

## Infectious Diseases Policy and Procedure

<b>Title:</b>	Infectious Diseases Policy and Procedure		
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	October 2015	<b>Next review due:</b>	September 2017
<b>NQF Reference:</b>	National Law section 167 National Regulations 77, 88, 103, 106, 109, 168 NQS 2		

### Rationale

There are three steps in an infection chain:

1. The germ has a source;
2. The germ spreads from the source;
3. The germ infects another person.

To break the infection chain cycle and stop to spread of infectious diseases, the service will implement:

- Effective hand hygiene;
- Exclusion of unwell children, educators and others;
- Immunisation;
- Cough and sneeze etiquette;
- Appropriate use of gloves;
- Effective cleaning procedures.

### Policy

Hygiene habits developed during childhood set a solid foundation for life. Strategies to support the prevention and reduction of infectious disease will be implemented.

Where there is an occurrence of an infectious disease, reasonable steps will be taken to prevent the spread of the disease at the service.

Parents or an authorised emergency contact will be notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable. Preventative measures through infection control processes will be implemented at Blackmans Bay Childrens Services at all times; to create a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health and wellbeing of children and adults.

As exclusion reduces the risk of the spread of infectious diseases, a person diagnosed with an infectious disease will be excluded from the service in accordance with National Health and Medical Research Guidelines.

### Procedure

#### Preventing and reducing the spread of infectious disease

##### Effective Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene refers to washing hands effectively with soap and running water (to remove dirt and germs); or using alcohol-based hand rub **only** when running water is unavailable (to reduce the number of germs). Hand hygiene is one of the most simple and effective ways to control the spread of infectious diseases.

Effective hand drying procedures are just as important as thorough hand washing, as damp hands pick up 1000 times more bacteria than dry hands.

Staff and children should wash hands before touching anything they wish to remain clean (e.g. food, surfaces); and after touching anything that may be contaminated. This may include:

- before preparing and before or after handling, or eating food;
- before giving medication;

- putting on and removing gloves;
- applying sunscreen or other lotions;
- after going or supporting a child to the toilet or changing a child's nappy;
- after cleaning up blood and other body substances including wiping noses;
- after touching animals.

Infants need their hands washed as often and thoroughly as older children.

#### **How to wash hands effectively**

1. Wet hands with running water;
2. Apply soap to hands;
3. Lather soap and rub hands thoroughly (including wrists, palms, between fingers and under nails); rub together for at least 15 seconds.
4. Rinse thoroughly under running water.
5. Dry thoroughly.

#### **Use of gloves**

Wearing gloves does not replace the need to implement effective hand hygiene.

Disposable (i.e. single use gloves) should be used (worn on both hands), especially where a person may come in contact with bodily fluids. This may include when:

- in contact with blood or other body substances or open sores;
- cleaning up or handling clothes, cloths or equipment that has been soiled by faeces;
- changing a child's soiled nappy;
- cleaning, if the person has a break in the skin of their hands, or they have dermatitis or eczema.

#### **Wiping Noses**

Individual tissues must be used when wiping noses. Dispose of dirty tissues immediately. Wash hands after wiping or assisting a child to wipe their nose; where hands cannot be washed with soap and running water, an alcohol-based hand rub may be used.

#### **Cleaning Procedures**

- Surfaces will be cleaned between activities. All surfaces children come into contact with will be cleaned daily using warm water and detergent as per the manufactures instructions; rinsed with clean water; and dried.  
Where the surface has been contaminated with bodily fluids or someone with a known or suspected infectious disease, use detergent and water followed by either disinfectant or bleach.
- Dress-up clothes and other material items are to be washed once a week or when visibly dirty and left to air dry.
- Toys and equipment mouthed by children will be washed in warm water, detergent, rinsed well and left to air dry.  
The criteria for selecting new toys, equipment, games, furnishings and other materials will include their washability and ease of cleaning.
- The service will ensure children have convenient access to toilet and hand-washing facilities. Children will be encouraged to flush toilets after use; and effectively wash and dry their hands.
- Bins used for the temporary storage of recycling, refuse and garbage will be emptied daily or when full.
- Toilets, nappy change areas and potties are to be cleaned in line with the relevant policy.
- Mattresses will be aired after each use. Cots are to be cleaned regularly and must be cleaned promptly if soiling has occurred.

