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Infectious Diseases Policy

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Date Created: June 2015 Date to be reviewed: April 2024 Version No: 5

Policy Statement:

The aim of Yarrunga Early Learning Centre is to provide an environment which protects the health and safety of all children and adults using the Centre by complying with the Education and Care Service National Regulations and the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.

Background:

Ensuring the health and safety of children and staff, and supporting children’s ongoing wellbeing, is a core focus of Yarrunga Early Learning Centre. Educators need to be aware of the likelihood of young children being exposed to an infectious illness whilst at Yarrunga. Maintaining appropriate hygiene practices within Yarrunga and teaching young children about health and hygiene will assist in the prevention of infectious diseases. Providing families with timely and current information will further support this process.

Children’s exposure to infectious diseases will be minimised by:

* following all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases.
* promotion of practices that reduce the transmission of infection.
* the exclusion of sick children and staff
* service support for childhood immunisation; and
* implementation of effective hand washing procedures.
* Exclusion from the service when children have temperature above 38 degrees

Scope:

This Policy covers all issues pertinent to the health and safety of the children, educators, families and visitors and is available from the Nominated Supervisor’s office. Educators are aware of the Policy and we encourage parents to be also.

Relevant legislation:

Education and Care Services National Regulations, (88)

Guide to the National Quality Framework (accessed 6th November 2023) ACECQA (2023)

Guide to Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations

EYLF – Belonging, Being, Becoming (2022) version 2 (accessed 6th November 2023)

Health and Safety in Children’s Services Model Policies and Practices – 2nd Edition revised (2003)

Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious disease in early childhood education and care services – 5th Edition (2013)

NSW Ministry of Health: [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

National Health and Medical Research Council: [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation?language=und Australian Government – Department of Health and Ageing – National Health and Medical Research Council.

<https://www.mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/search?q=infectious+diseases> (accessed 6th November 2023)

Location of information:

This information is located on the Yarrunga’s Website, by request and the Parent and Staff Handbooks.

Reference sources:

Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services. (5th ed)

Belong, Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2022 version 2.

Guide to the National Quality Framework (accessed 6th November 2023) ACECQA (2023)

Community Child Care Co-operative Model Policy May 2018

Cela Community Early Learning Australia, Quality area 2 Children’s health and safety. Infectious Diseases (accessed 6th November 2023)

Strategies:

**Approved Provider will:**

* Ensure that all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases is sourced from a recognised health authority, such as: Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (6th Edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) and the NSW Ministry of Health, or NSW public hospitals websites.
* Implement the recommendations from Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at Yarrunga. Also, information and recommendations the NSW/Federal Government and NSW Health.
* Ensure that children are reasonably protected from harm by working with the Nominated Supervisor and Educators on developing, implementing and reviewing policies that will guide health and safety procedures within Yarrunga.
* Collect, maintain, and store appropriately the required enrolment documents and enrolment information of children in Yarrunga.

**2. Nominated Supervisor will:**

Develop procedures for:

* Maintaining a hygienic environment.
* Providing families with relevant infectious diseases, health and hygiene information.
* Guiding children’s understanding of health and hygiene throughout the daily program.
* Ensuring staff are aware of relevant immunisation guidelines for children and themselves; and
* Maintaining relevant records regarding the current status of the immunisation of staff and children at the service, as well as any relevant medical conditions of children at Yarrunga.

Develop an enrolment procedure that captures all required information regarding the children’s immunisation status, and any medical conditions.

Provide relevant sourced materials to families about:

* The current NSW immunisation schedule for children.
* Exclusion guidelines for children that are not immunised or have not yet received all their immunisations in the event of an infectious illness at Yarrunga, upon induction at Yarrunga.
* Advice and information regarding any infectious diseases in general, and information regarding any specific infectious illnesses that are suspected/present in Yarrunga; and
* Providing information on illnesses (as soon as practicable after the occurrence of an infectious disease.)

