



WAVERLEY MEADOWS PRE-SCHOOL Assoc. Inc.

6 Farnham Avenue Wheelers Hill Vic 3150
 Telephone: 9560 2791 Fax: 9560 9323
www.wmps.info

LICENSE No. 3738 ABN: 28 483 128 625



DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

Purpose

This policy will provide clear guidelines and procedures to follow when:

- a child attending Waverley Meadows Pre-School shows symptoms of an infectious disease
- a child at Waverley Meadows Pre-School has been diagnosed with an infectious disease
- managing and minimising the spread of infectious diseases, illnesses and infestations (including head lice).

Policy statement

Values

Waverley Meadows Pre-School is committed to:

- providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff and any other persons attending the service
- responding to the needs of the child or adult who presents with symptoms of an infectious disease or infestation while attending the service
- complying with current exclusion schedules and guidelines set by the Department of Health
- providing up-to-date information and resources for families and staff regarding protection of all children from infectious diseases, immunisation programs and management of infestations.

Waverley Meadows Pre-School supports the 'No Jab, No Play' - Government policy, along with Immunise Australia Program and National Immunisation Program (NIP), which is currently recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and supported by the Commonwealth Government. All educators/staff at Waverley Meadows Pre-School are committed to preventing the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases through simple hygiene practices such as hand washing, effective cleaning procedures, monitoring immunisation records and complying with recommended exclusion guidelines and timeframes for children and educators/staff.

Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Waverley Meadows Pre-School, including during offsite excursions and activities.

Background and legislation

Background

Infectious diseases are common in children. Children are at a greater risk of exposure to infections in a children's service than at home due to the amount of time spent with a large number of other children. Infectious diseases are divided into four categories (A, B, C, D) on the basis of the method of notification and the information required. The Department of Health has developed a document,

Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts, to assist in protecting the public by preventing, or containing, outbreaks of infectious conditions common in schools and other children's services and is regulated by the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001.

An approved service must take reasonable steps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at the service, and ensure that the parent/guardian, authorised nominee or emergency contact of each child enrolled at the service is notified of the occurrence of an infectious disease as soon as possible. The service must have policies and procedures in place for dealing with infectious diseases (Regulations 4, 88). The service has a duty of care to ensure that everyone attending the service is provided with a high level of protection during all hours that the service is in operation.

Protection can include:

- notifying children, families and educators/staff when an excludable illness/disease is detected at the service
- complying with relevant health department exclusion guidelines
- increasing educator/staff awareness of cross-infection through physical contact with others.

The Victorian Government offers an immunisation program for children to assist in preventing the spread of infectious diseases. A standard immunisation calendar is available at www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/factsheets/schedule-victoria.htm. If an immunisation record cannot be provided at enrolment, the parent/guardian can access this information by requesting an immunisation history statement from:

- the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, by calling 1800 653 809. This service is free of charge and it takes 7–10 working days to process a request any Medicare office.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001*

- *Health Records Act 2001*

National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted

Element 2.1.1: Each child's health needs are supported

Element 2.1.3: Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented

Element 2.1.4: Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines

Standard 2.3: Each child is protected Element 2.3.1: Children are adequately supervised at all times

Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury

Element 2.3.3: Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Standard 6.2: Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected

Standard 6.3: The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

- *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*

- WorkSafe Victoria Compliance Code: First aid in the workplace

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the General Definitions section of this manual - held at the kinder.

Exclusion: Inability to attend or participate in the program at the service.

Illness: Any sickness and/or associated symptoms that affect the child's normal participation in the program at the service.

Immunisation status: The extent to which a child has been immunised in relation to the recommended immunisation schedule.

Infection: The invasion and multiplication of micro-organisms in bodily tissue.

Infestation: The lodgement, development and reproduction of arthropods (such as head lice), either on the surface of the body of humans or animals, or in clothing.

Infectious disease: A disease that can be spread, for example, by air, water or interpersonal contact. An infectious disease is designated under Victorian Law or by a health authority (however described) as a disease that would require the infected person to be excluded from an education and care service.

Medication: Any substance, as defined in the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (Cth), that is administered for the treatment of an illness or medical condition.

Pediculosis: Infestation of head lice that is transmitted by having head-to-head contact with another person who has head lice. Pediculosis does not contribute the spread of any infectious diseases and outbreaks of this condition are common in schools and childcare facilities.

