



Infectious Diseases Health, Hygiene and Infection Control

Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations : 77,88-96;106;109;110;112;115

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education Element 2.1.2; Element 2.1.3; Element 2.1.4; Element 2.3.1; Element 2.3.2.

Introduction

Health and safety is a core focus at Tathra preschool. We understand our duty of care to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all. Effective hygiene strategies protect all persons from, and minimise the potential risk of communicable diseases. Procedures have been developed to control the spread of infectious diseases in an environment which support children's ongoing well-being.

Induction procedures and ongoing professional development supports educators to be aware of the potential for young children, staff and educators to be exposed to an infectious illness whilst in a group preschool setting. Our educational program is designed to assist in the prevention of infectious diseases. We recognise the importance of maintaining hygiene practices in a learning environment which teaches young children about health and hygiene. Providing families with timely and current information will further support this process.

Policy Goals

The application of preventative measures aims to prevent the spread of infections and will be followed by all people in our preschool at all times. Infectious diseases will be minimised by:

- ❖ Implementation of recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases;
- ❖ Ensuring all educators/staff are fully informed about their responsibilities to implement and adhere to the preschools health policies and procedures;
- ❖ Promotion of practices that reduce the transmission of infection;
- ❖ The exclusion of sick children and staff;
- ❖ Provision of information which supports child immunisation while respecting individual choice;
- ❖ Implementation of effective hand washing procedures

Strategies: What will we do?

Infectious Diseases

Approved Provider will:

- Ensure that all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases is sourced from a recognised health authority, such as: *Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care* (4th edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2006), and the NSW Ministry of Health, or NSW public hospitals websites;
- Implement the recommendations from *Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care* to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at the service;
- Ensure that children are reasonably protected from harm by working with the Nominated Supervisor and Educators on developing, implementing and reviewing policy that will guide health and safety procedures within the service; and
- Collect, maintain, and store appropriately the required enrolment documents and enrolment information of children in the service

Nominated Supervisor will develop procedures to:

- Maintain a hygienic environment;
- Provide families with relevant infectious diseases, health and hygiene information;
- Guide children's understanding of health and hygiene throughout the daily program;
- Ensure staff are aware of relevant immunisation guidelines for children and themselves; and
- Maintain relevant records regarding the current status of the immunisation of staff and children at the service, as well as any relevant medical conditions of children at the service.
- Ensure enrolment procedures capture all required information regarding the children's immunisation status, and any medical conditions.
- Provide relevant resources material to families about:
 - The current NSW Immunisation Schedule for children;
 - Exclusion guidelines for children that are not immunised or have not yet received all of their immunisations in the event of an infectious illness at the service, upon induction at the service;
 - Advice and information regarding any infectious diseases in general, and information regarding any specific infectious illnesses that are suspected/present in the service; and

- Provide information on illnesses (as soon as practicable after the occurrence of an infectious disease).
- **Provide information to families as soon as practicable of the occurrence of an infectious disease. The information will include:**
 - Nature of illness;
 - Incubation period;
 - Infectious and exclusion periods.

This information will be sourced from a reliable source such as, *Staying Healthy in Childcare - Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care* (4th Edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2006).

- Ensure that an **“Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness”** record is completed as soon as practicable as or no later than 24 hours of the illness occurring.
- Ensure that staff and educators are aware of any incident, injury, trauma and illness relevant to individual children’s circumstances.
- Maintain confidentiality with regards to children’s individual medical circumstances
- Devise a routine written process for updating children’s enrolment records with regards to immunisation, ensuring that this occurs as required, (i.e. as children reach age milestones for immunisation), or at least twice a year
- Advise staff of the recommended immunisations for people working with children as per the *Immunisation Handbook – 9th Edition* (2008).
- Maintain current records of staff immunisation status and ensure educators are familiar with written procedures for exclusion of educators as well as children in the event of an infectious illness.
- Provide opportunities for educators to source relevant up to date information on the prevention of infectious diseases, and maintain health and hygiene from trusted sources.
- Ensure opportunities for educators and families to be involved in the review of the policies and procedures regarding children’s health and safety.
- Inform and implement the advice of the health department, or local health unit regarding Infectious Diseases as required.

