

Acorn Child Care Centres

Policies and Procedures



2.11.1 Child Illness Authority to Administer Paracetamol

Background

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends that children who are physically unwell be excluded from early childhood education and care services to minimise disease outbreaks. It also details the exclusion periods which apply for children with particular infectious diseases.

An unwell child – able to play quietly with toys at home with one or two siblings – may find it difficult to interact with other children, share toys, take part in routines and cope with the noise level in a childcare Service. In most instances, for a child who is unwell, the best place to recover is at home.

Policy statement

The Service maintains close and regular communication with parents and takes an informed and responsible team approach to administering medication to children, and documenting that process. In addition, the Service has clear guidelines for managing specific health care needs.

Strategies and practices

At the time of enrolment, parents are asked to sign an authorisation on the enrolment form for staff to administer the prescribed dose of Paracetamol to their child should they have a temperature of 38.0°C or more. QA2.1.1

Temperature (Elevated)

Is classed as any Child who has a temperature (as measured by a thermometer) of 38 degrees or over and this is witnessed by a second staff member. QA 2.1.1

Implementation

- For low grade temperatures up to and including 38.1° staff will attempt to bring the temperature down by natural methods before administering Paracetamol. These methods include tepid sponging, removal of excess clothing, providing the child cool fluids to consume. The parent will be contacted and informed the child has a low grade temperature and of current first aid methods being applied to bring down the temperature. The parent will be asked, If after a 15-minute period the temperature has not gone down. Then can we administer Paracetamol. After paracetamol has been administered the children will be monitored. If after an hour the temperature has not gone down, they the Family will be contacted to come and collect the child.
- For temperatures under 38.5°C the parent will be contacted to verify that Paracetamol can be administered to the child. The child will be monitored after Paracetamol has been administered. If the child's temperature does not return to normal, then the parent/guardian will be asked to collect the child immediately. If the child is displaying other symptoms of illness such as a rash, watering eyes, discharge from the nose, coughing, lethargy the parent will be asked to collect the child when the initial phone call to administer Paracetamol is made.

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- If the parent cannot be contacted but it is indicated on the enrolment form that the child can have Paracetamol, then **ONE** dose can be administered with the Responsible Persons authorisation. The Responsible Person is to continue to try and contact primary caregivers/emergency contacts to inform them that Paracetamol has been administered. QA 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 7.3.1
- Staff will continue to monitor and record child's temperature every 15 minutes for a one hour period until an authorised person arrives to collect the child, or temperature has returned to normal. QA 2.3.1
- If an elevated temperature has occurred and the parent has been asked to collect the child, the child must stay away from the centre for the remainder of the day. QA 2.1.4
- Under no circumstances will Paracetamol be administered without parent authority either written or verbally over the phone. If parent authority cannot be given, Director will check enrolment form and can give permission if parent has agreed to on enrolment form. QA 2.3.3, 7.3.1
- If children require Paracetamol before 11am in the morning the parent must be contacted to ensure the child has not previously been administered Paracetamol in the home environment before attending the centre to ensure the child is not at risk of being overdosed. QA 2.3.2
- Only one dose of Paracetamol will be administered to a child in a day.
- If a child has been given Paracetamol for three consecutive days, then a medical clearance is required by a doctor before returning to care.
- If a parent requires administration of Paracetamol or Nurofen for teething discomfort, or any other medical condition this needs to be in writing from their Doctor. Under no circumstances other than a temperature will Paracetamol be administered to a child without a written letter from a Doctor. QA 2.3.3, 7.3.1

Additional safe practices for babies

- Medication is not added to babies' formula or breast milk bottles because any baby who does not finish the bottle may not receive the correct dose.

Responsibilities of parents

- To keep the Service informed of any changes to their child's medical condition.
- To complete the appropriate Authorisation to Administer Medication Form.
- To ensure any medication brought to the Service has been prescribed by a registered medical practitioner is in the original container, bearing the original label and instructions and before the expiry or use by date.
- Advise room Educators if they have administered Panadol within the last 8 hours.
- To hand medications directly to an educator. Medication of any kind is never to be left in a child's bag, or with any person other than an educator or the Nominated Supervisor.

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Next review Date: 15/07/2020