



Dealing with infectious diseases – preschool procedure table

National Quality Standard Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations	Associated department policy, procedure or guideline	Reference document(s) and/or advice from a recognised authority
NQS: 2.1 Regulations: 88	Leading and operating department preschool guidelines Student health in NSW schools: A summary and consolidation of policy	Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services NSW Health – Stopping the spread of childhood infections factsheets ACECQA's policy and procedures guidelines – Dealing with infectious diseases [PDF 261 KB]

Responsibilities

School principal	The principal as nominated supervisor, educational leader and responsible person holds primary responsibility for the preschool. The principal is responsible for ensuring: the preschool is compliant with legislative standards related to this procedure at all times
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	• all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure • all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self-assessment. These tasks may be delegated to other members of the preschool team, but the responsibility sits with the principal.
Preschool supervisor	The preschool supervisor supports the principal in their role and is responsible for leading the review of this procedure through a process of self-assessment and critical reflection. This could include: • analysing complaints, incidents or issues and the implications for updates to this procedure • reflecting on how this procedure is informed by stakeholder feedback and relevant expert authorities • planning and discussing ways to engage with families and communities, including how changes are communicated • developing strategies to induct all staff when procedures are updated to ensure practice is embedded.
Preschool teacher(s) and educator(s)	Preschool teachers and educators are responsible for working with the preschool leadership team to ensure: • all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure • this procedure is stored in the preschool in a way that it is accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers • they are actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually • details of this procedure's review are documented. The health and wellbeing of children and staff are paramount in our preschool. Educators, families and children will minimise health risks by using appropriate health and hygiene procedures.

Procedure

Immunisation and enrolment	• The preschool will not accept a child's enrolment unless their parent has provided documentation from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). Documentation that can be accepted at the time of enrolment is: — AIR Immunisation History Statement showing the child is either up to date with their immunisations, has an approved medical contraindication or natural immunity to one or more vaccines, is on a recognised catch up schedule, or has a medical contraindication. — completed and signed AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form (IM011) – Medical contraindications or natural immunity — completed and signed AIR Immunisation History Form – Catch-up Schedule • There is a 12-week temporary exemption for children evacuated during a state of emergency, in emergency out of home care or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. • If a parent produces a letter from a doctor or international immunisation information, they will be asked to take their documentation to a doctor to obtain the correct AIR documentation before the child can commence preschool. • A copy of each child's immunisation history statement or form is stored in their enrolment folder. • An immunisation register is maintained by the School Administrative Officer (SAO) dealing with all preschool administrative matters. An electronic copy is kept on the school's system and a paper copy is kept by the preschool staff. • Families of children turning four during the preschool year are reminded to supply the school office with their child's updated immunisation statement or form. • The office staff will maintain records of children who are turning four and send a reminder phone call and/or letter, requesting the provision of an updated immunisation record. Families will be given 4 weeks to ensure the four-year-old vaccinations are administered and subsequent new records are provided. If the vaccination and records have not been administered during this timeframe, the
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	nominated supervisor will contact the families directly via verbal and written forms to state that their child will no longer be able to attend the preschool service until the immunisation has been updated or a verified medical exemption is provided. Once the school is in receipt of the updated immunisation statement, it is entered into ERN and then sent to the preschool for filing with the child's enrolment folder.
Health and Hygiene practices	• Preschool teachers and educators model, explicitly teach and support the implementation of health and hygiene practices during play experiences and daily routines to reduce the spread of infection. • The correct and effective processes for handwashing and drying, coughing, nose blowing / wiping and disposal of used tissues in the bin, is taught and reinforced. These hygienic practices are supported by posters and visual prompts in the preschool setting including the bathroom and toilet areas displaying the steps. • Children are taught and are provided with time as part of daily routines, to wash their hands after going to the toilet, before and after eating food, after blowing / wiping their nose, and after playing.
Maintaining a clean, hygienic environment	Educators maintain a clean and hygienic environment by following the guidelines in Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services. This includes: • All adults wash and dry their hands thoroughly. They need to wash and dry their hands at the following times: - on arrival to the preschool - after going to the toilet - before and after helping children with toileting - before and after giving first aid and/or medication - after helping a child with nose wiping - before and after eating or handling food - after patting or touching any preschool pets - before and after preparing or cooking food - after coming in contact with any bodily fluids. • The preschool, furniture, equipment and toys are regularly cleaned/washed and well maintained.