Educators will:

- Ensure that any children who are suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times.
- Implement appropriate health and safety procedures, when tending to ill children.

- Ensure that families are aware of the need to collect their children as soon as practicable to ensure the child's comfort.
- Advise families that they will need to alert the preschool if their child is diagnosed with an Infectious Illness.
- Maintain their own immunisation status, and advise the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor of any updates to their immunisation status.
- Provide varied opportunities for children to engage in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice.
- Take into consideration the grouping of children to reduce the risk of acquiring an infectious illness when planning the routines/program of the day.
- Implement the services health and hygiene policy including:
 - »»hand washing – washing and drying thoroughly,
 - »»Routine and daily cleaning of the service;
 - »»Nappy changing procedures;
 - »»Wearing gloves (particularly when in direct contact with bodily fluids); and
 - »»Proper handling and preparation of food.
- Provide opportunities for staff, children and families to have access to health professionals by organising visits/guest speakers to attend the service to ; and
- Maintain currency with regard to Health and Safety by attending appropriate professional development opportunities.

Families will:

- Advise the preschool of their child's immunisation status, and provide written documentation of this for the service to copy and keep with the child's enrolment records;
- Advise the service when their child's immunisation/medical condition is updated and provide this information to the service to ensure that enrolment records are up to date;

Procedures for Health ,Hygiene and Infection

Hygiene

Hygiene is considered to be the most effective way of controlling infection in our preschool. Effective hand washing procedures are displayed next to hand washing basins.

Educators should wash their hands:

- When arriving at the service to reduce the introduction of germs.
- Before all clean tasks e.g. handling and preparing food and eating.
- After all dirty tasks e.g. nappy changing, toileting, cleaning up urine, faeces, vomit or blood, wiping a nose, playing outside, handling animals after removing gloves

- Before going home to prevent taking germs home.

Soiled laundry will be hygienically stored in a sealed container in an area inaccessible to children, until such a time as it is laundered or removed from the premises. Items returned to a child's home for laundering will have soiling removed and will be placed in a leak proof container and not placed in the child's bag in contact with personal items. It is not recommended that educators/staff rinse soiled clothes due to risk of contaminating their clothing which can then be a source for transporting germs.

Educators will wear gloves when handling soiled linen and will follow recommended procedures for washing soiled linen.

Educators/staff will use separate cloths or tissues to wipe different children's faces and noses. Tissues will be disposed of immediately after wiping a child's nose. Hand hygiene will be performed between each child after wiping noses and disposing of tissues.

Educators/staff will use colour coded sponges for cleaning different areas (i.e. blue for kitchen, yellow for bathroom). The sponge code is displayed.

Detergent and warm water is used to clean except where the public health authority recommends a particular disinfectant for an outbreak of an infectious disease.

Nappy Changing

Whenever possible and or practical nappy changing will occur with the child standing up to ensure nappy changing occurs in a caring respectful environment which promotes independence.

If this is not possible or practical then nappy changing will be done only in the nappy change area which will be properly stocked with gloves, paper towels, towelettes, plastic bags, fresh nappies, clean clothes, rubbish bin with sealed lid lined with plastic. After each nappy change the child's and educator's hands will be washed and the change table or mat cleaned with detergent and warm water. At the end of each day the nappy change area will be washed with warm water and detergent and left to dry, preferably in the sun. The procedure for nappy changing will be displayed in the nappy change area.

Nappy changing and toileting is flexible and responsive to children's individual needs. Educators will discuss signs of toileting readiness with parents and work with families to develop a consistent approach to toilet training. We will not begin toilet training until there are definite indications that the child is developmentally and emotionally ready.

Cleanliness of toys and equipment

One criteria for selecting new toys will be their ease to clean.

