

Acorn Child Care Centres

Policies and Procedures



2.8 Managing Infectious Diseases

Background

Parents, staff and visitors to childcare Services need to cooperate to ensure anyone entering the Service is in good health so that the possibility of infections spreading to others is minimised.

Policy statement

The Policy details the Service's practices for managing unwell children and adults at the Service to minimise the spread of infection to others.

Strategies and practices

- The *Managing Infectious Diseases Policy* is explained to parents when they enroll their child in the Service, and their attention is specifically drawn to their responsibilities under the Policy. QA 2.1.4
- Educators are informed of the symptoms of excludable illnesses and disease and of infection control through staff meetings and professional development, and are provided with educational materials. They are alert to the signs of illness in children and respond accordingly. The signs include:
 - severe, persistent or prolonged coughing
 - breathing difficulties (e.g. noisy, wheezy)
 - yellowish skin or eyes
 - irritated eyes, eye lining red, pus from eyes
 - unusual spots or rashes
 - vomiting and/or diarrhoea
 - temperature over 38 degrees Celsius
 - behaviour exhibited that is not 'normal' for the child (e.g. sleeping, being unable to participate in the daily activities as usual). QA 2.1.4
- The Service's roster ensures sufficient educators with first aid qualifications are on site at all times children are present. QA 2.1.4
- All instances of illnesses and infectious diseases (children and staff) are recorded in the Illness and Infectious Disease Register so that they may be tracked and any spread minimised. The Register is kept in the office. QA 2.1.4
- Educators intentionally teach children health and safety practices to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. QA 2.1.4
- The Service strictly adheres to the National Health and Medical Research Council's recommended minimum exclusion periods for infectious conditions. The Queensland

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Government – Time Out Poster detailing these periods is displayed prominently in the foyer and in other areas of the Service. QA 2.1.4

- If an outbreak of an infectious disease occurs in the Service, parents are informed by notices displayed in the foyer and via the parent portal. Information given to parents will include the nature of the illness, symptoms, incubation and infectious periods and the Service's exclusion requirements for the illness. QA 2.1.4, 7.3.1
- Where an outbreak is a vaccine preventable disease, the Service will notify the relevant health authority, and will follow that authority's recommended guidelines and directives. Children and staff who are not immunised may be excluded from the Service for the duration of the outbreak. Refer to the Service's *Immunisation for Children and Staff Policy*. QA 2.1.1, 2.1.4
- In the case of serious ill health or hospitalisation, the child or staff member may be asked to provide a medical certificate verifying that they are sufficiently recovered to return to the Service. However, the Nominated Supervisor has the final say on whether the child or a staff member may return. QA 2.1.4
- Parents are asked not to bring any unwell child into the Service, and not to enter the Service if they are unwell themselves. The Nominated Supervisor can refuse entry to any child or adult (including a staff member) who comes to the Service clearly unwell. QA 2.1.4
- Should a child become unwell during the day, the parents or authorised person are contacted immediately to collect the child. The parent will be asked to sign the Illness Record. QA 2.1.4, 7.3.1
- Staff who become ill during the day are sent home and replaced. QA 7.3.1
- To ensure the safety of other children, staff and visitors, parents are asked to inform the Service if their child has been exposed to any infectious disease. QA 2.1.4

Additional safe practices for babies

- To take extra care to adhere to all health and safety procedures (e.g. nappy change, bottle preparation) at the first sign of any outbreak of illness in the Service.

Responsibilities of parents

- To keep the Service informed of their child's current immunisation status.
- To provide, if requested, a medical certificate verifying that the child who has been unwell has sufficiently recovered to return to the Service.
- To keep unwell children away from the Service. If a child has had vomiting or diarrhea, the child must be kept at home for 24 hours from their last movement.
- To remain away from the Service when they themselves are unwell.
- To arrange collection, within 1 hour of phone call of their unwell child.
- To inform the Service at any time their child has been exposed to an infectious disease.

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