



# HANDBOOK

Phone: 08 9591 3240

Mobile: 0449 536 549

Email: [earlylearningwa@bigpond.com](mailto:earlylearningwa@bigpond.com)

[www.rockinghamearlylearning.org.au](http://www.rockinghamearlylearning.org.au)

# WELCOME TO OUR CENTRE

**The *Management Committee and staff* welcome your enrolment in our Child Care Centre.**

We are currently rated as an Exceeding Centre which aims to provide you and your child [ren] the **highest quality service** at all times. Your **involvement in our Centre and our activities is welcomed** and can be of great benefit to all the children and staff. Everyone has something special to contribute. On entry to the Centre you will be shown the routines and you and your child [ren] will be introduced to the staff.

## NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

We are registered with the **ACECQA**, and regularly maintain the "Quality Improvement Plan" process.

As part of the National Quality Framework parents are welcome to be involved in the centre. Educators regularly ask families to view their child's portfolio, displayed learning stories and contribute comments. Families are invited to attend AGM and a midyear meeting with your child's Qualified Educator. Families have an opportunity to review our centre Policies & Philosophy annually.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE

This service is managed by committee comprising of parents and community members.

The Approved Provider is the incorporated body, represented by the **management committee** which is elected each year. Upon commencement you will be charged a **one off registration fee**, this gives you membership to the association for the duration of time spent at this service. As a not for profit model any surplus funds or profits are reinvested into back into the service.

**Please** feel free to inform the committee in writing with suggestions or items which can be added to the agenda. Correspondence will be notified in writing or email from the Committee outlining the allocated date and time for your requested interests.

The Committee is always open to the community in which truly values all suggestions or support on offer. **Please feel welcome.**

On a day to day basis the Centre is managed by the Director. Parent contributions are always welcome.

## VISION STATEMENT

As a community based, not -for-profit centre, Rockingham Early Learning and Child Care Centre aims to provide a high quality service that responds to the unique needs of its members and the wider community.



## OPERATING PHILOSOPHY

As a centre, we embrace Psychologist Bronfenbrenner's Theory of child development. In doing so, we place emphasis on the quality and context of a child's environment. We view child development as a complex system of relationships, which is affected by multiple environmental factors, such as the family environment, the Day Care setting and wider cultural values and systems. We acknowledge that these experiences are unique to each child that we care for.

It is our philosophical belief that families are a child's first teacher. We therefore encourage and welcome families and their extended families to share with us their values, cultures, customs, experience, interests, knowledge and expectations. These form the foundation of our educational program and reflect the rich diversity of our community.

Educators embrace the Principle and Practices that underpin our Early Years Learning Framework and have a clear vision to deliver high quality practice. Play is valued as a context in which children learn to develop social-emotional, cognitive, physical and language skills.

We provide opportunities for uninterrupted play and offer flexible learning spaces that are responsive to the child's needs and interests. We understand that children are capable of constructing their own learning and we recognise their capacity, agency and right to contribute to their play experiences. Educators are committed to scaffolding children's learning through providing intentional teaching and developing rich, planned experiences in a safe, secure and supportive environment. These are all deliberate and purposeful and are underpinned by leading theory pertaining to child development and learning.



## PARENT PARTICIPATION

*Parents, you are our greatest source of information with regards to your child.* To give your child the best opportunity for development, **Early Childhood Educators and parents need to work together.**

If you would like to become more involved in the manner by which your child is cared for in our Centre, why not consider one or more of the options below:

- Join management committee
- Join in organising social events
- Help collect bits and pieces, recycling
- Spare a little time to join your child in play/story time etc
- Share a special interest with the children
- Any ideas you may have that we could include in the curriculum would be appreciated.

If you can think of a way in which you could be more involved in the Centre and you may have a little spare time, **PLEASE** come and see us.

## ENROLMENTS:

The Commonwealth Government allocates enrolments under the priority of access guidelines set down. This requires priority of access to working parents and people studying or training for future employment. Non-working parents who are occupying space in the Centre, which is not of the highest priority, may be asked to change their days. This will only happen when clients with greater priority of access require space to enable them to work or to attend classes and no alternatives are available.

When the Centre has no vacancies, a waiting list will be kept. Parents on the waiting list will need to keep in contact with the Centre to remain on this list.

**Failure to comply with the following will result in non-acceptance of your child [ren]'s enrolment.**

The Department of Education Regulation **requirements:**

Up to date records to be maintained containing each child.

- **Fully completed enrolment details** ( *to be completed on the centre enrolment form* )
- **Immunisation** ( *from my.gov account* )
- **Current information pertaining parent / guardian** ( *Name, Address and Contact numbers, Medical information* )
- **Minimum of one emergency contact with supporting signature, address and phone number** ( *different to the Parent or guardian* )
- **Birth certificate** ( *to be sighted and a photocopy maintained on the premises* ) centre requirement.

