

Illness and Infectious Disease Management Practices

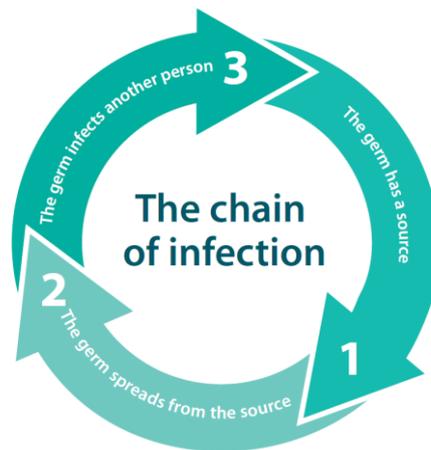


Policy Objective

To ensure Hawthorn Child Care Centre has in place practices and procedures to minimise the risk and spread of illness and infectious disease within the Centre community.

Implementation

Hawthorn Child Care Centre aims to minimise the risk and spread of illness and infectious diseases within the Centre by breaking the chain of infection. The chain of infection refers to the way in which germs spread. By breaking the chain, we aim to prevent and control illness and infectious diseases.



The most important ways to break the chain of infection and stop the spread of diseases are:

- Effective hand hygiene including the appropriate use of gloves.
- Exclusion of ill children, educators and other staff including volunteers and students.
- Immunisation.
- Effective environmental cleaning.

Effective Hand Hygiene

Educators, staff, volunteers, students, and children should follow the five steps to washing hands as outlined in *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition:

There are five steps to washing hands:

1. Wet hands with running water (preferably warm water, for comfort).
2. Apply soap to hands.
3. Lather soap and rub hands thoroughly, including the wrists, the palms, between the fingers, around the thumbs and under the nails. Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds (for about as long as it takes to sing 'Happy birthday' once).
4. Rinse thoroughly under running water
5. Dry thoroughly. Hands can be dried with paper towel.

The process of thoroughly washing, rinsing and drying hands should take around 30 seconds.

Infants need their hands washed as often and as thoroughly as older children:

- If the infant can stand at a small hand basin, wash their hands the same way you wash your own hands.
- If the infant cannot stand at a hand basin, wash their hands with pre-moistened disposable wipes, then dry thoroughly.

Educators, staff, volunteers and students can also clean their hands using an alcohol-based hand rub which contains 60–80% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand rubs are only to be used if hands are not visibly dirty. *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition outlines the following three steps to using alcohol-based hand rub:

- Apply the amount of hand rub recommended by the manufacturer to palms of dry hands.
- Rub hands together, making sure you cover in between fingers, around thumbs and under nails.
- Rub until hands are dry.

Hand hygiene should be performed in line with the following recommendations from *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition:

Table 3.1 When to perform hand hygiene

	Before	After
Educators and other staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting work, so germs are not introduced into the service Eating or handling food Giving medication Putting on gloves Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children Going home, so germs are not taken home with you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking off gloves Changing a nappy Cleaning the nappy change area Using the toilet Helping children use the toilet Coming in from outside play Wiping a child’s nose or your own nose Eating or handling food Handling garbage Cleaning up faeces, vomit or blood Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children Touching animals
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting the day at the service; parents can help with this Eating or handling food Going home, so germs are not taken home with them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eating or handling food Touching nose secretions Using the toilet Having their nappy changed—their hands will become contaminated while they are on the change mat Coming in from outside play Touching animals

In addition to practising hand hygiene through washing hands, educators, staff, volunteers, and students are to wear gloves in line with the recommendations in *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition

Table 3.2 When to wear gloves

Type of gloves	When to wear them	How to maintain them	Examples
Disposable gloves	When there is a chance you may come in contact with body fluids, including faeces, urine, saliva, vomit or blood	No maintenance—use them once and throw them away; do not reuse	Changing nappies Managing cuts and abrasions Cleaning spills of body fluids

Hawthorn Child Care Centre also requires educators, staff, volunteers, and students to wear gloves when serving food and drink.

Educators, staff, volunteers, and students must wash hands before and after wearing gloves.

