Mawson Lakes School OSHC

Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

As a service, Mawson Lakes School OSHC has established this policy in relation to infectious diseases to ensure that all children at our service learn and grow in a healthy environment, free of germs and infectious diseases. All children have the opportunity to learn, explore and grow within a service that makes their health and safety a top priority through taking preventative measures in infection control. This policy will help all educators to understand, manage, and minimise preventative infectious diseases.

BACKGROUND

This policy has been developed to reflect the Education and Care Services National Regulations and ensure our practices align with the philosophy and values of Mawson Lakes School OSHC. We recognise our responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent and minimise the spread of infectious diseases within our service and to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children, families and educators. We follow current public health advice and relevant guidance, including Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, published by the Australian Government. Where an infectious disease occurs, we follow appropriate procedures for managing the situation and notifying families and relevant authorities, as required.

LEGISLATION

Regulation	Description	Implementation
85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures	There are appropriate policies and procedures in place for incident, injury, trauma and illness.
86	Notification to parents of incidents, injury, trauma, and illness	Educators and Director notify families of children who have been involved with an incident, injury, trauma or illness.
87	Incident, injury, trauma, and illness record	All educators record any incidents, injuries, trauma and illnesses that occur at the service in the 'Accident and Injury' folder. These records are counter signed by the family of the child when notifying them.
88	Infectious diseases	We take appropriate steps to minimise the risk of children coming into contact with infectious diseases. We use the SPIKE app to notify families of the occurrence of an infectious disease at the service.
103	Premises, furniture, and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair	The premises, furniture and equipment are checked by educators to ensure that is it safe, clean and in good repair. If something is found to be in disrepair, the equipment or furniture is fixed or removed from the premises.
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures	The service has policies and procedures that reflect the needs of the service. These are reviewed as necessary.
170	Policies and procedures to be followed	Policies and procedures created by the service are followed by our educators at all times.
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available	Policies and procedures are kept available to all educators and families and are located in the OSHC office cupboard.
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures	Appropriate authorities and governing bodies are notified of any change to policies and procedures.
173	Prescribed information to be displayed	Relevant information is displayed at the service on the information wall.

POLICY

Our service is committed to providing a safe and protected environment for children to grow and learn, in which infectious diseases are minimised and managed. All educators at our service are trained in first aid and trained in line with Work, Health, and Safety standards to ensure that the children have a safe atmosphere to play and explore in.

When an occurrence of an infectious disease takes place in the service, all families are contacted through text message, or a message using the SPIKE Parent app. Educators and families will have access to current information provided by relevant government authorities on how to minimise health and safety risks to children and educators.

Children and educators who are sick with an infectious disease, will be excluded from the service in accordance with current Department for Education instructions and SA Health directives. A medical certificate of clearance is required upon request for a child or adult to be readmitted to the service after contracting any highly contagious disease.

If a child is unwell at home or becomes unwell at the school, the family is asked to not send that child to the service, but to make alternative arrangements for their care. The spread of infectious diseases is considered in the planning of excursions and the risk assessments of each excursion location.

New educators are made aware at their induction of the policy and procedures surrounding the management of infectious diseases, with these being kept accessible in the office cupboard.

Information pertaining to the Work, Healthy, and Safety Act, regulations, and codes of practice are held at the service, or on the school site, and can be made available to staff and families attending the service. Educators are able to access the policies and procedures and are made aware of their obligations in regard to WH&S as part of their induction with a refresher WH&S course taking place every 3 years.

HYGIENE

We believe good hygiene is a vital part of the operation of our service, and we equip all educators with the knowledge and skills to deal with infectious diseases, as well as role model good hygiene practices for the children to learn from.

Handwashing is the most effective way of controlling infectious diseases within the service, with all children and educators thoroughly washing their hands before food preparation or handling and eating times, as well as after going to the toilet, cleaning up blood or other bodily fluids, or handling animals.

We model these positive hygiene behaviours for the children to learn from, whilst providing ample toilets and handwashing facilities for the children to use, encouraging them to use soap when washing their hands, and drying them off with a paper towel.

The health and wellbeing of the children is a priority, with our educators acting in accordance with ACECQA's National Quality Area 2 - Children's Health and Safety. Our educators play an important role in supporting the children to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. Educators are provided with appropriate Protective Personal Equipment including face masks, gloves and hand sanitiser, and are required to wear disposable gloves when they are coming into contact with any blood or bodily fluids. Educators are required to wash their hands after wearing disposable gloves to protect themselves from any possible infectious diseases.

Educators are responsible for maintaining clean and hygienic play environments. Tables, benches and other frequently touched surfaces are cleaned after use, with disinfectant used where appropriate. Toys, cushions, blankets and other shared play items are cleaned regularly and whenever necessary to minimise the spread of infectious diseases. Educators model and encourage good hygiene practices, supporting children to develop habits that protect their own health and the wellbeing of others.

KEY TERMS

Key Term	Meaning
ACECQA	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
Exclusion Period	Families are expected to keep children at home when they have an infectious disease and follow the recommended exclusion periods in accordance with current SA Health guidance. Exclusion helps minimise the spread of infectious diseases by reducing contact between people who are infectious and those who may be at risk of becoming unwell.
Infectious disease	A disease that is designated under law of a relevant jurisdiction or by a health authority as a disease that would require a person with the disease to be excluded from an education of care setting.
Qualified educator	An educator who is actively working towards an approved teaching qualification and has completed at least 50 percent of the qualification or holds an approved education and care diploma
Work, Health & Safety	The management of risks to the health and safety of everyone in your workplace. This includes the health and safety of anyone who does work for you as well as the children and families who visit the service.
Personal Protective Equipment	Personal Protective Equipment. Clothing and equipment that is worn or used to provide protection against hazardous substances or environments.