Toys, equipment and dress up clothes will be washed regularly as per our Work, Health and Safety Cleaning Schedule. Toys, equipment and dress up clothes will be washed daily after being mouthed by a child and after being handled by a child who is sick in warm water and detergent

Surfaces will be cleaned with detergent and warm water after each activity and all surfaces cleaned thoroughly daily. Areas contaminated with blood and body fluids will be cleaned as per Staying Healthy in Childcare recommendations.

Preschool pets

Any preschool pets (birds/animals) will be maintained in a clean and healthy condition. Any animals will be provided with appropriate veterinary care (e.g. worming, care of sick animals). Children will be supervised by an adult during contact with animals and discouraged from putting their faces close to animals. Children will wash and dry their hands after touching animals. Children are not to eat and drink while interacting with animals.

Immunisation against infectious diseases

Parents/Guardians will be encouraged to immunise their child against all diseases appropriate to the child's age. A record of the child's current immunisation status is kept on file. Children who are not immunised, do not have a complete immunisation record, are immunosuppressed or who are receiving medical treatment causing immunosuppression such as chemotherapy will be excluded from care during outbreaks of some infectious diseases in accordance with the National Health & Medical Research Council exclusion guidelines³, even if their child is well.

The preschool will keep a stock of up to date information/ pamphlets for parents and educators/staff on immunisation and common infectious diseases and will contact the Greater Southern Public Health Unit for guidance when managing infectious diseases.

All workers will be encouraged to have all immunisations recommended in the Staff Immunisation Policy.

Exclusion due to infectious disease

Information about the preschool's exclusion policy (in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's) is provided to families in the Preschool Handbook. Children and staff with infectious diseases will be excluded from the preschool in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines. A medical certificate is required after contracting an infectious disease, which must state that the child/staff is well enough to return and does not pose a health risk to other attendees before the adult or child can be re-admitted to the service.

The preschool will distribute letters/fact sheets where appropriate to notify educators/staff members, families of enrolled children and visitors to the service of exclusion due to infectious disease.

If a child is unwell at home parents/guardians are asked not to bring the child to the service.

If an educator/staff member is unwell they should not report to work. Educators/staff members should contact the approved provider/nominated supervisor/coordinator at the earliest possible time to advise of their inability to report to work.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at the service the service's illness policy will be followed.

In the case of serious ill health or hospitalisation, the child or educator/staff member will require a medical certificate verifying that their recovery is sufficient to enable their return to the service, from their medical practitioner or specialist.

Blood- Borne viruses

This policy recognizes that it is unlawful to discriminate against anyone infected with blood-borne viruses including HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. As blood borne virus are not transmitted through casual contact, a child with a blood borne illness or any other blood borne impairment shall be treated and comforted as any other child, i.e. by cuddling, giving hugs, holding hands etc.

If an educator/staff member is notified that a child or the child's parent/guardian or any other educator/staff member is infected with a blood borne virus the information will remain confidential. Only with the consent of the person with the virus, or the parent/guardian, can this information be shared with other educators/staff. Deliberate breaches of confidentiality will be a disciplinary offence preceding normal consultative action.

Head lice

When an incident of head lice occurs at the preschool, will follow recommendation outlined in Staying Healthy in Childcare.

Educators will ensure that a child suspected of being infested does not have close contact with other children for the rest of the day. When families come to collect their child they will be asked to commence treatment and keep the child away from the preschool until the day after appropriate treatment has been started, and the lice are removed. If they begin treatment prior to the next day exclusion is not necessary.

The child may return to the preschool the day after treatment has commenced and all live head lice have been removed. A few remaining eggs are not a reason for continued exclusion. However, the family must continue treatment until all eggs and hatchlings have been removed, usually over the following ten days.

Cleaning up spills of blood and other bodily fluids

Standard precautions support the assumption that all blood and body fluids are potentially infectious. Therefore hygiene practices that promote infection control are adopted for all contact with blood and body fluids. Educators/staff will follow recommended guidelines for dealing with spills of blood, faeces, vomit, urine, nasal discharge and other body fluids as explained in Staying Healthy in Child Care in order to protect the health and safety of all children and adults within the service. Disposable gloves are readily available for use in dealing with spills and hands will be washed after removal of gloves.

