



Infectious Diseases Policy

Quality Area 2 - Children's health and Safety

INTRODUCTION

Muswellbrook Preschool has a duty of care to ensure the health and safety of all children, and staff, and to support their ongoing wellbeing. It is important to be aware of the likelihood of being exposed to an Infectious Disease within the preschool environment. Maintaining hygiene practices within the Preschool and teaching young children about health and hygiene will assist in the prevention of infectious diseases. Providing families with timely and current information, including information on COVID-19, will further support this process.

Muswellbrook Preschool Kindergarten will:

The Committee:

- Ensure that all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases is sourced from a recognized health authority, such as: Staying Healthy in Child Care - Preventing Infectious Diseases 5th Edition, NSW Department of Health, the National Health and Medical Research Council and Department of Education.
- Implement the recommendations from the above sources to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at the Preschool.
- Will work with the Director and Educators to develop, implement and review policies that will guide health and safety procedures within the Preschool to ensure that children are reasonably protected from harm.

The Director/Nominated Supervisor:

- *Develops policies and procedures for:*
 - Maintaining a hygienic environment
 - Providing families with relevant infectious diseases, health and hygiene information
 - Maintaining relevant records regarding the current status of children's immunisation
 - Develop an enrolment procedure that gathers all the required information regarding a child's immunisation status and medical conditions.
- *Provide relevant materials to families about:*
 - The current NSW Immunisation Schedule
 - The exclusion guidelines for unimmunised medical exempted children

- Will provide information regarding infectious diseases that are suspected/present at the Preschool to appropriate parties concerned.
- *Provide information to families of the occurrence of an infectious disease that includes:*
 - Nature of Infectious Diseases
 - Incubation period and
 - Infectious and exclusion periods
 - Ensure that an “Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness” record is completed no later than 24 hours after the illness occurring.
 - Contact parents of a child medical exempted from immunisation against a vaccine preventable disease which has been detected at the Preschool and request that the child be collected as soon as possible. Advising that the child must stay at home until there is no more occurrences of that disease and the exclusion period has ceased. Fees remain payable during this time.
 - Ensure that all educators and staff are aware of individual children’s circumstances.
 - Maintain confidentiality with regards to the children’s medical circumstances, and families personal information.

The Educators/Staff:

- Ensure that any children who are suspected of having an infectious disease are responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times.
- Implement appropriate health and safety procedures including personal protection equipment and use of the spills kit, if required, when tending to ill children.
- Ensure that families are aware of the need to collect their children as soon as possible.
- Educators will clean all resources and high frequency areas.
- Advise families that they will need to alert the Preschool if their child is diagnosed with an infectious disease.
- Ensure hygiene practices are part of routine and intentional practice.
- Follow the Preschool’s health and hygiene policy including.
 - Hand washing
 - Routine and daily cleaning
 - Nappy changing
 - Wearing of gloves
 - Proper handling and preparation of food.
 - **During Public Health Orders from the NSW government, the Preschool will abide by the current and specific guidelines stated within the Health Order. Example: Covid -19 Pandemic**

Families:

- Advise the Preschool of their child’s immunisation status and when this is updated.
- Keep their children at home if they are unwell or have an excludable infectious disease for the minimum recommended exclusion period.
- Keep children at home if they have had diarrhea and vomiting (gastroenteritis) until they have been symptom free for 48 hours.
- Families will be required to follow any Public Health Orders affecting the Preschool at any given time.

- Informing the service if their child has an infectious disease or has been in contact with a person with an infectious disease.

Specific Circumstances for COVID – 19

Muswellbrook Preschool will follow all required procedures implemented from the Department of Health in relation to Health Orders and advice for COVID.

Staff will follow the outlined strategies to reduce exposure to COVID while required.

Strategies to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading the disease:

- A risk assessment has been carried out regarding COVID-19
- For staff and Children to wash hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water.
- For all staff to use Alcohol based hand sanitizer when soap and water is not immediately accessible
- Encouraging all staff and children to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.
- For all staff and children to follow good respiratory hygiene when coughing and sneezing.
 - Cover mouth and nose with bent elbow or tissue.
 - Dispose of used tissues immediately.
 - Wash hand immediately after contact with nose and mouth residue.
- Excluding children or staff who are unwell and reasonably suspected to have a communicable disease from the service.
- Exclude all children with suspected COVID-19 Symptoms as recognised by N.S.W Department of Health. Fever (temperature over 37.5) respiratory symptoms-coughing, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath.).
- Other symptoms include headache, muscle or joint pain, nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting, loss of the sense of smell, altered sense of taste, loss of appetite and fatigue.
- If Children are assessed as unwell, they will be isolated with a staff member while waiting to be collected. There will be masks and gloves available for staff responsible for the child. If required.
- If a child or staff member is away from preschool/sent home from preschool, because they have respiratory/covid symptoms, it is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

they have a COVID test and show a negative result **and** be symptom free before they can come back to Preschool. Please note, if children/staff return to preschool and symptoms are still present, they will be sent home **immediately.**

- All surfaces/ equipment that has been touched by the unwell child will be thoroughly cleaned with Germex and paper towel.
- Restricting the number of onsite adult visitors.
- Any child that is sent home unwell will be collected from Sowerby Street office unless otherwise arranged.
- All visitors are encouraged to make appointments and will register on arrival.
- Excursions and incursions will be at the discretion of the Director. (They will require a risk assessment to include COVID 19 RISKS)
- During any infectious disease outbreak, routine environmental cleaning is increased in frequency, particularly on high-touch surfaces such as door handles, tables, chairs, light switches, bathroom areas. Surfaces are cleaned with germex and paper towel.
- Toys and equipment in high use are cleaned at the end of the day and / or at the end of the group's attendance.
- During mealtimes, all children and staff will follow the hand washing guidelines.
- Staff are requested to utilise the outdoor areas as much as possible and to restrict the times that the children are gathered in a small space. Staff will limit large group activities such as singing. Large group activities should be carried out in open areas where children can distance from one another.
- Muswellbrook Preschool will consider stopping collecting items for recycling and all rubbish will be placed in the general waste bin if the need arises.
- In recognition of the rapid and consistent release of information related to COVID-19, Muswellbrook Preschool will refer to reliable authorities daily and follow any recommendations given. This will include items such as mask wearing, stay at home orders, lockdown zones, social distancing and all other restrictions/directives placed on the Preschool from relevant authorities.

Notifications

- Any incident that requires the Approved Provider to close or reduce the number of children at our service for a period, will be notified to the State or Territory Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.
- If a child or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 this will be reported to the
 - Regulatory Authority: (Early Childhood Directorate- NSW Department of Education Phone: 1800619113 Email: ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)
 - Local Public Health Unit: 1300066055

Related Documents:

Children with a Serious Medical Condition
 Confidentiality
 Health and Hygiene
 Illness, Accident and Emergency
 Medical Conditions

Reviewed on October 2021

Signed by	Name	Signature	Date
Committee			
Nominated Supervisor			

Due for Review October 2023