

Kirrawee Child Care Centre Pty. Ltd.
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Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy

When groups of children play and learn together, illness and disease can spread from one child to another even when the service's stakeholders implement recommended hygiene and infection control practices.

Services require a policy on immunisation because it is an important strategy in infection control, which encompasses the service's guidelines for excluding children and adults with an infectious illness or disease.

A service should be committed to preventing the spread of infections through simple hygiene practices such as, hand washing, effective cleaning procedures, monitoring immunisation records and complying with recommended exclusion guidelines and timeframes.

Policy statement

- Kirrawee Child Care Centre has a duty of care to ensure that all persons¹ are provided with a high level of protection during the hours of the service's operation.
Protection includes:
 - notifying children, families and staff/carers when an excludable illness or disease is present in the service;
 - maintaining a record of children's complying to relevant health department² exclusion guidelines; and
 - increasing staff/carers awareness of cross infection through physical contact with others.
- The purpose of this policy is to manage and prevent the spread of infectious illnesses and diseases.
- The policy assists the service to:
 - notify families or emergency contact³ when a symptom of an excludable infectious illness or disease has been observed;
 - notify stakeholders when an excludable infectious illness or disease has been confirmed by a medical practitioner;
 - identify and comply to exclusion guidelines and timeframes;
 - identify when an illness or disease is no longer excludable or infectious; and

¹ For the purpose of this policy, 'persons' include <children, families, staff, carers, carers' family, management, coordination unit staff, ancillary staff (administrative staff, kitchen staff, cleaners, maintenance personnel), students, volunteers, visitors, local community, school community, licensee, sponsor and/or service owner>.

² For the purpose of this policy, 'health department' is the state/territory health department relevant to the service's location.

³ For the purpose of this policy, 'emergency contact' is the individual nominated on a child's enrolment form or staff/carer, student or volunteer contact details as the person to be contacted in case of an emergency. 1/1.

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- maintain immunisation records of children.

Families, staff/carers, students, volunteers and visitors can also display symptoms of an infectious illness or disease while in the service's environment and as such, the service has an equal duty of care to all persons. The Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy is applicable to children and adults.

- The service prevents the spread of illness and disease by implementing the following strategies which:
 - promote hand washing and other hygienic practices;
 - identify and exclude children and staff/carers with symptoms of an excludable infectious illness or disease;
 - maintain clean and hygienic environments; and
 - encourage child and adult immunisation.

Please refer to the service's Hygiene and Infection Control Policy.

- It is understood by staff, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and other stakeholders that the Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.
- In meeting the service's duty of care, it is a requirement under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*⁴ that management and staff implement and endorse the service's Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy and procedures.

Rationale

Kirrawee Child Care Centre has a duty of care to take steps to provide the families, staff and children with a safe and healthy work environment.

Please refer to:

- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4th ed.). Canberra: Author.
- Department of Health and Ageing. (2007). *Immunise Australia program*. Retrieved June 29, 2007, from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/home>

⁴ There are legislative Acts and regulations for each state and territory that address the issue of Occupational Health and Safety. Services are advised to seek information that is relevant to their jurisdiction. 2/1.

Strategies and practices

Hygiene and infection control

It is important to maintain hygienic practices and procedures in all health and safety policies. Washing hands, concepts of Standard Precautions and the procedures for maintaining clean and hygienic environments.

Please refer to the service's Hygiene and Infection Control Policy.

Immunisation

- If families are receiving Child Care Benefit (CCB), then it is a requirement that they inform services of their children's immunisation status on enrolment.

Children

On enrolment, the Centre will photocopy their child's immunisation record found in their Blue Book, in accordance with the *Public Health Regulation 2000*. A parent/guardian will be asked to sign an agreement on the Immunisation Register form that:

- They will inform KCCC when any updates to the record are made.
- It is understood that it is the families responsibility to ensure their child is immunised.
- Any child who is not immunised or their immunisation is not up to date may be excluded during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.
- The immunisation register will be reviewed on a monthly basis by the Director.
- Any children behind on their schedule will be given a reminder by the Director.

Children who are not immunised

- KCCC will keep a record of all children who are not immunised. For those families who decide not to immunise their children, they are referred to their doctor for information on benefits and risks of immunisation.
- KCCC will contact the health department for more information.

