, to assess the need for testing and report this to the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider who will treat this information as confidential.

Post Infectious Disease Outbreaks

- Following an infectious diseases outbreak the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:
 - evaluate South Turramurra OOSH's handling of the infectious disease occurrence.
 - critically reflect on what could have been done to improve its response.
 - review and update policies and procedures if necessary.

References and Related Policies and Procedures

References

- NSW Health Control Guidelines - <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/controlguideline/Pages/default.aspx>
- NSW Health Disease Notification - <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/default.aspx> (last accessed 22-April-20)
- NSW Public Health Unit - <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Pages/phus.aspx>
- Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 5th edition July 2015 - www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf
- NSW Department of Health - Stopping the spread of childhood infections factsheet - <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/childhood.aspx>
- National Immunisation Program Schedule - <https://www.health.gov.au/childhood-immunisation/immunisation-schedule>
- Australian Government Department of Health: Immunisation - www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation
- National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS): National and state legislation in relation to immunisation requirements for childcare - <https://www.ncirs.org.au/public/no-jab-no-play-no-jab-no-pay>

Related Policies and Procedures

- Enrolment and Orientation
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Dealing with Medical Conditions in Children
- Incident, injury, trauma, and illness
- Health and Safety
- Governance and Management

- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Nutrition and Food Safety

Approval and Revision History

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16/07/2020	Amy Kitto	Scott Everard	July 2021
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