Exclusion of Ill Children, Educators and Other Staff

Children, educators and other staff, including volunteers and students, who are unwell should stay home from the Centre. Even if they do not have a condition that requires exclusion, it is recommended an ill person rests and recovers away from the service. Exclusion prevents transmission of the disease to others and also assists in the recovery of the sick person.

If a child becomes ill while at the Centre, educators are to refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness policy. The Centre reserves the right to call the child’s parent/s or authorised nominee to collect their child from care if the child is displaying symptoms of illness or an infectious disease. If an educator becomes ill while at the Centre, they will be sent home.

To determine when a person should be excluded from the service the following steps will be taken, as outlined in *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition:

- Identify whether the symptoms or a diagnosed illness have an exclusion period.
- Refer to the recommended minimum periods of exclusion as listed in *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition.
- Advise the parents, or the educator or other staff member, when they may return to the education and care service.

Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods

Hawthorn Child Care Centre is guided by decisions regarding exclusion periods and notification of infectious diseases by the Australian Government Department of Health and SA Health. Please see the supporting document *Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods* for a full list of conditions and their minimum exclusion requirements. If a child, educator, staff member, volunteer or student is diagnosed with an infectious disease with an exclusion period the Centre asks that they notify Centre Management as soon as is practical.

At times, an outbreak of a new or ‘novel’ virus or infection may require exclusion from the Service that is not specified in general exclusion periods for common infectious illnesses. Information, education and recommendations regarding any ‘novel’ virus will be provided by the Australian Government Department of Health and/or SA Health.

A child, educator, staff member, volunteer or student who has been diagnosed with an infectious disease will not be allowed to return to the service without a doctor’s clearance. Any guidelines and/or advice provided by Australian state and federal government departments around an infectious disease should be

followed by families, educators, staff members, volunteers and students, including required quarantine periods.

Please note that as per the recommendations in *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition staff members whose work involves food handling and who have diarrhoea or vomiting should not return to work until they have been symptom-free for 48 hours.

In addition to the recommended minimum exclusion periods outlined in *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition Hawthorn Child Care Centre asks that families adhere to the following exclusion periods:

Vomiting, Diarrhoea or Any Bowel or Stomach Upset: Families are asked to keep their child at home until the child has remained without vomiting or diarrhoea for 24 hours after the reintroduction and tolerance of a full diet.

Temperature: Families are asked to keep their child at home until the child's temperature has stayed at a normal level (below 38°) for 24 hours without paracetamol or any other administered agent. This includes children who are teething as research indicates that fever cannot always be directly attributed to teething. See <http://www.abc.net.au/health/talkinghealth/factbuster/stories/2010/08/18/2985998.htm> for further information.

Coughs and Colds: Families are asked to keep their child at home if their child is unusually tired or lethargic; has a continuously runny nose and/or cough; is unsettled; or may need paracetamol, ibuprofen, or other medication throughout the day. Families are asked to keep their child at home until 24 hours after symptoms have subsided.

If a family feels that their child cannot participate fully in their day at the Centre, including all activities and indoor and outdoor play, they are asked to keep their child at home until the child is well enough to do so.

Copies of *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition are available throughout the Centre as well as online at <https://www.nhmc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/ch55>. All families are welcome to use this resource for their own referral and information on exclusion periods.

Notifying Families of Infectious Diseases

Hawthorn Child Care Centre will provide up-to-date information and advice about infectious diseases to families, educators, staff, volunteers and students sourced from the Australian Government Department of Health and SA Health as required. Centre Management will closely monitor health alerts and guidelines from SA Health and the Australian Government Department of Health for any advice and emergency health management in the event of a contagious illness outbreak. Recommendations from the Australian Government Department of Health and SA Health will be strictly adhered to at all times.

It is a requirement of the Education and Care National Regulations that the approved provider of a service must ensure that a parent or an authorized emergency contact of each child being educated and cared for by the service is notified of the occurrence of an infectious disease as soon as practicable. The Centre will provide families with information about the nature of the illness, incubation and infectious periods and the service's exclusion requirements for the illness. This will be done using the *Staying Healthy* 5th Edition infectious diseases fact sheets which will be distributed to families using the Skoolbag and SeeSaw apps as well as displayed at the entrance to the Centre and in the room which has experienced the first case of the illness. Notifying families of the occurrence of an infectious disease will be done in a manner which is not prejudicial to the rights of any child or staff member.