**When making booking parents are required to complete an enrolment form in full and forward their registration donation of \$25.00.**

\*All documentation must be sighted by administration prior to commencement.

**PLEASE INFORM ADMINISTRATOR IN WRITING OF ANY CHANGES TO THE ABOVE INFORMATION.**



## STAFF:

Rockingham Early Learning and Child Care Centre are licensed for 52 children. The breakdown of staff to children is as follows and as required by the Department of Communities (**Education & Child Service**) **National Regulation 2012**).

### REQUIRED RATIOS

0-2 years	1-4
2-3 years	1-5
3-5 years	1-10

*"Please note RELACCC operates above this recommended ratio."*

***The Centre will ensure that the staff child ratio is maintained at all times. Parents need to be aware that between the hours of 11.00am and 2.00pm is the children's rest or quiet time. The Centre is staffed by professional, qualified, competent workers who have been selected for their ability to relate well with the children, their skills and initiative in programming to meet the needs of the children in our care.***

Staff at RELACCC have been employed with us between 2 to 26 year periods, staff turnover is low. Staff Rosters are systematically reviewed every Thursday of each week to make adjustments wherever necessary that meet the children's individual and family needs including the staff at RELACCC.

All families are informed as soon as possible both verbally and by use of Relief staff notification signs especially upon short notice. It is very rare that we require to use relief staff.

## SETTLING CHILDREN INTO THE CENTRE

A pre-enrolment visit is encouraged to allow both parent and child to meet their Early Childhood Educator and discuss an exchange of information about their child before commencing care at the centre.

Settling children in to the Centre will be tailored to meet both the needs of the children and parent. All children are different. During the early settling days you are most welcome to spend as much time as needed to help your child adjust to the new environment and become familiar with the staff.

All parents are encouraged to ring throughout the day to see how their child is and speak directly to your child's Early Childhood Educator. Management will ring and notify a parent if a child becomes too distressed at any time. This would be a very rare occasion.



## CHILD CARE BENEFIT

Child Care Subsidy (CCS %) is available and determined by the gross family income.

CCS% payment can also be paid directly to the service to reduce weekly fees.

**It is your responsibility to contact Centrelink to be accessed for any entitlements.**

## ALL BOOKED TIME WILL BE CHARGED

This includes **Public Holidays, South Metro Tafe and University Term Breaks, sick and absentees.**

**2 WEEKS NOTICE IN WRITING IS REQUIRED WHEN VACATING SPACE.**

***Children must attend during notice period to qualify for Centrelink entitlements***

All parents will be asked to pay a **Bond determined on the number of booked days** this should be paid upon child commencement date or by arrangement. The Centre will hold this bond until you give **TWO WEEKS written notice** that you wish to withdraw your child.

Parents are requested to keep your ongoing **payments one week in advance**. Payment is due promptly and non-payment of fees may jeopardise your child's placement. **All booked days including public holidays and sick days will be charged for. Booked family holidays will be charged the reduced rate if 2 weeks' notice period has been given.**

Payment of fees is accepted through **direct debit** from the parents' personal internet banking, or by accessing our **eftpos facility**. When using the Merchant eftpos machine *please ensure to write the surname of the account holder at the top of the receipt this can then be posted this into the centres Fee Box or given to office staff.* Receipts and statements will be emailed to you through our direct software "HUBWORKS"

Any child not attending the Centre for two weeks without notifying the Director in writing or signing the time sheet for absentees shall be assumed to have forfeited their place and full fees will be incurred without the CCS%. Please notify the Centre before 9.00am if a child will not be attending during their booked time.

## FEES

**Ask for pricing on enquiry.**

## OVERDUE FEES

Parents with overdue fees will be encouraged by the Administrator to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the following procedure will apply:

## OVERDUE FEES (continued)

- **After One-Week Overdue:** A polite written reminder stamped OVERDUE will be forwarded to the parent.
- **After Two Weeks Overdue:** A Fee reminder stamped FINAL NOTICE giving one weeks notice that their place will be cancelled if the account is not brought up to date. The letter will include a reminder that parents are encouraged to discuss payment difficulties and make suitable arrangements to pay.
- **After Three weeks Overdue:** A Fee reminder will be forwarded advising the parent of their **OUTSTANDING DEBT** and that their account is now being placed in the hands of the Centre's debt collecting agency without further delay. ***You will be responsible for any extra charges from the agency.*** The child will no longer be able to attend the centre until the account is brought up to date as per centre Policy.

## CURRICULUM

Developmentally appropriate curriculum and activities are provided for all the children and are designed by the Early Childhood Educators to stimulate the development of each child. **Being, Belonging & Becoming** (social, emotional, physical, intellectual, language and creative potential). The curriculum is based on the Early Years Framework which promotes spontaneous play and learning experiences guided by the children's interest and needs. Children learn more if they are interested in their surroundings. All families will be given access to the SeeSaw portal upon commencement.

