

Infectious Diseases Procedure

Purpose

This procedure relates to the Infectious Diseases Policy and should be read in conjunction with this.

Background

To protect and promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children in ECMS services and minimise the risk of injury, illness and the spread of infections.

To inform and educate the service, families, and community on how to manage childhood illness, safety, and wellbeing in an early childhood environment.

Procedures

Infectious Diseases

The nominated supervisor/person in charge will:

- Display the Exclusion Periods for Primary Schools and Children's Services 2019 in a prominent position within the service <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/school-exclusion-table>
- Display the current local immunisation dates, times and locations at the service
- Comply with the exclusion requirements for infectious diseases in line with the Exclusion Periods for Primary Schools and Children's Services 2019
- Ensure that relevant Personal Protective Equipment is available to staff as required
- Notify all parents/guardians of any outbreak of an infectious disease within the service as soon as is practically possible. At a minimum, this will involve displaying information about an outbreak in a prominent position (i.e. on the front door and doors in the rooms of the service)
- Provide staff and families with up to date and accurate information on childhood illnesses and diseases and immunisation.

All Educators will:

- Comply with effective hand hygiene procedures and support and educate children

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and families to do the same

- Use Personal Protective Equipment when dealing with body fluids to prevent the spread of infection to themselves or others. Cover any open wounds on hands with an occlusive (air and watertight) dressing
- Comply with effective sneeze and cough etiquette and support and educate children and families to do the same
- Inform Nominated Supervisor/Centre Director if aware of an infectious illness notification of a child within the service
- Inform Nominated Supervisor/Centre Director if they have been diagnosed with an infectious illness
- Comply with ECMS Code of Conduct and Leave Policies, in particular ensuring that staff do not attend the workplace when they are unwell.

All Parents/Guardians will:

Be aware of their role in preventing the spread of infectious diseases by undertaking the following actions as detailed in the ECMS Family Handbook:

- Notify the service if their child has an infectious disease
- Provide accurate and current information regarding the immunisation status of their child/children when they enrol and any subsequent changes to this while they are attending the service
- Keep their child away from the service for the time required by the Illness procedures and/or the children's services exclusion table or until a medical certificate of clearance is provided
- Keep a fully unimmunised child away from the service for the time required by the children's services exclusion table.

HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis

Although there is no legal requirement for parents to notify the centre of a child's HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis status, ECMS recommends that parents inform the Nominated Supervisor of the status of the child in the best interests of the child. This information will be treated confidentially in line with the ECMS Privacy Policy.

Head Lice

The nominated supervisor/person in charge will:

- Exclude children from the service who have live head lice to prevent an outbreak
- Encourage all families attending ECMS to consent on the enrolment form for an educator to check the child's hair if they have reason to suspect that the child has head lice
- Provide regular and up to date information on the detection, treatment, and control of head lice to parents/guardian and staff/educators at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required
- Include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/staff/educators attending/employed at ECMS
- Include information and updates in newsletters as required

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- Provide practical advice on treatment of head lice and support families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures, e.g. demonstrations on how to treat or referral pathways to health services such as Maternal Child and Health Services (MCHN)
- Access community educational resources and support from community health centres and local government.

All ECMS staff/educators will:

- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with children and families experiencing head lice
- Support parents/guardian and the broader ECMS community to maintain a consistent, collaborative approach to head lice management.

Parents/guardians attending an ECMS are required to:

- Not send their child to a service with untreated head lice
- Notify the nominated supervisor/responsible person in charge if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced.

Immunisation

Please refer to the ECMS Immunisation Policy and Procedure.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- An Immunisation History Statement is presented at the time the child is enrolled and updated at the time of each immunisation thereafter or every six months. Copies of these are to be kept on children's files/enrolments
- Parents/guardians will be informed if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease and children may be required to be excluded from the service until the disease outbreak is under control
- Enrolled children with exemptions to immunisations (including those children on a catch-up schedule or within a grace period) are monitored and excluded if there is a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak

ECMS staff:

Are encouraged to discuss vaccinations with their treating doctor, in particular for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Chickenpox, Whooping Cough and Influenza.

Pandemic

In the event of a declaration from the World Health Organisation (WHO) of a pandemic, ECMS will comply with all directions and instructions from the Federal Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE), Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Victorian Department of Health (DH).

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During such times, ECMS will initiate a Crisis Management Team (CMT) to support both staff and families. The CMT will be responsible for the liaison between ECMS, DESE, DET, DH, and any other relevant government body. The CMT will provide communication to staff and parents in the form of updates, staff support, parent information and frequently asked questions (FAQs) through a wide range of communication channels (email, social media and ECMS website). Staff and parents are encouraged to access this information frequently to ensure that they have the most up to date and accurate information possible.

In these extreme circumstances, ECMS may be required to enforce further infection control practices and procedures, and pedagogical changes. These will be relevant to the advice from the authorities and will be consistent with the requirements of the relevant disease outbreak. Any additional measures required during a pandemic will be removed or reduced **only** under the advice of the DESE, DET and DH. ECMS will ensure that both staff and parents/guardians are informed of these changes as soon as practicable.

Sources

Related Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 • Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 1165, 167, 169 172 and 174 • Education and Care Services National Regulations (Current as at 1 July 2018): Regulations 4, 77 – 80, 85-98, 102, 136, 137, 146, 147 160-162, 167 – 173, 176 - 178, 181, 183, 184 • Health Records Act 2001 • Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001 • National Quality Standards, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety • Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 • Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 • Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 (Vic) • Privacy and Data Collection Act 2014 (Vic) • Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Sources and Further Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection Control Guidelines / minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's service centres for infectious diseases https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/school-exclusion-table • Infectious diseases www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases • Guidelines for the control of infectious diseases www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/disease-information-advice • Better Health – Immunisation www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/healthyliving/immunisation • Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit, Department of Health. Telephone: 1300 651 160 Email: infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au

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- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)'s Staying Healthy in Child Care (replaces the 4th edition)
- <https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-preventing-infectious-diseases-early-childhood-education-and-care-services> or email health@nationalmailing.com.au or telephone 1300 064 672 Hand Hygiene Australia www.hha.org.au
- World Health Organisation (WHO): Alcohol-based hand rubs risks / hazards www.who.int/gpsc/tools/faqs/abhr2/en/
- Head lice www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/head-lice
- Infection Control in Childcare. Australian Government, Department of Health <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-pubs-cdi-1997-cdi2122-cdi2122a.htm>

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