MANAGEMENT OF UNWELL CHILDREN

- When a child becomes unwell while at the service, the family are notified and asked to collect the child. The child is made comfortable and separated from the other children until a family member arrives, or until the child is feeling better
- They can be isolated from the other children, educators and families in TR 9, supervised by educators
- If a child has a fever, a temperature greater than 37 degrees celsius, the child will be cared for, made comfortable and the family will be called
- Educators will wash their hands with anti-bacterial foam soap after interaction with the child, and any materials will be washed
- Children with infectious diseases will be excluded from the service in accordance with current SA Health guidance and the NHMRC's Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services guidelines
- Children may return to the service once the applicable exclusion period has ended and any relevant return-to-care requirements have been met. Medical clearance will only be requested where specifically indicated by relevant health advice or public health directions
- In the case of a serious ill health or hospitalisation, a child will require a medical clearance from their medical practitioner or specialist, verifying that they are sufficiently recovered to return to the service

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE OF HIGH-RISK AREAS

- **Bathrooms:** Cleaned by the cleaning service after hours
- **Toys:** Cleaned regularly by educators and whenever necessary to maintain hygiene and minimise the spread of infectious diseases
- **Hats:** OSHC provided hats are washed daily in accordance with hygiene requirements
- **Floors:** Vacuumed and mopped nightly by educators
- **Furniture and surfaces:** Tables, benches and frequently touched surfaces are cleaned by educators throughout the day and after use

COVID-19 PROCEDURE FOR EDUCATORS

Educators follow current SA Health advice and Department for Education instructions to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and manage confirmed cases at Mawson Lakes School OSHC.

Educators will:

- Promote and model regular handwashing and good respiratory hygiene
- Ensure foam soap, water and appropriate hand-drying facilities are available
- Provide access to hand sanitiser
- Maintain clean and hygienic toys, furniture, frequently touched surfaces and play spaces
- Support ventilation by opening windows and doors when appropriate and using available ventilation systems
- Dispose of rubbish safely and follow the service's cleaning procedures
- Review excursions, incursions and staffing arrangements where necessary in response to identified risks and current health advice

NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF COVID-19 CASES

When the Director becomes aware of a confirmed COVID-19 case involving a child or educator attending the service, the Director will follow the Department for Education's current COVID-19 reporting protocol.

The Director will:

- Contact the relevant family or educator to obtain the information required for reporting
- Determine whether the person attended OSHC during the relevant infectious period
- Review attendance records to establish the dates on which children or educators may have been exposed
- Complete and submit the Department for Education's required Positive Case Reporting Form
- Follow the Department's current instructions for identifying relevant contacts and notifying affected families and educators
- Ensure communications protect the privacy and confidentiality of the person who has tested positive
- Copy of the completed reporting form to the site leader
- During vacation care, inform the school principal into communications with families and educators where required by the Department's protocol

The Director will follow the Department for Education's current instructions regarding any additional reporting, notifications or actions required following a confirmed case. Families and educators should follow current health advice relevant to their circumstances.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles	Responsibilities
Nominated Supervisor & Approved Provider	• Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met • Ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of any infectious disease at the service • Ensure that families are notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable and in a manner that is not prejudicial to the rights of any child or educator • Display a notice stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the service premises • Implement exclusion periods consistent with current information from a relevant recognised authority • Ensure that notification requirements to the regulatory authority are met in relation to an outbreak of an infectious disease that poses a risk to the health, safety, or wellbeing of children attending the service • Ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are kept safe, clean, and well maintained, including high risk areas • Take reasonable steps to ensure that the educators follow the policy and procedures • Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to all and available for inspection

	• Implement the Dealing with Infectious Diseases policy and procedures • Promote hygiene practices with all children and educators • Ensure that notification to the regulatory authority is met in relation to an outbreak of an infectious disease that poses a risk to health, safety, or wellbeing of children attending the service
Educators	• Implement the Dealing with Infectious Diseases policy and procedures • Monitor the children's health, safety, and wellbeing daily and manage accordingly • Be immunised against infectious diseases as recommended by recognised authorities • Stay at home if unwell or have an excludable infectious disease • Employ and role model good hygiene practices • Integrate infection control awareness, hygiene and protective practices into educational programming and planning • Communicate with families about infectious diseases in general and specific expectations within the service
Families	• Be familiar with and follow the services Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy and procedures • Keep their child at home if they are unwell or have an excludable disease • Keep their child at home if there is an infectious disease at the service and their child is not fully immunised against it • Inform the service if their child has an infectious disease or has been in contact with a person who has an infectious disease

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Our Dealing with Infectious Diseases policy will be updated and reviewed every three years or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

REVIEW

POLICY CREATED BY	Lorin & Sue - All educators	Nominated Supervisor	September 2022
MODIFICATIONS - Policy reviewed out of scope following the release of the Education and Care Services Supply, Authorisation and Use of Devices			
POLICY REVIEWED BY	Lorin, Sue, the Governing Council and all educators	Nominated Supervisor	October 2026
MODIFICATIONS - This policy has been reviewed to ensure it remains current, reflects our service's practices, aligns with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements, and continues to support the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children, families and educators			
POLICY REVIEWED BY			
MODIFICATIONS			