The Curriculum is displayed in each room and at times may include outings and incursions. Please feel free to discuss the curriculum with the Early Childhood Educator in your child's room. Parent or Guardian will be encouraged to provide family input in to curriculum development especially in relation to multicultural issues, music and story telling. The extent to which parents wish to be involved will be respected. Each child has a learning portfolio which is kept in your child's room for you to view at any convenient time. Each child has the opportunity to explore their environment during room transitions between rooms ensuring to meet the children's interests & needs. Learning stories are displayed in each room; this is a documentation of children's learning experiences.

## MEALS

The centre operates a full kitchen facility that provides all the children with nutritional meals daily which ensure to meet the (RDI) recommended daily intake. As a whole the centre has been awarded Food Safe through Rockingham City Council Health Department. **Please notify staff on enrolment of any special dietary requirements or allergies your child may have.** The centre has developed a nutritional policy that follows the guidelines of the RDI for children 0-5 years. Milk formula must be provided in original container, sterile bottle to be supplied by parent, each to be marked with the child's name. ***These measures are to protect your child's health and safety***, to avoid cross contamination and to maintain the correct nutrition value in babies' diet.





## BIRTHDAYS

All children are encouraged to join in and prepare a Birthday cake that is cooked by the children themselves to celebrate the child's birthday. **(Please note due to unforeseen food allergies it is our centre's policy that the child's Birthday cake will be made here at the centre so *all of the children* can enjoy this special moment and celebrate together).**



## TOYS AND SPECIAL THINGS

**We do not encourage children to bring toys and other special treasures into the Centre, as they may get broken or lost. (Exceptions: special blankets or teddies/dolls to use at sleep time, no pillows.)**

## CLOTHING

Please be advised that it would be more beneficial to your child's overall development to wear **clothing that is casual**. When children are dressed in favourite or expensive items they may become restricted as to what type of activity they are able or choose to engage in. Ensure child's clothing are labelled.

- ❖ Physical: children may be restricted if clothing is too long or too tight. Footwear should be enclosed and anti-slip.
- ❖ Art / Craft: for fear of getting their clothing dirty or stained.
- ❖ Children are required to wear clothing that covers the shoulders due to possible skin damage

These are examples of how a child's development could be hindered or are the cause of serious injury.



## SUMMER AND WINTER

All children must wear a hat (supplied by Centre) while in attendance at the Centre. During the really hot weather it would be a good idea to include a pair of bathers, a T-shirt and a towel in your child's bag so that they may freely participate in water play. Sunscreen is provided by the Centre, should your child have skin allergies please provide the preferred bottle of sensitive sunscreen to use while attending the Centre. Sunscreen should be applied to your child 20 minutes before attending the Centre; please notify staff if sunscreen has not been applied at home.

During the colder months parents are asked to provide at least one spare set of each: jumper, trousers, socks and shoes.

## SLEEP/REST TIME

Although it is not compulsory for children to have a sleep during the day, rest time is encouraged. Sleep/rest time will normally be between the hours of 11.15am and 2.00pm for babies, although sleep patterns are either on demand or tailored to the home sleep patterns, and for older children between the hours of 11.30am and 2.00pm. These hours are only a guideline.

## OUTINGS

From time to time, we will endeavour to have outings for the children that will take them away from the Centre. In this case you will be *required to fill in and sign an authorisation form before your child will be able to participate*. The Centre must receive written authorisation so that it can be filed with your child's records. All parents of children involved will be notified of any planned outings in advance.

## HOURS OF OPERATION

The Centre currently opens Monday to Friday from **7.00am - 6.00pm**.  
With the exception of Public Holidays.

## DAILY SIGNING IN/OUT

It is a Department of Communities Education & Care Regulatory Unit regulation that **ALL children MUST be signed in** (on arrival) and **signed out** (on departure). It is a requirement from the *Child Care Subsidy Providers* that all absences from booked space are recorded and signed for- failure to do so incur full fees for the period. All sick, holiday, occasional absences must be signed for.

Your child must be handed over to a staff member and provide estimate of when you may arrive to collect your child. **ONLY authorised persons** can collect your child, unless prior arrangements are made with the Coordinator or Child's Educator. Identification will be required (Drivers Licence or Photo Id)

**FAILURE TO SIGN YOUR CHILD IN AND OUT ON THEIR EXACT DAY OF ATTENDANCE WILL RESULT IN CHILDCARE BENEFITS CCS% BEING CANCELLED and full fees are charged.**

## COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

If someone other than yourself will be delivering or collecting your child, please let them know that they will need to bring Licence or Photo Id. Staff and Management at Rockingham Early Learning and Childcare Centre request that children not be brought to the Centre prior to our licensed opening hour i.e.: **7am**. We would also appreciate if every endeavour were made to collect your child from the Centre by the advertised closing time i.e.: **6pm**.