The Centre will record outbreaks of infectious diseases using the Infectious Disease Form which details the disease, how and when families were notified of the disease, information regarding the disease, and measures which have been taken to control/eliminate the disease.

The Centre will report any cases or outbreaks that are suspected to be food poisoning linked to food prepared or served at the Centre to SA Health. We will also work with SA Health if a child attending the service contracts a notifiable condition. Please see supporting document *Notifiable Conditions* for a full list of notifiable conditions.

Immunisation

In line with the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 (the Act), from 7 August 2020 children will not be able to enrol in or attend early childhood services unless all immunisation requirements are met. In line with the requirements of the Act, Hawthorn Child Care Centre will not:

- enrol a child if all immunisation requirements are not met
- allow a child to attend, or continue to attend the service if all immunisation requirements are not met

Families must vaccinate their children following the National Immunisation Program Schedule for South Australia (correct as of July 2020)

Age	Vaccine
Birth	Hepatitis B
6 weeks	Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough Hepatitis B Haemophilus type b (Hib) Meningococcal B as part of the State Government Meningococcal B Immunisation Program Pneumococcal Polio Rotavirus, the first dose is given at 6 to 14 weeks of age
4 months	Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough Haemophilus type b (Hib) Hepatitis B Meningococcal B as part of the State Government Meningococcal B Immunisation Program Pneumococcal Polio Rotavirus, the second dose at 10 to 24 weeks of age
6 months	Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough Hepatitis B Haemophilus type b (Hib) Pneumococcal, an additional vaccine dose recommended for Aboriginal children Polio
12 months	Measles, mumps and rubella Meningococcal ACWY Meningococcal B as part of the State Government Meningococcal B Immunisation Program Pneumococcal
18 months	Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough Hepatitis A, an additional vaccine recommended for Aboriginal children Haemophilus type b (Hib) Measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox Vaccines at 4 years of age Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough

Hepatitis A, an additional vaccine recommended for Aboriginal children Pneumococcal, an additional vaccine recommended for Aboriginal children Polio
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Further vaccinations are also required for children with specific medical at risk (MAR) conditions.

All children aged 6 months to less than 5 years of age, and Aboriginal children from 6 months of age, are eligible to receive free flu vaccines as part of the Annual Funded Childhood Influenza Program.

'No Jab No Pay' legislation approves the following exemptions:

- the child is aged less than 7 months of age
- the child has a medical contraindication to a vaccine, such as anaphylaxis
- the child has natural immunity to a particular disease
- the vaccine is temporarily unavailable
- the child is vaccinated overseas
 - A child vaccinated overseas will not automatically be granted an exemption; the overseas schedule for which that child was vaccinated will need to meet Australian immunisation schedule requirements. An immunisation provider will need to assess if this meets the Australian requirements and enter all doses administered overseas into the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).
- the Secretary has determined that the child meets the immunisation requirement

For a child under the custody or guardianship of the Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection, as per the Children and Young People (Safety) Act, a temporary exemption of six weeks, commencing on the day on which the child in care is taken into custody or guardianship, will apply.

Conscientious objection and vaccination objection on non-medical grounds will no longer be a valid exemption from immunisation requirements. Parents and guardians will need to speak with their medical practitioner about whether exemptions to being vaccinated are to be considered valid.

In line with the SA State Government's *No Jab No Play* legislation Hawthorn Child Care Centre collects, stores and provides immunisation records on request to the Chief Public Health Officer in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease. To facilitate this process, all families are asked to provide evidence of their child's vaccination record in the form of an immunisation history statement issued by Medicare.

In very rare circumstances, a certificate from the Chief Public Health Officer or a document approved by the Chief Public Health Officer may be accepted.

A letter from a GP, an overseas immunisation record or the South Australian Child Health and Development Record (the "Blue Book") are not considered approved immunisation records. A child vaccinated overseas must have their child's immunisation records recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register by an immunisation provider and then provide the service with a copy of the child's immunisation history statement.

