



Infectious Diseases

POLICY

Mount Pleasant Road Primary School

A. Definition:

- A.1.** **Hand hygiene** is a general term referring to any action of hand cleansing. It includes hand washing with soap and water and using antimicrobial hand rubs (for example, an alcohol-based hand rub).
- A.2.** **Infectious diseases** are diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another.
- A.3.** **Respiratory hygiene** or **cough etiquette** are terms used to describe infection prevention measures. Practices include:
- A.3.1.** covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
 - A.3.2.** using tissues and disposing of them appropriately
 - A.3.3.** attending to hand hygiene immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing nose.
- A.4.** **Standard precautions** are the minimum infection prevention and control practices that must be used at all times for all people in all situations. The use of standard precautions aims to minimise and, where possible, eliminate the risk of transmission of infection.

B. Rationale:

- B.1.** To help prevent and control the transmission of infectious diseases in our school, and to promote health within the school community.

C. Implementation:

- C.1.** We have a legal responsibility to help manage infectious diseases in our facility.
- C.2.** We also have an important role to play in supporting the prevention and control of transmission of infectious diseases through:
- C.2.1.** abiding by legislated requirements for school exclusion, infectious disease notification and immunisation status recording
 - C.2.2.** supporting the personal hygiene routines of students, for example, provision of hand hygiene facilities
 - C.2.3.** ensuring procedures are in place to safely manage the handling of spills of blood and other body fluids or substances.

Note: Primary responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious diseases lies with individuals, families and public health authorities. Schools are not expected to provide expert advice or treat students, which is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities as appropriate.

- C.3.** The strategies and actions that we are required to take to prevent the transmission of an infectious disease are:
- C.3.1.** We have a role in helping health authorities and families prevent and control infectious diseases through **the support of immunisation programs** and through **recording the immunisation status of each student**.
 - C.3.2.** Staff and students should treat all blood and other body fluids or substances as being potentially infectious and practice standard precautions whenever dealing with them. Standard precautions include:
 - C.3.2.1.** hand hygiene
 - C.3.2.2.** the use of personal protective equipment (for example, gloves and masks)
 - C.3.2.3.** safe handling and disposal of 'sharps'
 - C.3.2.4.** respiratory hygiene.
 - C.3.3.** Hand hygiene is considered one of the most important infection control measures for reducing the spread of infection. Where appropriate, we incorporate the teaching of hand hygiene routines into the curriculum and daily school activities
 - C.3.4.** We have a responsibility to provide soap and other hand hygiene consumables to support good hand hygiene.

- C.3.5.** Interaction between people at school should minimise contact with body fluids and substances, including:
- C.3.5.1.** blood (wet or dry)
 - C.3.5.2.** other body fluids or substances (other than sweat).
- C.3.6.** We have appropriate personal protective equipment (for example, gloves and masks) available for staff to use when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances. Staff members and students should be familiar with and practice recommended standard precaution practices
- C.3.7.** Appropriate personal protective equipment, such as single-use disposable gloves, should be provided for staff to use when dealing with blood or other body fluids or substances.
- C.3.8.** Staff are encouraged to be appropriately vaccinated against preventable infectious diseases as per the *Australian Immunisation Handbook* recommendations for persons who work with children.
- C.4.** The strategies and actions that we are required to take to control transmission of infection when a case/s is identified are:
- C.4.1.** Inform parents that unwell children do not attend school. Isolate children who become unwell during the day and send the unwell child home as soon as possible.
 - C.4.2.** **Primary schools** are required to notify the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) immediately if a child is suspected of having pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, meningococcal disease or polio, even if you believe a doctor has already done so. Notification is through Communicable Disease Prevention and Control; telephone: 1300 651 160 (24 hours).
 - C.4.3.** The Department will be informed of notifiable cases of infectious disease using the IRIS incident alert and include confirmation that DHHS has been notified. Notification of other diseases is not required, however we can contact the above phone number for further assistance or advice, or by email at: infectious.diseases@dhhs.vic.gov.au (regularly monitored).
 - C.4.4.** The Principal must be aware of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 exclusion requirements and must not allow a child to attend school if:
 - C.4.4.1.** they have been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease that requires exclusion as described in the School exclusion table (see the School Exclusion Table: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/school-exclusion-table>)
 - C.4.4.2.** they have been informed that a child has been in contact with a person with an infectious disease as described in the School exclusion table
 - C.4.4.3.** during an outbreak, DHHS directs children not immunised by a vaccine preventable disease to be excluded until advised attendance can be resumed.
 - C.4.5.** The following important points will be considered when responding to students affected by common infections:
 - C.4.5.1.** students with cold or flu-like symptoms or vomiting or diarrhoea should be encouraged to seek medical attention, limit contact with others and stay at home until sufficiently recovered
 - C.4.5.2.** if a child becomes ill at school with these symptoms, we will contact the family and arrange for the collection of the child
 - C.4.5.3.** good general hygiene remains the best defence against infection and we will encourage children to regularly wash their hands and cover their nose and mouth if sneezing and coughing
 - C.4.6.** Cases of influenza do not need to be reported to DHHS. However, if further advice is needed, the contact details in Notification of infectious diseases to DHHS (above).
 - C.4.7.** An outline of key school actions against different stages of an influenza pandemic can be found in the  [Human Influenza Pandemic Incident Response Procedures \(docx - 242.26kb\)](#) (Pandemic Influenza Incident Response Plan).
 - C.4.8.** When contacting the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding a notifiable infectious disease, advice will be provided to be communicated to the school community.
 - C.4.9.** In other more general cases, we will still give consideration as to what should be communicated to the school community. It will:
 - C.4.9.1.** maintain student confidentiality
 - C.4.9.2.** be fact based
 - C.4.9.3.** be written in a way not to cause alarm
 - C.4.9.4.** inform parents and guardians that a school community member/s has been diagnosed with an infectious disease
 - C.4.9.5.** name the condition
 - C.4.9.6.** suggest that they seek medical advice regarding their child's health if they have concerns.

C.4.9.7. In those instances when a school may require additional advice, see contact details in Notification of infectious diseases to DHHS (above).

D. Evaluation:

D.1. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

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