### CHILDREN COLLECTED AFTER 6.00PM

A **late collection fee** will apply to cover costs of overtime to staff.  
Continuous late collection will incur Legal Authorities being notified.

## CUSTODY

A child may only leave the premises in the care of person/s authorised on the enrolment form unless written authority is received to the contrary. This will be strictly adhered to for the safety of your child.

## MEDICATION

Only medication **prescribed** by medical practitioner will be administered at this service. Please ensure to complete a medication authority form, personally inform your early childhood Educator responsible for your child and write 'Medication' and the times required in the parent Messages section on your child's communication board. All emergency action forms (e.g. Anaphylaxis, Allergy or Asthma) should be completed by your GP and returned to centre ASAP.

*Over the counter medication **will not be administered** unless accompanied with a Doctors Certificate clearly outlining the correct dosage and child's name.*

**All medication must be handed directly to an early childhood Educator *with the completed form.***

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE MEDICATION IN A CHILD'S BAG.  
ALSO NOT ON THE KITCHEN BENCH.**

## ILLNESS & INJURY

Centre follows the Covid contingency plan at all times. The Health and Safety of every child attending our centre is of paramount importance to us. There are certain conditions, which will necessitate the exclusion of a child from the Centre until a doctor's certificate is received.

- Ear or eye discharge
- Rash
- Infectious sore
- High fever
- Diarrhoea and vomiting

If illness develops or an accident occurs while a child is in attendance, the Centre will contact parents and appropriate action will be taken to seek treatment where necessary. All accidents are recorded at the Centre and will require your signature and viewing. If your child has a health problem that requires special care, please inform the Centre immediately so that proper care and attention can be provided.

***It is strongly recommended that all children be immunised against Polio, Whooping Cough, Tetanus, Measles, Mumps and H.I.B.***

## SICK CHILDREN

**We regret that we are *unable to care for sick children.***

It is important to protect children from infection as much as possible, so the Centre will comply with the **Health Department Guidelines** for exclusion from childcare during the following illnesses. Sick children need some time away from Childcare to rest, recover and minimise the spread of infection / contamination towards other children and staff

**Covid 19 plan** (see attachment at the end of handbook)

**Chicken Pox**- Incubation period 14 days. Exclude until crusts have separated from blisters (usually 5-6 days).

**Conjunctivitis**- Exclude until treatment is complete.



## **SICK CHILDREN (continued)**

**Diarrhoea** - Exclude until bowel actions return to normal. The Centre reserves the right to ask a child to be removed immediately after 2 consecutive diarrhoea motions.

**Head lice** - Exclude until effective treatment has been given and hair is free of eggs and lice.

**High Temperature** - It is advisable to keep your child home at least 24 hours following any illness involving high temperature, to ensure that the condition has abated before the child returns to the Centre.

**Infectious Hepatitis** - Incubation period 14-60 days. Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.

**Measles** - Incubation period 10-14 days. Exclude 4 days from appearance of rash.

**Meningitis** - Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.

**Mumps** - Incubation period is 18 days. Exclude until symptoms have subsided.

**Rubella** - (German measles) Incubation period 14-21 days. Exclude until at least 5 days from the appearance of the rash.

**Scabies** - Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.

**Scarlet Fever** - Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.

**School Sores** - excludes until sores have healed.

**Upper Respiratory Tract Infection** - Probably the most common condition suffered by small children. Exclude until symptoms subside and while on medication.

**Thrush** - Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced.

**Vomiting** - centre reserves the right to request collection of a child who has vomited twice.

**Whooping Cough** - Incubation period 7-14 days. Exclude for 4 weeks or until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.

**A CHILD RECOVERING FROM A CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS WILL REQUIRE A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE PRIOR TO RE-ENTERING THE SERVICE.**

## **IMMUNISATION**

Please be aware failure to vaccinate may result in loss of Centrelink entitlements. If proof of vaccination cannot be produced for a child during an outbreak of infectious disease at the Centre, the child shall be excluded from the appropriate period of time.

On enrolment, parents are asked to provide proof of immunisation for their child (print from my.gov account). *Thank you.*

## **STAFF ILLNESS**

The Centre acknowledges that sick staff will be excluded from the Centre to ensure that the children have a healthy environment and to reduce the risk of infection.

## EVACUATION

Four times annually as per Child Care Regulations the Centre is involved in evacuation practice drills.

## EMERGENCY AND FIRE EXITS

Each child shall regularly participate in a fire drill. If parents are in the Centre at the time of an emergency exit or fire drill, please follow the directions given to you by the staff or follow the emergency exit plans displayed in each room.

