

## 5.20 Infectious Diseases

**Policy:** Elonera Montessori school will meet the requirements of NSW Health regarding the management of infectious diseases, immunisation and processes for managing potential outbreaks.

**Background:** Elonera Montessori will aim to minimise the spread of potentially infectious diseases between children, and centre staff, by excluding children who may have an infectious disease or are too ill to attend the centre and reporting any infectious disease outbreak to the local Public Health Unit.

**Relevant Legislation:** National Regulations 77 Health, hygiene and safe food practices 85 Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures 86 Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness 87 Incident, injury, trauma and illness record 88 Infectious diseases 90 Medical conditions policy 162 Health information to be kept in enrolment record

**Key Resources:** [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au); *Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*, published by the National Health and Medical Research Council ([www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)) and publications by organisations such as the Cancer Council ([www.cancer.org.au](http://www.cancer.org.au)), KidSafe ([www.kidsafe.com.au](http://www.kidsafe.com.au)), Red Nose ([www.rednose.com.au](http://www.rednose.com.au)), *Staying Healthy in ChildCare*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/clinical%20guidelines/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>).

### Procedures:

#### Prevention:

- Spot and routine cleaning by educators
- Effective hand washing practices
- Identifying and excluding sick children and educators
- Effective handling, storage and disposal or washing of soiled items
- Ensure all staff and persons working at the centre conform to all infectious disease policies.

#### Immunisations

- Immunisation status is asked for upon enrolment across the school.
- All new enrolments to Nido and Stage 1 must be fully vaccinated, and proof provided to the school, approved medical exemptions may apply.
- The administration staff are responsible for maintaining updated immunisation records.
- Educators are encouraged to have up to date vaccinations for the following:
  - Hepatitis A
  - Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)
  - Varicella, if they have not previously been infected with chickenpox.
  - Pertussis. An adult booster dose is especially important for those educators caring for the youngest children who are not fully vaccinated.
  - Although the risk is low, educators who care for children with intellectual disabilities should seek advice about Hepatitis B immunisation if the children are unimmunised.
- Elonera will provide educators and staff with information about diseases that can be prevented by immunisation through in-service training sessions, fact sheets and the *Staying Healthy in Childcare* publications.

**To reduce the spread of infectious diseases, Elonera will:**

- exclude from care and notify the local Public Health Unit and provide details of any known or suspected persons with any of the following vaccine preventable diseases:
  - Diphtheria
  - Poliomyelitis
  - German Measles
  - Tetanus
  - Measles
  - Mumps
  - Whooping Cough
- exclude a child or staff member with any of the following symptoms which might indicate they have a potentially serious illness:
  - vomiting,
  - rash, especially if purplish or haemorrhaging spots (possibly meningococcal) or blistering (possibly staphylococcal),
  - severe headache,
  - stiffness of the neck,
  - aversion to light (photophobia),
  - drowsiness or any unusual state of consciousness or behaviour,
  - convulsion or epileptic seizure.
  - severe pain anywhere (including toothache),
  - swelling of the lips, mouth, tongue, throat, neck or airways,
  - hives,
  - asthma, wheezing, or any difficulty breathing,
- exclude a child or staff member with any of the following symptoms which might indicate they have an infectious illness:
  - diarrhoea,
  - generalised rash,
  - enlarged or tender lymph glands,
  - severe cough with fever,
  - head lice, nits, scabies, ringworm, impetigo, or mouth ulcers not yet treated,
  - mouth ulcers due to herpes simplex virus or coxsackie virus,
  - infection or yellow or green discharge of the eyes or ears,
  - excessive yellow or green discharge of the nose,
  - if any other infectious disease is suspected.
- exclude children, staff, volunteers or visitors who have infectious diseases other than listed above in accordance with the NHMRC recommended Minimum periods of exclusion, please see *table 1.1 in Staying Healthy – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services 5th edition*.
- exclude students who are not adequately immunised for the various infectious diseases according to the protocols that are set out by NSW Health.

**Steps if infection has been identified:**

1. Isolate the child from other children. Make sure the child is comfortable and is supervised by a staff member.
2. Contact the child's parents or, if they are unable, the contact person for emergencies as listed on the enrolment form. Inform the parents or contact person of the child's condition, or suspected condition, and ask that the child be picked up from the centre as soon as possible.
3. Ensure all bedding, towels, clothing, etc., which has been used by the child is disinfected – these articles should be washed separately and, if possible, aired in the sun to dry.
4. Ensure all contact toys are separated and disinfected.
5. Ensure all eating utensils are separated and sterilised.
6. Provide information in relevant community languages when required.

7. Inform all families of the presence of an infectious disease in the centre.

**Families:**

- The centre will ensure confidentiality of any personal or health related information obtained by centre staff in relation to any children, children's parents and families.
- If a child or staff member has been unable to attend the centre because of an infectious illness, when the child or staff member has fully recovered the family or staff member they may be asked to obtain a certificate from their doctor which specifically states the child or staff member is not infectious and is able to attend care or return to work.
- Parents/Guardians are to be informed that it is their responsibility to inform the service immediately of an infectious disease that has been discovered in their family. This is important to minimise the risk of spread of the illness.

**Elonera will:**

- Agree to the requests that we receive from NSW Health regarding health alerts that deal with infectious diseases and immunisation.
- Regularly check NSW Health provides for up to date information on their website on infectious diseases, and exclusion policies for schools.
- Ensure that contact information for parents, external service providers and emergency services is readily available if the school was required to close the school.
- Maintain privacy of staff, children and families. If the Nominated Supervisor is told that a child or child's Parent/Guardian or member of the family is infected with HIV, or hepatitis C, the information must remain confidential, unless that person has given their consent to inform educators and other staff.

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