



Infectious Diseases

Quality Area 2: Children's health & safety

Relevant Legislation

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) ACT 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 77, 85-88, 90, 162
National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care: Elements: 2.1, 2.1.4

Aim / Rationale

Ensuring the health and safety of children, and staff, and supporting children's ongoing wellbeing, is a core focus of the delivery of the Yass Montessori Pre-School education service. Educators in services need to be aware of the likelihood of young children being exposed to an infectious illness whilst in care.

Maintaining hygiene practices within the service and teaching young children about health and hygiene will assist in the prevention of infectious diseases.

Providing families with timely and current information will further support this process.

Policy Goals

Children's exposure to infectious diseases will be minimised by:

- ✧ our service following all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases.
- ✧ promotion of practices that reduce the transmission of infection.
- ✧ the exclusion of sick children and staff.
- ✧ service support for child immunisation.
- ✧ implementation of effective hand washing procedures.

Strategies: What will we do?

The 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 (5th 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 Pre-School.
- ✧ Collect, maintain, and store appropriately the required enrolment documents and enrolment information of children in the Pre-school whilst maintaining confidentiality.

Procedure:

- ✧ Children are not to attend the Pre-School if they are unwell.
- ✧ Parents are to notify the Pre-School if their child is to be absent.
- ✧ Parents are to keep their child at home until well or a doctor has given the all clear to attend Pre-School.
- ✧ Children are required not to attend Pre-School for at least 24 hours after vomiting or diarrhea episodes to prevent the spread of infection.
- ✧ When a child shows symptoms of illness whilst at Pre-School, staff will care for them and contact the parent or emergency contact number.
- ✧ Children are required to wash their hands after handling animals or animal products.
- ✧ If there is an infectious disease at Yass Montessori Pre-School, the staff will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of the infectious disease at the Pre-School.
- ✧ Infectious disease notification signs are located in the filing cabinet and will be displayed to notify the Pre-School community.

The Pre-School will:

- ✧ 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.
- ✧ 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.

- ✧ Develop an enrolment procedure that captures all required information regarding the children's immunisation status, and any medical conditions.
- ✧ Ensure that an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record is completed as soon as practicable or no later than 24 hours of the illness occurring.
- ✧ Provide relevant sourced materials to families about:
 - 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.
 - Providing 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 and describe the:
 - Nature of the illness.
 - Incubation period.
 - Infectious and exclusion periods.
- ✧ Provide regular reminders to families to keep information in children's enrolment records up to date (immunisation), ensure that this occurs as required.

Educators will:

- ✧ Maintain their own immunisation status and advise the Pre-School of any updates to their immunisation status.
- ✧ Take into consideration the grouping of children to reduce the risk of acquiring an infectious illness when planning the routines/program of the day.
- ✧ Ensure that any children that are suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs are supported.
- ✧ 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 service if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness.
- ✧ Provide varied opportunities for children to engage in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice.

Implement the services health and hygiene policy including:

- ✧ Hand washing – washing and drying thoroughly.
- ✧ Routine and daily cleaning of the service.
- ✧ Wearing gloves (particularly when in direct contact with bodily fluids)
- ✧ Toileting Routines.
- ✧ 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 ensure that practices in place at the service are correct.
- ✧ Maintain currency regarding Health and Safety by attending appropriate professional development opportunities.

Families will:

- ✧ Advise the Pre-School of their child's immunisation status and provide a current Immunisation Statement for their child.
- ✧ Advise the Pre-School when their child's immunisation/medical condition is updated and provide this information to the Pre-School to ensure that enrolment records are up to date.
- ✧ Have the opportunity to provide input into the review and effectiveness of policies and procedures of the service via various methods.

COVID-19 - Coronavirus

In recognition of the rapid spread of Coronavirus and the ongoing release of information from authorities, the Pre-School needs to respond swiftly and correctly to advice from the authorities:

GOALS (COVID-19):

The Pre-School will apply measures that prioritise health and safety measures, including:

- ✧ Mandatory COVID vaccinations for all staff.
- ✧ Implementing vigilant hygiene practices that prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19.
- ✧ Encouraging good health and sanitation.
- ✧ Monitoring sources of public health information.
- ✧ Implementing all measures recommended by authorities and
- ✧ Educating and informing our community with current and trusted information.

STRATEGIES (COVID-19):

Practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 will include:

- ✧ Regularly and thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or with soap and water.
- ✧ Encouraging children to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.
- ✧ Following good respiratory hygiene, when coughing or sneezing:
 - Cough with mouth and nose with bent elbow or tissue and
 - Dispose of the used tissue immediately and
 - Wash hand with soap and water or, if water is not available, use hand sanitiser.
- ✧ Excluding children or staff who are unwell and reasonably suspected to have a communicable disease from the service until they are cleared by a doctor to return.

Should there be any concerns regarding the health of a child at the Pre-School, families will be asked to seek medical attention. Further guidance may be sought from Healthdirect on 1800 022 222.

CLEANING AND HYGIENE (COVID-19):

Our Pre-School maintains a clean and hygienic environment. During any infectious disease outbreak, routine environmental cleaning is increased in frequency, particularly on high-touch surfaces such as door handles, tables, light switches and bathroom areas and any toys/ surfaces which may have been mouthed or in contact with bodily fluids.

Surfaces are cleaned to reduce any soil, then disinfected to remove germs.

Further advice regarding infectious cleaning will be sought from the local Public Health Unit should there be any direct concern regarding the exposure of COVID-19 at the service.

Evaluation

Infection control is effectively managed at the service to ensure children remain healthy and transmission of infectious diseases are minimised.

Procedures and Forms

Enrolment

Medical Conditions

Incident Injury Trauma & Illness

Staff Induction - Orientation

Links to other Policies

Enrolment

Incident Injury Trauma & Illness

Staffing / Recruitment

Medication, Administration of

Staff Handbook

Sources and References

Health and Safety in Children's Services Model Policies and Practices

Staying Healthy in Child Care

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

National Health and Medical Research Council: www.nhmrc.gov.au

The Australian Immunisation Handbook

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
2013	Developed	2015
February 2018	Reviewed	2020
March 2020	Updated to include COVID 19	2022
September 2023	Updated with minor changes– risk minimisation completed and risk assessment updated	Sep 25 or when procedure, practice, or legislation changes

Person/s responsible for policy

Director / Administrator