Recommended minimum exclusion period: The period recommended by the Department of Health for excluding any person from attending a children's service to prevent the spread of infectious diseases through interpersonal contact. The exclusion table published by the Department of Health can be accessed at <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Minimum-Period-of-Exclusion-fromPrimarySchools-and-Childrens-Services-Centres-for-Infectious-Diseases-Cases-and-Contacts>

Sources and related policies

Sources

- *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, ACECQA*
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard, ACECQA*
- Department of Health and Ageing: www.immunise.health.gov.au
- Victorian Department of Health: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2005), *Staying Healthy in Child Care: Preventing infectious diseases in child care*, www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines. (Note: this publication is currently being revised and will have significant changes. It is important that services refer to the most up to date version of this resource.)
- Communicable Diseases Section, Public Health Group, Victorian Department of Human Services (2005), *The Blue Book: Guidelines for the control of infectious diseases*
- Department of Human Services (2012), *Head lice management guidelines*: <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Head-lice-management-guidelines->

Service policies

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

Procedures

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring that if there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at the service, reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of that infectious disease (Regulation 88(1))

- ensuring that where there is an occurrence of an infectious disease, a parent/guardian, authorised nominee or emergency contact of each child at the service is notified of the occurrence as soon as is practicable (Regulation 88(2))
- ensuring that information about the minimum exclusion periods recommended by the Department of Health is displayed at the service and is available to all stakeholders
- supporting the Nominated Supervisor and the educators/staff at the service to implement the requirements of the recommended minimum exclusion periods
- ensuring information about the National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule is displayed and is available to all stakeholders (refer to www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/factsheets/schedulevictoria.htm)
- conducting a thorough inspection of the service and consulting with educators/staff to assess any risks by identifying the hazards and potential sources of infection to educators/staff and children
- ensuring there are sufficient resources available for educators/staff and parents/guardians in relation to the identification and management of infectious diseases and infestations
- keeping informed about current information and research, ensuring that any changes to the exclusion table or immunisation schedule are communicated to educators/staff and parents/guardians in a timely manner.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- informing DEECD, DHS Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control Unit and the parents/guardians of the child within 24 hours of becoming aware that a child is suffering or believed to be suffering from a vaccine-preventable disease, (Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001: Regulation 13(2)). Any exclusion will be based on firm medical evidence following diagnosis of a vaccine-preventable disease, or on recommendations from the DHS Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control Unit
- contacting the parents/guardians of a child they suspect may be suffering from an infectious or vaccine-preventable disease that has been detected at the service, and requesting the child be collected as soon as possible
- notifying a parent/guardian, authorised nominee or emergency contact person when a symptom of an excludable infectious illness or disease has been observed
- ensuring that a minimum of one educator with current approved first aid qualifications is in attendance and immediately available at all times the service is in operation (refer to Administration of First Aid Policy)
- establishing good hygiene and infection control procedures, and ensuring that they are adhered to by everyone at the service (refer to Hygiene Policy)
- ensuring the exclusion requirements for infectious diseases are adhered to as per the recommended minimum exclusion periods (Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001: Regulation 14)
- * notifying the Approved Provider and parents/guardians of any outbreak of infectious disease at the service, and displaying this information in a prominent position
- advising parents/guardians on enrolment that the recommended minimum exclusion periods will be observed in regard to the outbreak of any infectious diseases or infestations (refer to <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Minimum-Period-of-Exclusion-from-Primary-Schools->

andChildrens-Services-Centres-for-Infectious-Diseases-Cases-and-Contacts)

- requesting that parents/guardians notify the service if their child has, or is suspected of having, an infectious disease or infestation
- providing information and resources to parents/guardians to assist in the identification and management of infectious diseases and infestations
- notifying all parents if head lice is suspected in the group of children.
- maintaining confidentiality at all times (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy).

Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:

- encouraging parents/guardians to notify the service if their child has an infectious disease or infestation
- observing signs and symptoms of children who may appear unwell and informing the Nominated Supervisor
- providing access to information and resources for parents/guardians to assist in the identification and management of infectious diseases and infestations
- monitoring any symptoms in children that may indicate the presence of an infectious disease and taking appropriate measures to minimise cross-infection
- complying with the Hygiene Policy of the service
- maintaining confidentiality at all times (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy).

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- keeping their child/ren home if they are unwell or have an excludable infectious disease
- informing the service if their child has an infectious disease or has been in contact with a person who has an infectious disease
- providing accurate and current information regarding the immunisation status of their child/ren when they enrol, and informing the service of any subsequent changes to this while they are enrolled at the service
- complying with the recommended minimum exclusion periods
- *complying with the Government's 'No Jab, No Play' Policy - ensuring their child is up to date with all vaccinations
- regularly checking their child's hair for head lice or lice eggs, regularly inspecting all household members, and treating any infestations as necessary
- notifying the service if head lice or lice eggs have been found in their child's hair and when treatment was commenced
- complying with the Hygiene Policy when in attendance at the service.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- ensure that all information related to infectious diseases on display and supplied to parents/guardians is current
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

Attachments

None

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Waverley Meadows Pre-School on 15th May 2015.

Last Review: October 2019 (See *Policy Schedule* for next review date)

© 2012 Kindergarten Parents Victoria Code of Conduct Policy Telephone 03 9489 3500 or 1300 730 119 (rural)