## NOTIFICATION OF RECORD CHANGING

It is imperative that any change of child's details (i.e. address, contact number, medical history, and access) must be immediately changed on the child's record. If any circumstances within a family change, it may be helpful if you inform the Director so the child's needs can be accommodated.

## SMOKING, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Smoking is totally banned from any area on the South Metro TAFE Campus, and anyone affected by drugs or alcohol will not be permitted to enter the Centre, including parents, staff and management. We have a duty of care to children attending our Centre and we may refuse to release children to persons who are clearly intoxicated or affected by drugs. ***Your cooperation and understanding in these matters will be appreciated.***

## MULTICULTURALISM

As we live in a multicultural society, *Rockingham Early Learning and Childcare Centre* is strongly focused on providing a curriculum based on multiculturalism. Not only do we recognise the importance of teaching children about their own cultures, but to expose them to other cultures. This is achieved through incorporating experiences and cultures of the staff, the children and the community into a multicultural program.

## CHILD ABUSE

As the Centre is bound by our duty of care, we do need to take the appropriate action if child abuse is suspected.



## PARENT CONCERNS

In order to offer the best possible care for your child we need to be able to *keep the lines of communication open*. If you have any concerns please speak to your child's Early Childhood Educator.

Should you then be dissatisfied, please feel welcome to approach the Director.

If you believe your concern has not been resolved then please put your concerns in writing forwarding this letter to the Management Committee @ PO BOX 1001 Rockingham City 6168.

The Department of Communities Education & Care Regulatory Unit is the body that regulates the childcare industry. Should you need to contact them for any reason, their telephone number is **6551 8333**.

## TERMINATION OF CARE

In order to be able to provide the opportunity for families in the Rockingham and surrounding areas, *you are required by policy to provide the centre within **TWO WEEKS WRITTEN** notice when you no longer require care for your child*.





**Thank you for taking the time to read this important information.**

Should you have any further questions or suggestions we would love to hear from you.

The centre's Director (Sarah Izatt) can be contacted between  
**7.00am and 3.30pm Monday to Friday on 9591 3240** or mobile 0449 536 549  
or make a personal booking on Mondays in the **Parent Communication book**  
that you will locate on the sign in desk outside the office.

*Please check centre notice board situated in front foyer for duty officer in charge after 3.30pm.*  
Thank you kindly.

**Phone: 08 9591 3240**

**Mobile: 0449 536 549**

**Email: [earlylearningwa@bigpond.com](mailto:earlylearningwa@bigpond.com)**

**[www.rockinghamearlylearning.org.au](http://www.rockinghamearlylearning.org.au)**



# SICK CHILDREN POLICY

Children come into contact with many other children and adults in the early childhood environment increasing their exposure to others who may be sick or carrying an infectious illness. The National Quality Standard requires early childhood education and care services to implement specific strategies to minimise the spread of infectious illness and maintain a healthy environment for all children, educators and families. We acknowledge the difficulty of keeping children at home or away from childcare when they are sick and the pressures this causes for parents, however our Service aims to minimise the transmission of infectious diseases by adhering to regulations and policies protecting the health of all children, staff, families and visitors.

## 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.
2.1.1	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.

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
92	Medication record
93	Administration of medication
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures



## RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy	Handwashing Policy
Administration of Medication Policy	Immunisation Policy
Control of Infectious Diseases Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Coronavirus-COVID-19 Management Policy	Medical Conditions Policy
Enrolment Policy	Pregnancy in Early Childhood Policy
Family Communication Policy	

## PURPOSE

We aim to maintain the health and wellbeing of all children, staff, and their families, ensuring a healthy environment and minimising cross contamination and the spread of infectious illnesses by implementing best practice and high standards of personal hygiene within our Service.

## SCOPE

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

## IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service has adopted the *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (Fifth Edition) publication recommendations developed by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council to guide our practices to help limit the spread of illness and disease. We aim to provide families with up to date information regarding specific illnesses and ways to minimise the spread of infection within the Service and at home.

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.

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

- Control of Infectious Diseases Policy
- Immunisation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy and
- Handwashing Policy



*Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (2013)* explains how infections are spread as '*The Chain of Infection*'.

There are three steps in the chain:

- o The germ has a source
- o The germ spreads from the source
- o The germ infects another person

The chain of infection can be broken at any stage to help prevent and control the spread of diseases.

### **The germ has a source**

Germs can be picked up directly from an infected person or from the environment. It is important to understand that an infected person may not show any signs or symptoms of illness.

### **The germ spreads from the source**

Germs can spread in several ways, including through the air by droplets, through contact with faeces and then contact with mouths, through direct contact with skin, and through contact with other body secretions (such as urine, saliva, discharges or blood).