- Table-tops, mouthed toys, dirty linen, cleaning cloths and loaned hats are washed daily by the preschool staff.
- A cleaner from ISS contracted by the Department of Education undertakes daily cleaning of the preschool site each afternoon. They remove rubbish, clean the floors, bathrooms and table tops.
- Additional cleaning of tables, surfaces, resources and toys will be undertaken as required. Separate colour coded cleaning cloths are to be used for different areas and surfaces to avoid cross-contamination. (See preschool kitchen for colour coded cleaning cloths.)
- A regular schedule of cleaning preschool toy items, furniture, writing utensils and other items is established and followed. (See cleaning schedule located near craft room sink.)
- Any food handling, preparation and storage practices undertaken follow the recommendations of the NSW Health Food Authority.
- Loaned hats are washed after use.
- Bodily fluids, such as blood, vomit, any contaminated items used in first aid and nappies are handled and disposed of safely by immediately placing in bins away from child access.
- Any soiled children's clothing is placed in a sealed plastic bag by the SLSOs and placed in the labelled "soiled clothing" bucket with lid in the laundry area. Soiled clothing is taken home and washed by the child's family.
- Lockers and shelf surfaces are wiped down daily by the school cleaner.
- Bathrooms are cleaned daily by the cleaner and intermittently by staff when needed during the day, eg after mealtimes,
- Refer to Preschool Cleaning Schedule located near the craft room sink for outline of items cleaned, frequency and processes.
- Educators will also reduce health risks by implementing *Standard Precautions for Infection Control*, including:

	▪ ensure tissues, face cloths or cloth towels are not used for more than one child ▪ use tissues when wiping a child's nose ▪ children are encouraged to wipe their own nose. If an educator is required to wipe a child's nose, after doing so, they need to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water and/or hand sanitiser ▪ dispose of gloves, paper towels and tissues immediately after use into a container with a disposable liner ▪ ensure children do not share personal items ▪ ensure hand basins are not used for food or during preparation or rinsing soiled clothing ▪ use disposable gloves at all times when dealing with bodily fluids, secretions or excreta and disinfect surfaces ▪ soiled clothing is to be stored in a labelled plastic bag in laundry area for collection • Educators will support individual children who require assistance with toileting, whilst encouraging them to be responsible for their own toileting and hand washing.
Cleaning contaminated clothing or equipment	Address every situation promptly. <u>Cleaning spilt urine or faeces</u> Comfort the child and give assistance. Minimise any discomfort. • Wear disposable gloves • Place paper towel over the spill and carefully remove paper towel and contents • Place the paper towel and gloves in a plastic bag, seal the bag and put in the rubbish bin • Put on new gloves and clean the surface with warm water and detergent and allow to dry • Remove and discard gloves • Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water.

	<u>Cleaning spilt vomit</u> • Wear disposable gloves • On hard surface (procedures as noted above) • On carpet, remove excess, place in sealed plastic bag and place in bin. Then sprinkle vomit absorber and seal off the area • Cleaner will vacuum in afternoon • Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water. <u>Soiled Clothing (vomit, faeces, urine)</u> • Wear disposable gloves and use damp paper towels • Wet paper towel from a tap. Use paper towel once, do not rewet the towel, as it will contaminate the sink • Dispose of paper towel • Place soiled clothes in a sealed plastic bag for parents to take home • Assist the child to wash themselves • Remove gloves, discard them • Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water. <u>Contaminated Equipment</u> • Wear disposable gloves • Remove the contaminated equipment from the learning environment • Place in bucket with disinfectant, wash and allow to dry • Discard disposable gloves • Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water. <u>Toileting Accidents</u> If a child wets and/or soils their clothes, a staff member must: 1. Wear disposable gloves. 2. Assist child in undressing or dressing in spare clean clothing, if required. 3. Place soiled clothing in a plastic bag. Then place this bag in the blue bucket with a lid labelled '<i>Soiled Clothing</i>' located in the laundry area. 4. Clean areas as required, following procedures for cleaning contaminated equipment or areas. 5. Alert parents of toileting accident and ask to collect soiled clothing at pick up time.
Sick children	• If a child arrives at preschool obviously unwell, the teacher will discuss the child's condition with their parent to determine if they will be requested to take the child home or not. • Parents will be asked about recent symptoms and then will be advised to take the child to their GP to see a medical clearance before they can return to