Provide information to families, by email/notice in foyer and rooms, as soon as practicable of the occurrence of an infectious disease that describe the:

* Nature of illness.
* Incubation period; and
* Infectious and exclusion periods.

This information will be sourced from a reliable source such as, Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (6th Edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2013).

Ensure that an “Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedure” record is completed online on the ACECQA website as soon as practicable or no later than 24 hours of the illness occurring.

Ensure that they are not influenced by letters from doctors stating that their child can return to care, unless the child’s condition fulfils the criteria for returning to care. It is the doctor’s role to make the diagnosis for the children but it is the education and care services role to refer to the information in staying healthy in childcare to decide on their response to an illness (e.g the required exclusion time). Our local public health unit can help with these situations, or if we are in doubt about exclusion.

Ensure communication processes are in place to make educators aware of individual children’s circumstances.

Maintain confidentiality with regards to children’s individual medical circumstances, by putting procedures in place to safeguard children and family’s personal information.

Devise a routine written process for updating children’s enrolment records with regards to immunisation, ensuring that this occurs as required, (i.e., as children reach age milestones for immunisation), or at least twice a year.

Advise staff of the recommended immunisations for people working with children as per the Immunisation

https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation?language=und

Maintain current records of staff immunisation status and ensuring educator’s familiarity with written procedures for exclusion of educators as well as children in the event of an infectious illness.

Provide opportunities for educators to source relevant up to date information on the prevention of infectious diseases and maintaining health and hygiene from trusted sources.

Ensure opportunities for educators and families to be involved in review of the policies and procedures regarding children’s health and safety; and

Inform and implement the advice of the Public Health Department, or local health unit regarding infectious diseases as required.

If there is an outbreak of infectious disease- completing the following:

* Write symptoms/ confirmed disease in the ‘Record of Illness’ book.
* Complete ‘notification of infectious disease’ procedure and display in foyer as well as in the affected rooms.
* Notify parents via closed Facebook groups and email.

Provide opportunity for the staff to have the annual flu vaccination.

**Educators will:**

Ensure that any children that are suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs are always supported.

Implement appropriate health and safety procedures, when tending to ill children, including recognising that a child with a temperature above 38 degrees should be sent home as this indicates that the child has a fever. A fever is usually caused by an infection somewhere in the body. Types of infections that lead to fever include;

* Viral (caused by a virus) such as cold, flu or gastroenteritis
* Bacterial (caused by bacteria) such as some ear infections, pneumonia or urine infections.

Ensure that families are aware of the need to collect their children as soon as practicable to ensure the child’s comfort.

Advise families that they will need to alert Yarrunga if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness.

Maintain their own immunisation status and advise the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor of any updates to their immunisation status.

Provide varied opportunities for children to engage in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional teaching.

Take into consideration the grouping of children to reduce the risk of acquiring an infectious illness when planning the routines/program of the day.

All linen will be laundered daily.

Implement Yarrunga’s health and hygiene policy and procedures including:

* Hand washing – washing and drying thoroughly, and remembering to include babies when hand washing
* Routine and daily cleaning of Yarrunga.
* Nappy changing procedures.
* Wearing gloves (particularly when in direct contact with bodily fluids); and
* Proper handling and preparation of food.
* Washing and cleaning toys

Provide opportunities for staff, children and families to have access to health professionals by organising visits/guest speakers to attend Yarrunga to ensure practices in place at Yarrunga are correct; and

Maintain currency with regards to Health and Safety by attending appropriate professional development opportunities that become available.

**Families will:**

Advise Yarrunga of their child’s immunisation status and provide written documentation of this for Yarrunga to copy and keep with the child’s enrolment records.

Advise Yarrunga when their child’s immunisation/medical condition is updated and provide this information to Yarrunga to ensure that enrolment records are up to date; and

Have the opportunity to provide input into the review and effectiveness of policies and procedures of Yarrunga via various methods.

Evaluation:

Infection control is effectively managed at Yarrunga to ensure children remain healthy and transmission of infectious diseases are minimised.