Some germs can spread directly from person to person, others can spread from the infected person to the environment. Many germs can survive on hands and on objects such as toys, door handles and bench tops. The length of time a germ can survive on a surface (including the skin) depends on the germ itself, the type of surface it has contaminated and how often the surface is cleaned. Washing hands and surfaces regularly with detergent and water is a very effective way of removing germs and preventing them spreading through the environment.

(Source: *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2013 p: 7)

### **The germ infects another person**

When the germ has reached the next person, it may enter the body through the mouth, respiratory tract, eyes, genitals, or broken or abraded skin. Whether a person becomes ill after the germ has entered the body depends on both the germ and the person's immunity.

Illness can be prevented at this stage by stopping the germ from entering the body (for example, by making sure that all toys that children put in their mouths are clean, by washing children's hands, by covering wounds), and by prior immunisation against the germ.

Source: *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2013 p: 7)

### Minimizing the spread of infections and diseases in early education and care services

We understand that it can be difficult for families to know when their child is sick. Families may experience problems taking time off work or study to care for their child at home. Obtaining leave from work or study can contribute to negative attitudes in the workplace which can cause stress on families. Families may also experience guilt when they send their child to care who is not well.

However, it is imperative that families maintain a focus not only on the well-being of their own child but also upon the well-being of other children and the early childhood professionals at the Service. To protect the health of children and staff within the Service, it is important that children and staff who are ill are kept away from the Service for the recommended period.

At times, an outbreak of a new or 'novel' virus or infection, such as COVID-19, may require exclusion from the Service that is not specified in general exclusion periods for common infectious illnesses. Information, education and recommendations regarding any 'novel' virus will be provided by the Australian Government Department of Health and/or local public health unit.

(see **Excluding Children from the Service** section)

The need for exclusion and the length of time a person is excluded 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.

Our Educators and staff are not medical practitioners and are not able to diagnose whether or not a child has an infectious illness. However, if an infectious illness is suspected, our Service may ask the family to collect their child from care as soon as possible or not bring the child to care.

Management and educators *may* request families seek medical advice and provide a medical certificate stating that the child is no longer infectious prior to returning to care. Please note 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 is up to the Nominated supervisor

To help minimise the spread of illness and infectious diseases our Service implements rigorous hygiene and infection control procedures and cleaning routines including:

- effective hand washing hygiene
- cough and sneeze etiquette
- appropriate use of protective gloves
- exclusion of children, educators or staff when they are unwell or displaying symptoms of an infectious disease or virus
- effective environmental cleaning including toys and resources and bedding
- requesting parents and visitors to wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer upon arrival and departure at the Service
- physical distancing (when recommended by Australian Health Protection Principal Committee [AHPPC] and/or Safe Work Australia)

### Children arriving at the service who are unwell

Management will not accept a child into care if they:

- have a contagious illness or infectious disease
- have been in close contact with someone who has a positive confirmed case of COVID-19
- have a temperature above 37.5°C when assessed prior to entry to the service (effective during a pandemic or outbreak of an infectious disease)
- are unwell and unable to participate in normal activities or require additional attention (green nasal discharge, respiratory difficulties, stomach issues)
- have had a temperature, vomiting in the last 48 hours- as reported by a parent
- have had diarrhea in the last 48 hours
- have started a course of anti-biotics in the last 24 hours
- have been given medication for a temperature prior to arriving at the Service (for example: Panadol)

### Children who become ill at the Service

Children may become unwell throughout the day, in which case Management and educators will respond to children's individual symptoms of illness and provide immediate comfort and care.

- Educators will closely monitor and document the child's symptoms on the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* (Refer to our contingency plan throughout the pandemic, this supersedes any other health treatment policy)



- Children who are unwell at the Service will be able to rest in a supervised area away from other children until parents or the emergency contact person is able to collect them
- A child who has passed runny stools/vomited whilst at the Service will be sent home and may only return once a certificate from a General Practitioner has been produced
- Educators will take the child's temperature. If the child's temperature is 37.5°C or higher, management will contact the child's parents/guardian/emergency contacts as soon as possible to have the child collected (within 30 minutes)
- For infants under three months old with a temperature/fever over 37.5C, parents will be immediately notified and requested to seek medical assistance. If the parent cannot take the child to a GP immediately, permission will be required for the Service to seek medical assistance urgently
- Educators will monitor the child closely and be alerted to vomiting, coughing or convulsions
- Educators will attempt to lower the child's temperature by:
  - removing excessive clothing (shoes, socks, jumper, pants)
  - encouraging the child to take small sips of water
  - moving the child to a quiet area where they can rest whilst being supervised
- Educators will check that written parental permission to administer paracetamol or ibuprofen has been provided during enrolment and filed in the child's individual record
- Educators will check the medical history of the child to ensure there are no allergies before administering Panadol or Nurofen
- Accurate records will be kept of the child's temperature, time taken, medication administered, dosage, staff member's full name and name of staff member who witnessed the administration of medication (if relevant)
- Educators will continue to document any progressing symptoms
- Educators will complete the *Incident, Injury, Trauma or Illness Record*, ensuring the form has been completed correctly and signed by the parent/guardian/emergency contact upon collection of their child
- Educators will thoroughly clean and disinfect any toys, resources or equipment that may be contaminated by a sick child.

