

# DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES

## PRINCIPLE

Greater Shepparton City Council Children's Services are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff and any person attending the service by ensuring reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at the service (*Education and Care Services National Regulations 88(1)*). All children's services have a responsibility under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019* to manage infectious diseases.

## GUIDELINES

### **Children's Services will ensure:**

1. Any child that is suspected of having an infectious disease is attended to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times.
2. The Incident, injury, trauma and illness policy is followed by staff and volunteers at the service in the event that a child becomes ill (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 85(b)*).
3. A confirmed Medical Practitioner diagnosis of a child with an infectious disease has been provided to the service, where required. Not all infectious diseases are notifiable to the *Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)*, for example head lice.
4. Educators and staff practices on dealing with infectious disease are consistent with current information provided by *DHHS*. Notifiable disease are outlined at the following website: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion>.
5. Information from *DHHS* about the recommended minimum exclusion periods (*Appendix 11.1 - Minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's service centres for infectious disease cases and contacts*) is displayed at the service and is available to all staff, educators, families, students and volunteers.
6. A child is excluded from the service in accordance with the recommended minimum exclusion periods when informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease or has been in contact with a person who is infected with an infectious disease as required under (*Regulation 111(1)* of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019*).
7. Where there is an occurrence of an infectious disease (notifiable disease to *DHHS*), at the service,
  - A parent/guardian or authorised emergency contact of each child at the service is notified of the occurrence as soon as is practicable (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 88(2)(3)*).
  - A notice of occurrence of the infectious disease will be displayed at the service (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 173(2)(g)*)
  - The service must notify ACECQA via the NQIT system as ,for 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 Regulation 175 (2)(c)*).
  - Early Years Services Management are to be notified

- Families, educators and staff will be provided with information about the nature of the infectious disease, incubation and infectious periods and the services exclusion requirements for the infectious disease.
- Health and hygiene practices are to be promoted and implemented to prevent cross infection and the spread of infectious disease as outlined in the (*Staying healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, 2013*) (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 77*).

## 8. **Gastroenteritis Outbreak:**

An outbreak of gastroenteritis may be defined as two or more cases of vomiting and/or diarrhoea occurring among children and/or staff within 48 hours of each other. If this occurs and the symptoms cannot be explained by medication or other medical conditions, this may be an outbreak.

- When the infectious disease is gastroenteritis, services will :
  - Follow (*Appendix 11.2 –Outbreak Management Checklist - Children’s Services*) and the ‘*DHHS Industry guide children services centres - A Guide for the management and control of gastroenteritis outbreaks in children’s services centres*’  
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/researchandreports/A-guide-to-the-management-and-control-of-gastroenteritis-outbreaks-in-childrens-centres>
  - Contact Greater Shepparton City Council Building and Maintenance Department to ensure they are aware of the outbreak and service cleaners are notified of the cleaning protocol required as outlined in the ‘*A Guide for the management and control of gastroenteritis outbreaks in children’s services centres*’.

## 9. **The ‘No Jab, No Play’ Legislation:**

Under this legislation, before enrolling a child, services have to obtain evidence that children are up to date with all immunisations that are due for their age, or that they are able to receive.

- Services are to ensure the ‘No Jab, No Play’ Legislation is to be adhered to at all times. For further information refer to <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>.
- When directed by the Chief Health Officer (*DHHS*), a child who is not immunised against a vaccine- preventable disease will not attend the service until directed that attendance can be resumed (*Regulation 111(2) of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019*).
- Reasonable steps are taken to obtain up-to-date Immunisation History Statements from parent/guardians, if their child has received or been due to receive a vaccination while attending the service.
- Educators and staff are encouraged to keep up to date with their immunisations.

## 10. **Epidemic or Pandemic Event:**

An epidemic is an outbreak of a contagious disease that spreads rapidly and extensively, and affects many individuals simultaneously in an area of population.

A pandemic is an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a wide geographic area and affecting a large proportion of the population.

- During an epidemic or pandemic services will comply with the advice of the *Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)*, *Victorian Chief Health Officer, DHHS* and the *Department of Education and Training (DET)*.

### **Related Policies:**

- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Medical Conditions
- Providing a Child Safe Environment

**National Quality Standards: 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.2.2**

**Education and Care Services National Law: 167**

**Education and Care Services National Regulations: 77; 85; 88; 90; 173; 162(f); 168(2)(c)**

**Children's Services Regulations 2020: 46; 54; 57; 112**

**The Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019: 111**

### **Sources and Reference Tools:**

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Education and Care Services National Law 2010*
- *Guide to the National Quality Standards*
- *The Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019*
- *The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Children's Services Regulations 2020*
- *Department of Education and Training(DET)*
- *Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)* <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases>
- *A Guide for the management and control of gastroenteritis outbreaks in children's services centres* <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/researchandreports/A-guide-to-the-management-and-control-of-gastroenteritis-outbreaks-in-childrens-centres>
- *Environmental Health Department - Greater Shepparton City Council*
- *Staying healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, 2013).*
- *Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit* - <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>
- *ELAA – Dealing with Infectious Diseases policy*