	preschool. Should a parent be unwilling to take the child home, advice from the nominated supervisor will be sought. • If a child becomes ill while at preschool, (including cough, sore throat, sneezing, runny nose, sniffing or a fever), appears lethargic or is displaying symptoms of a potentially infectious disease, they will immediately be isolated and taken to the book area away from the other children. Parents are contacted by phone to collect their child as soon as possible. They will be kept under close supervision by the staff and made comfortable. • A child's temperature will be taken if they display the above symptoms. • All items the child comes into contact with while resting will be removed and washed so no other child comes into contact with them (eg pillow, sheet). • The preschool teacher will decide to contact the family should a child display the above symptoms and not be well enough to participate in the preschool program. • If a child appears very unwell and needs urgent medical attention an ambulance will be called. The preschool teacher will liaise with the nominated supervisor and parents.
Children with an infectious disease and exclusion	• Families will be asked to keep any child who is unwell at home until they are fully recovered and/or have a medical clearance from a medical doctor. This is particularly the case for contagious diseases, a severe cough, diarrhea or a continually runny nose. • If a child arrives at preschool unwell, the family will be encouraged to take the child home. If the child is not taken home, the child will be monitored closely, and the family will be called immediately to collect the child if the child does not improve. This will be recorded on an <i>Incident, illness, injury or trauma form</i>. • If a child vomits or has diarrhea at preschool, their parent or emergency contact will be called and asked to collect. In the meantime, the child will be made comfortable and allowed to rest under the supervision of a staff member in the quiet reading area of the preschool on a stretcher, if needed. The child will be allowed to return to preschool when free from diarrhea and/or has a normal temperature for at least 24 hours or a medical clearance has been

	issued by a medical doctor. • If the outbreak is for a vaccine preventable disease, any child not immunised for that disease (i.e. on a catch-up schedule), will also be excluded from preschool. Advice regarding the length of exclusion will be sought from the public health unit (phone 1300 066 055). • If a child is suspected of having an infectious disease, for example chicken pox, they should be isolated from other children, made comfortable and supervised by a staff member. Parents are called immediately to collect the child as soon as possible. • Children with a diagnosed infectious disease will be excluded from attending preschool for the minimum exclusion period recommended in the current edition of <i>Staying Healthy in Childcare: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services</i>. This reference document is located in the preschool office. • Outbreaks of a serious illness that pose a risk to the health of the preschool children and staff will be considered as a serious incident and a notification will be made to the Department of Education Early Learning Unit. • Office staff will maintain immunisation records, including records of any children who are medically exempted from immunisation and contact the parents immediately in the case of an outbreak of an infectious disease.
Infectious diseases	• The preschool will notify the local Public Health Unit (phone 1300 066 055), as soon as practical if a child: — has a vaccine preventable disease; diphtheria, mumps, poliomyelitis, haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib), meningococcal disease, rubella (German measles), measles, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus — is reasonably suspected of having come into contact with a person who has one of these vaccine preventable diseases and is not immunised against that disease (for example, on a catch-up schedule). • If a child contracts a vaccine-preventable disease, preschool educators will tell the parents and the nominated supervisor.

	• The preschool will follow any directions provided by the Public Health Unit regarding how long a child suffering an illness must stay away from preschool and the exclusion of any other children. • If an enrolled preschool child is diagnosed with an infectious disease or head lice, all parents will be notified in writing via a note as well as a message posted on-line via Kinderloop. A message will also be posted at the preschool entrance. Any communications with families will maintain the privacy of the infected child/ren. • All parents will be supplied with a factsheet about the relevant disease which lists its symptoms obtained from NSW Health. • An outbreak of a disease on the immunisation register is considered a serious incident and so the preschool must notify Early Learning (phone 1300 083 698) as soon as practical within 24 hours.
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Record of procedure's review

Date of review	4 July 2025
Who was involved	Sharna Labbe, Deana Talevska, Alex Arancibia, May Meesorn-iam
Key changes made and reason why	Added location of "Staying Healthy" document for reference
Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders	Principal: 4 July 2025 Staff: 21 July 2025 – Weekly staff meeting Parents: 23 July 2025 – website and community procedure folder updated – message sent via Kinderloop Please note, parents must be notified at least 14 days prior to a change that may have a significant impact on their service's provision of education and care or a family's ability to use the service.