### Common colds and flu

The common cold or flu (viral upper respiratory tract infections) are very common in children occurring 6-10 times a year on average with the highest number usually being during the first 2 years in childcare, kindergarten or school. Symptoms may include coughing, runny nose and a slight temperature.

In circumstances where a child appears to have cold or flu symptoms, management will determine if the child is well enough to continue at the Service or if the child requires parental care.

Our Service aims to support the family's need for childcare however, families should understand that a child who is unwell will need one-on-one attention which places additional pressure on staff ratios and the needs of other children.

Children who are generally healthy, will recover from a common cold in a few days. Keeping a child home and away from childcare, helps to prevent the spread of germs.

Influenza is a highly contagious illness and can spread to others for 24 hours before symptoms start. To prevent the spread of influenza our service encourages staff and children to be vaccinated once a year.

### Reporting outbreaks to the public health unit

Management is required to notify the local [Public Health Unit](#) (PHU) by phone (call 1300 066 055) as soon as possible after they are made aware that a child enrolled at the Service is suffering from one of the following vaccine preventable diseases, any confirmed case of COVID-19 or outbreak of gastroenteritis.

- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Poliomyelitis
- Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib)
- Meningococcal disease
- Rubella ('German measles')
- Measles
- Pertussis ('whooping cough')
- Tetanus
- An outbreak of 2 or more people with gastrointestinal or respiratory illness.

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 such as coronavirus- COVID-19.

## Excluding children from the Service

When a child has been diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease, the Service will refer to information about recommended exclusion periods from the **Public Health Unit (PHU)** and *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.

[Recommended exclusion periods- Poster Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services](#)

- When an infectious disease has been diagnosed, the Service will display appropriate documentation and alerts for families including information on the illness/disease, symptoms, infectious period and the exclusion period. (This information can be obtained from *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care and Public Health Unit, or Department of Health*).
- If a vaccine preventable disease occurs in the Service, children who have not been fully immunised will be excluded from care
- Management will check all children's Immunisation records and alert parents as required
- A medical clearance from the child's General Practitioner stating that the child is cleared to return to the childcare setting will also be required before the child returns to care ( Refer back to the Contingency plan)
- Children that have had diarrhoea and vomiting will be asked to stay away from the Service for 48 hours after symptoms have ceased to reduce infection transmission as symptoms can develop again after 24 hours in many instances
- Children who have a suspected case of COVID-19 and meet the criteria for testing (fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, nasal discharge) are required to contact their GP or be tested at a COVID-19 testing clinic. Exclusion periods will apply if they have a confirmed case.( Refer to contingency plan)

## Notifying families and emergency contact

- It is a requirement of the Service that all emergency contacts are able to pick up an ill child within a 30-minute timeframe
- In the event that the ill child is not collected in a timely manner, or should parents refuse to collect the child, a warning letter will be sent to the families outlining Service policies and requirements. The letter of warning will specify that if there is a future breach of this nature, the child's position may be terminated.



## MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- effective hygiene policies and procedures are adhered to at all times to prevent the spread of illnesses
- they promote effective hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- effective environmental cleaning policies and procedures are adhered to all times
- all families are provided access to relevant policies upon enrolment which will be explained by management including: *Control of Infectious Diseases Policy, Sick Children Policy, Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Handwashing Policy and Medical Conditions Policy.*
- families are provided with relevant information from a trusted source about preventing the spread of illnesses
- that any child who registers a temperature of 37.5C or above is collected from the Service and excluded for 48 hours after the last elevated temperature *or* until the Service receives a doctor's clearance letter stating that the child is cleared of any infection and able to return to childcare
- a child who has not been immunised will be excluded from the Service if a vaccine preventable disease is reported within the Service community and that child is deemed to be in danger of contracting the illness. Please refer to our *Control of Infectious Diseases Policy.*
- families of a child with complex and chronic medical conditions will be notified in the event of an outbreak of an illness or infectious disease that could compromise their health
- families are notified to collect their child if they have vomited or had diarrhoea whilst at the Service.

## THE APPROVED PROVIDER OR NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE

- notification is made to the Regulatory Authorities within 24 hours of any incident involving serious injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service, which:
  - (i) a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner *or*
  - (ii) for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital. For example: whooping cough, broken limb and anaphylaxis reaction
- any incident or emergency where the attendance of emergency services at the Education and Care Service premises was sought, or ought reasonably to have been sought (eg: severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis)
- parents or guardians are notified as soon as practicable and no later than 24 hours of the illness, accident, or trauma occurring.