Healthy environment

Every effort is made to maintain a high standard of hygiene. Cleaning and maintenance schedules ensure that all equipment and furnishings are safe, clean and hygienic and that they are in good repair. Reporting procedures are in place to enable staff to report any equipment /or area that is not clean or in a safe condition or evidence of vermin.

Tathra Preschool is a non-smoking environment. Refer to Work, health and Safety Policy.

Tathra preschool Sun Protection Policy ensures all children and educators attending the preschool are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultra violet rays of the sun. The Sun Protection policy is provided to families both within the Enrolment Handbook.

All rooms are well ventilated to prevent: reduced concentration span; lack of energy, tiredness and lethargy; increased risk of infection and possible asthma attacks.

Educator will ensure that lighting, heating and noise levels are comfortable and take into account specific activities (e.g. sleep time) and individual needs.

Evaluation

Health and safety is a core focus for service delivery. Due diligence is given to our duty of care to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all. Infection control is effectively managed to ensure children remain healthy and transmission of infectious diseases are minimised.

Procedures and Forms

- Preschool Enrolment Handbook
- Hand washing Procedures.
- Nappy Changing and Toileting Procedures.
- Induction Procedures for new educators/staff
- Staff record.
- Work Health and Safety Cleaning Schedule.
- Work, Health and Safety Maintenance Schedule.
- Faeces, Vomit and Blood d Spills Procedure.

Links to other Policies

- Incident ,Injury and trauma Policy
- First Aid Policy.
- Staff Immunisation Policy.
- Nutrition, Food, Beverages and Dietary Requirements Policy.
- Confidentiality and Privacy Policy.
- Enrolment and Orientation.
- Work, Health and Safety Policy.
- Medication and Medical Conditions
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Sun Protection Policy
- Payment of fees
- Child Protection Policy

Sources and References

T

athra Preschool Enrolment Handbook

Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2011)

DEEWR (2009). Belonging Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: www.deewr.gov.au.

Health and Safety in Children's Services Model Policies and Practices – 2nd Edition

revised (2003)

Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care - 4th Edition (2006)

NSW Ministry of Health: www.health.nsw.gov.au/

Immunisation Handbook – 9th Edition (2008) Australian Government – Department of Health and Ageing – National Health and Medical Research Council
Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (3) (2011)

National Health and Medical Research Council - *Staying Healthy in Child Care - 4th Edition 2005* - Retrieved April 4, 2011, from <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/ch43.pdf>

Immunise Australia Program - *Understanding Childhood Immunisation Booklet* - Retrieved April 4, 2011, from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/IMM52-cnt>

Medicare Australia - *Australian Childhood Immunisation Register* - includes links to state/territory government health departments and other relevant internet sites - Retrieved April 4, 2011, from <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/public/services/acir/index.jsp>

National Occupational Health and Safety Commission - *National code of practice for the control of work related exposure to Hepatitis and HIV (Blood-borne) viruses (NOHSC2010 (2003))* - Retrieved April 4, 2011, from <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/AboutSafeWorkAustralia/WhatWeDo/Publications/Documents/263/NationalCodeOfPracticeControlWorkRelatedExposureHepatitisHIVVirusesNOHSC2010-2003PDF.pdf>

Sids and Kids - *Information Statement - Immunisation* - Retrieved April 4, 2011, from <http://www.sidsandkids.org/wp-content/uploads/Immunisation200804Cit-sugg.pdf>

The Royal Children's Hospital - *Child Care and Children's Health an information sheet for parents (Sept 2008) - Hygiene and infection control* - Retrieved April 4, 2011, from <http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCHPSept2008English.pdf>

Worksafe WA - *Reducing the risk of infectious diseases in child care workplaces Guidance note* - Retrieved 16 March 2011, from [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance notes/Guide- diseases in child care.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance%20notes/Guide-diseases%20in%20child%20care.pdf)

Date Adopted

December 2012

Review Date

2021 Review or when procedure, practice or legislation changes.