- Linen must not to be shared between children. Children's linen will be clearly named and stored individually. Linen will be changed (including cushions) at least weekly unless visible soiling occurs or if the child is ill. If soiling occurs, disinfect underlay on mattress and change pillow protector.
- Bottles are to be clearly identified and refrigerated. Bottles are to be emptied and rinsed before being placing in the child's bag.
- Sponges are to be colour coded for specific tasks (according to the chart in each kitchen area) and replaced regularly.

#### **Animals**

- Children will wash their hands after touching animals. Children will be supervised during contact with animals and discouraged from putting their faces close to animals. Any animal or bird kept by Blackmans Bay Childrens Services will be maintained in a clean, safe and hygienic manner. If a child is scratched or bitten, appropriate first aid will be applied.

#### **Health and Hygiene Information Distribution**

- Staff, volunteers and students are expected to act in a manner that supports health and safety.
- A regular training program will be organised annually to ensure staff and Board of Directors may identify:
  - the service's health and safety procedures and policies
  - safe and healthy workplace practices
  - how to report hazards
  - how to contribute to safe work practices and procedures.
- Information on hygiene and dental-care principles and practices will be available at the service and drawn to the attention of parents.

#### **Exclusion**

Any notifiable diseases are to be notified to the Director of Public Health (DHHS) as prescribed in *Guidelines for Notification of Notifiable Diseases, Human Pathogenic Organisms and Contaminations*.

Exclusion is often a source of confusion because not every disease which is contagious requires exclusion. Infections that may not require exclusion (because it makes no difference to the spread of the infection) fall into two groups:

1. When disease is only contagious prior to symptoms appearing (e.g. rash of slapped cheek syndrome)
2. When symptoms are a poor guide to contagious period (e.g. cold sores & hepatitis A can spread with absence of symptoms).

Where exclusion will decrease the spread of infection, the following will be applied:

- Where it is suspected that a child may be suffering from an infectious disease, the parent will be notified as soon as possible to request the child is collected and taken to a medical practitioner to verify a diagnosis.
- The child will be isolated, though not ostracised, from other children until collection. Supervision will be maintained at all times; ensuring the child is comfortable and reassured.
- First aid or emergency medical treatment will be administered if required.
- The diagnosis of an infectious disease will be confirmed by a registered medical practitioner.

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- The exclusion guidelines recommended by NHRMC (Staying Healthy) will be implemented.
- Parents will be notified that there has been a confirmed case of an infectious disease by placing note on the entrance to each relevant room. Information regarding the infectious disease will be available to parents including symptoms, incubation periods and exclusion periods.
- When there is a notifiable infectious disease in the service, information will be made available to parents in a manner that is not prejudicial to the rights of staff or children and which does not infringe State or Commonwealth legislation.
- Parents will be informed by notices about common infectious diseases in the service. Parents of children with an immunity impairment will be advised about outbreaks of contagious diseases so that they may decide if it is in the best interest of the child not to attend the service for a period.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.
- Where an immunised staff member has contracted a diagnosed excludable disease while carrying out their employment functions (that clearly impacts their ability to fulfil their work duties), any appropriate insurance forms must be completed within 5 working days pending a workers compensation claim.
- An excluded individual may return to the service when the time specified by the exclusion guidelines has expired AND the individual is well enough to undertake normal activities. Any questions or disputes concerning exclusion periods are to be referred to the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Staff must complete the Infectious Disease Register.

### Links to other policies or documents

- Administration of First Aid Policy and Procedure
- Nappy Change Policy and Procedure
- Nutrition Policy and Procedure
- Toileting Policy and Procedure

### Sources

- Department of Education Tasmania
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- Staying Healthy (5<sup>th</sup> Edition)
- *Animal Welfare Act 1993*
- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*