- notification is made to the Public Health Unit on 1800 020 080 of any confirmed cases of COVID-19
- notification is made to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of any confirmed cases of COVID-19.

## PARENT/FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY

In order to prevent the spread of disease, families are required to monitor their child's health and not allow them to attend childcare if they have an infectious illness or display symptoms of an illness.

For children who have ongoing medical needs such as asthma or anaphylaxis, parents should regularly review their child's health care action plans to ensure educators and other staff are able to manage their individual needs as required.

Families should implement effective hygiene routines at home such as regular handwashing and sneeze and cough routines (use of tissues, covering their mouth with coughing, sneezing into a tissue or elbow).

Families should notify the Service if their child has been unwell in the past 24 hours or someone in the family is/has been sick. This is particularly critical during a pandemic such as COVID-19.

Signs of illness in young children may include:

- runny, green nasal discharge
- high temperature
- diarrhoea
- red, swollen or discharging eyes (bacterial conjunctivitis)
- vomiting
- rashes (red/purple)
- irritability, unusually tired or lethargic
- drowsiness
- poor circulation
- poor feeding
- poor urine output
- a stiff neck or sensitivity to light
- pain
- mouth sores that cause drooling
- impetigo

Parents should seek medical attention should their child (or other family members) develop symptoms such as:

- high fever
- uncontrolled coughing or breathing difficulties

Families are required to keep up to date with their child's immunisation, providing a copy of the updated AIR Immunisation History Statement to the Service following each immunisation on the National Immunisation Schedule.

### Returning to care after surgery

Children who have undergone any type of surgery will need to take advice from their doctor/surgeon as to when it is appropriate and safe to return to childcare.

A medical clearance statement will be required to ensure the child is fit and able to return to the Service and participate in daily activities.

### Posters/Resources

Posters for Temperature Screening

[Poster for service entrance \(pdf - 42.94kb\)](#)

[Poster for staff \(pdf - 79.86kb\)](#)

[Poster for families \(pdf - 54.42kb\)](#)

NSW Health. COVID-19 symptoms and testing. (reference re: fever and temperature)

### SOURCE

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

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. (2009).

Australian Government- Department of Health <https://www.health.gov.au/>

Australian Government Department of Health Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020)

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/>

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012) (updated June 2013). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services Health Symptoms and testing COVID-19 Public Health Act 2010*



Raising Children Network: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/a-z-health-reference/fever>

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Safe Work Australia

Victoria Department of Education and Training (2020).

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	MARCH 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MARCH 2022
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy revised as part of 2021 review schedule</li> <li>additional regulations added</li> <li>additional resources added</li> <li>sources checked- minor edits</li> </ul>		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
JULY 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>temperature range to indicate fever changed to 37.5° Celsius or above for screening</li> <li>temperature screening guidance added to align with COVID-19 recommendations (Victoria DET)</li> <li>inclusion of posters for display in services re: temperature checks</li> </ul>	JUNE 2021	
MAY 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor changes to include strategies for a COVID-19-safe environment</li> <li>adjustments to requesting families to produce a medical certificate each time their child has symptoms of an illness (due to COVID-19 infection prevention strategies, this is not always possible to contact GPs for clearance)</li> <li>influenza vaccination recommendations</li> <li>children with complex and/or chronic medical conditions are notified in the event of illness in the service</li> </ul>	JUNE 2021	
MARCH 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changed position of colds and flu section</li> <li>Additions to infectious diseases/illnesses</li> <li>Additions for reporting outbreaks to Public Health</li> <li>Deletion of use of sponging to reduce fever (Sydney Children's Hospital recommendation)</li> <li>Additional section for Approved Provider notification</li> <li>Exclusion period recommendation resources added</li> <li>Inclusion of Department of Health information</li> <li>Additional information for parents and families</li> </ul>	JUNE 2021	

JUNE 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some sentences reworded/refined.</li> <li>• Additional information added to points.</li> <li>• Rearranged the order of points for better flow</li> <li>• Sources/references updated, and alphabetised.</li> <li>• Policies added to 'Related Policies'</li> <li>• Minor formatting (line spacing &amp; paragraph spacing) for consistency throughout policy.</li> </ul>	JUNE 2020
MAY 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included the 'Related Policies' section</li> <li>• Included information from 'Staying Healthy in Childcare' about the Chain of Infection. Updated the exclusion period in respect of a vomiting and expanded the 'Families Responsibilities' section.</li> </ul>	JUNE 2019
OCTOBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard</li> </ul>	JUNE 2018
AUGUST 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated to meet the National Law and/or National Regulations in respect of a serious incidents and notification purposes.</li> </ul>	JUNE 2018
JUNE 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor changes made to the policy terminology to ensure best practice</li> </ul>	JUNE 2018