

## **SICKNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

This Centre aims to provide care for children in a 'healthy' environment with minimal exposure to illness and disease. The Centre therefore cannot accept children when they are ill. We recognise that this is often inconvenient for working parents, however, returning a child to the Centre while they are ill could jeopardise the health of other children and staff. We also recognise that children are usually more settled at home when they are ill and able to be provided with care on a one to one basis.

The manual titled 'Staying Healthy In Child Care' published by the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Department of Family and Community Services has been referred to in the formulation of this policy, as required by Licensing Regulations.

### **How the Policy will be implemented**

#### **SICKNESS**

If a child has been unwell at home, parents/guardians are asked not to bring the child to the Centre until they have recovered from the illness. (Refer to the exclusion list at the end of this policy for more information).

It is imperative that the Centre is kept informed of any medical condition that a child has or develops at home so that staff are aware of any medication, treatment or special dietary requirements to be considered in the short or long term.

The Centre staff, through the Director (or Responsible Person), may exercise the right to exclude a child from care if they feel that the child is unwell.

A child is considered unwell if any of the following occur. The child:

- Has a contagious condition
- Is vomiting
- Has severe diarrhea
- Has an temperature above 38 degrees
- Is unable to participate in normal Centre activities, including activities held outdoors (for example, when a child has a severe cold)

If a child becomes ill whilst at the Centre, a parent/guardian or emergency contact person will be notified and asked to collect the child as soon as possible. The child will be made comfortable until the parent/guardian arrives.

In the case of serious ill health or hospitalization of a child/staff member, a certificate of clearance from a medical practitioner verifying that their recovery is sufficient to enable them to return to the Centre may be required (at the Centre Director's discretion and in line with the 'Staying Healthy In Child Care' guidelines).

#### **INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

Children with contagious conditions need to be excluded from the Centre for the safety of others. Minimum exclusion periods apply, however, a child or member of staff may need to stay at home longer than the exclusion period to recover from an illness. At the end of this policy, there is a list of minimum exclusion periods for various illnesses, which will be strictly adhered to. It is at the discretion of the Centre Director (or

Responsible Person), to determine if the child is well enough to return to normal Centre activities. The Director must not be influenced by letters from doctors which allow children back into care.

Some notifiable diseases (as listed in the 'Staying Healthy in Child Care' manual) will definitely require medical clearance before a staff member or child can be re-admitted to the Centre. These include diphtheria, hepatitis A, polio, tuberculosis, typhoid and paratyphoid. In most circumstances, a medical certificate of recovery will also be required for other infectious diseases, (e.g. ~~Swine Flu~~). A request for this will be at the discretion of the Centre Director. The Public Health Authority will be contacted in the event of a notifiable disease outbreak including: Diarrhea (if several children in one group are ill), Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib), Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Measles, Meningococcal infection, Parvovirus B19 (if 2 or more cases), Pertussis, Roseola (if 2 or more children in one group are ill) Scarlet fever and Tuberculosis.


If a parent suspects that their child has contracted an infectious disease, they will notify the Centre immediately so that parents of non-immunised children may be contacted and excluded from care. Parents will also advise the Centre upon confirmation of an infectious disease by a medical practitioner. The Centre will display information on the notice board in the front office area, detailing any disease that has been confirmed. Extracts from 'Staying Healthy in Child Care' will also be made available for parents.

#### PREVENTING INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Staff will be provided with training regarding Infection Control Procedures to be used in a child care setting. As hand washing is the most important way of controlling infection, posters depicting correct hand washing techniques will be prominently displayed throughout the Centre. Staff will role model appropriate hand washing procedures and encourage children to wash their own hands (where developmentally appropriate) to develop good habits. Parents will be asked to support the control of infection by encouraging their children to wash their hands on arrival at the Centre and when leaving. The centre will provide paper towels and liquid soap. Washing hands every time you wipe a child's nose will reduce the spread of colds. If you cannot wash your hands after every nose wipe, use gloves and clean tissues which must be disposed of safely and appropriately. New gloves should be used for each child and hands should be washed once gloves removed.

The Nappy Changing Procedure will be followed at all times by staff.

Staff will monitor the cleaning of toys and laundering of bedding at all times.

References: 'Staying Healthy in Child Care', 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2013, 

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