Families are asked to provide the service with an updated immunisation history statement at the below times:

- at the time of the child's enrolment for the provision of the service
- after the child turns 7 months of age but before the child turns 9 months of age
- after the child turns 13 months of age but before the child turns 15 months of age

- after the child turns 19 months of age but before the child turns 21 months of age
- after the child turns 4 years and 2 months of age but before child turns 4 years 8 months of age.

Records must be provided at these times to show the child is up to date with all immunisations and the immunisations have been provided at the correct schedule points.

If a child enrolls in or attends a service in between these specified times, then the record must be extracted no greater than one month before enrolment or attendance.

The Centre will track children's immunisations using the Xplor program and follow up with any families who have not provided the service with an up-to-date copy of their child's immunisation history statement.

For further information on early childhood services and immunisation requirements please visit <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/conditions/immunisation/immunisation+programs/early+childhood+services+and+immunisation+requirements>

Vulnerable children will be excluded from the Centre in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, even if the child is well. Vulnerable children include:

- children who are too young to vaccinate;
- children who are medically at risk; and
- children from families who have not provided up-to-date immunisation records at the required intervals.

Hawthorn Child Care Centre advocates for immunisation by providing families with up-to-date information from recognised government, health care, and research bodies in both hard copy in the Centre Foyer and electronically using the Skoolbag and SeeSaw apps.

Educators, staff, volunteers, and students working at Hawthorn Child Care Centre are also strongly encouraged to be immunised in line with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommendations:

- Pertussis: This is especially important for educators and other staff caring for the youngest children who are not fully vaccinated. Even if the adult was vaccinated in childhood, booster vaccination may be necessary because immunity to pertussis decreases over time.
- Measles–Mumps–Rubella (MMR): For educators and other staff born during or since 1966 who do not have vaccination records of two doses of MMR, or do not have antibodies against rubella.
- Varicella: For educators and other staff who have not previously had varicella (a blood test is required to prove previous infection).
- Hepatitis A: Young children can be infectious even if they are not showing any symptoms.
- All staff should also consider having yearly influenza vaccinations.

Educators and staff who choose to immunise themselves are asked to provide records of their vaccines to Centre management.

Effective Environmental Cleaning

Effective environmental cleaning can reduce the number of germs found in the environment, breaking the chain of infection. Please see the Effective Environmental Cleaning policy for information on the Centre's cleaning processes and procedures, as well as the Sandpit Hygiene policy.

How Families Can Support Illness and Infectious Disease Management Practices

Families play an important part in supporting the Centre's illness and infectious disease management practices and breaking the chain of infection. Families can assist Hawthorn Child Care Centre in minimising the risk and spread of illness and infectious diseases by:

- Practicing hand hygiene on arrival and departure from the Centre.
- Keeping their child away from the Centre if their child is ill, even if they have a condition that does not require exclusion.
- Keeping ill family members, including siblings and adults, away from the Centre.
- Promptly collecting their child from the Centre if informed by educators or staff that their child is displaying symptoms of illness or an infectious disease.
- Adhering to the recommended minimum exclusion periods, both those set by the National Health and Medical Research Council and by the Centre.
- Informing Centre management if their child is diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease, with or without an exclusion period.
- Vaccinating their children following the National Immunisation Program Schedule.
- Following the responsibilities of families for illness and infectious disease listed by the National Health and Medical Research Council.
- Clearly labelling drink and milk bottles with their child's name.
- Ensuring milk bottles have caps.
- Clearly labeling dummies with their child's name and providing a cap for the dummy.

Changes to Existing Policy

No changes made.

Regulations

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2019

National Quality Standards 2, 3, 7

Sources

Acton Early Childhood Centre Health Policy

Australian Government Department of Health

Department for Education and Child Development

Disease Surveillance and Investigation Section, Communicable Disease Control Branch, SA Health

Guide to the National Quality Framework January 2020

Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 5th Edition

Supporting Documents

Infectious Disease Form

Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods

Review Date: March 2021

Next Review Date: March 2022