Staff/Carers

- Staff/carers are encouraged to maintain their immunisation status against immunisable diseases.
- KCCC keeps a record of staff/carers' current immunisation status.
- KCCC asks staff/carers to fill out an immunisations record when starting at the Centre.
- Staff/carers are asked to inform the Centre when they have updated information to add to the immunisation form.
- KCCC provides all staff with up to date information regarding immunisation against infectious diseases.

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Identifying symptoms of an excludable infectious illness or disease

- Staff/carers are made aware of symptoms which may indicate an excludable infectious illness or disease.

Please refer to the service's Illness Policy.

Exclusion guidelines

- KCCC health related exclusion guidelines for infectious illnesses and diseases apply to both children and adults.
- The Centre will exclude children, staff/carers, students or volunteers who have been diagnosed with an infectious illness or disease minimises cross infection.
- All families are made aware of the service's exclusion guidelines at the time of enrolment and orientation.
- The Centre communicates with families during the exclusion period by offering clear and reliable information as to when a child can return to the service. This information is sourced from '*Staying Healthy In Child Care*'.

Exclusion guidelines for immunisable diseases & infectious illnesses.

- Please refer to Health & Hygiene Policy

Exclusion procedure

- *Notifying families or emergency contacts*
- Families are notified when a child displays symptoms of an excludable infectious illness or disease by phone straight away.
- The families are asked to pick their child up and take them to their doctor for advise.
- When families and guardians and emergency contacts can not be contacted, the Centre takes them over to the medical centre for assessment and advise.
- The parents are asked to sign permission for this at time of enrolment.
- A group email is sent to all families quarterly to request up dated information regarding contact details and emergency contacts.

Protective behaviours and practices

- *Staff, carers, students and volunteers as role models*
- Children learn through example and modelling is an important way to teach children about behaviours and practices.
- Staff/carers, students and volunteers must comply with the Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy.

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Communication

- **Families**
- Families are notified once a year to attend a 4 year old health check by their local Early Childhood Clinic via a flyer from the Clinic Nurses.
- Fact sheets on infectious illnesses or diseases are kept in the office in a folder 'Staying Healthy In Child Care'
- A note is emailed to all families to inform them of immunisation updates. These are usually twice a year in the Centre Newsletter.

- **Management/Coordination unit staff**
- All staff are encouraged to maintain their immunisation status against immunisable diseases.
- All staff are encouraged to be immunised against Hep A & B.
- KCCC maintains up to date immunisation records on all staff.
- Staff are provided with up to date information about immunisations
- When an excludable infectious illness or disease has been confirmed, a flyer is displayed on the entrance door to inform all parents/caregivers.

Privacy and confidentiality

- The right for children, families and staff/carers to be afforded a level of privacy and confidentiality in regards to their immunisation status is paramount.
- Staff/carers, students and volunteers should be aware of the service's commitment to maintaining and respecting privacy and confidentiality.
Please refer to the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

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Links to other policies

- Child protection
- Employment of child care professionals
- Enrolment of new children and families to the service
- First aid
- Hygiene and infection control
- Illness
- Medication
- Occupational health and safety
- Privacy and confidentiality

Sources and further reading

- Childcare and Children's Health. (2005). Infection control and some common infections in young children. *Childcare and Children's Health*, 8 (3), 1-4.
- Department of Health and Ageing. (2007). *Immunise Australia program*. Retrieved June 29, 2007, from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/home>
- Frith, J., Kambouris, N., & O'Grady, O. (2003). *Health & safety in children's centres: Model policies & practices* (2nd ed.). NSW: School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales.⁵
- Matthews, C. (2004). *Healthy children: A guide for child care* (2nd ed.). NSW: Elsevier.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4th ed.). Canberra: Author.
- Oberklaid, F. (2004). *Health in early childhood settings*. NSW: Pademelon Press.

Useful websites

- Centre for Community Child Health - www.rch.org.au/ccch/index.cfm?doc_id=427
- HealthInsite - www.healthinsite.gov.au
- Immunise Australia Program – www.immunise.health.gov.au
- National Health and Medical Research Council - www.nhmrc.gov.au
- NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service - www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au
- Raising Children Network – www.raisingchildren.net.au

⁵ This publication is produced on behalf of Early Childhood Australia New South Wales (NSW) Branch and the NSW Children's Services Health and Safety Committee. Services should be aware that the publication may refer to practices that reflect NSW licensing regulations or health department exclusion guidelines.