



# Illness and Infectious Disease Policy



<b>Policy Number</b>	QA2/9	<b>Title</b>	Illness and Infectious Disease Policy
<b>Revision</b>	2.0	<b>Written By</b>	Policy Team and Nominated Supervisor
<b>Reviewed By</b>	EHOOSH Management Committee	<b>Approved By</b>	EHOOSH Management Committee
<b>Supersedes</b>	1.2	<b>Effective Date</b>	July 2025

## 1. Policy Statement

Eastwood Heights OOSH is dedicated to protecting the health and wellbeing of children, educators, staff, and families through effective infection prevention and control measures. The service upholds its duty of care by maintaining a clean, safe, and hygienic environment that reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases. We aim to minimise the impact of illness on children's learning and development while ensuring continuity of care. This policy highlights our commitment to:

- Respond promptly and appropriately to signs and symptoms of infectious illness.
- Apply exclusion periods in line with public health authority guidance.
- Promote immunisation and health education for children, staff, and families.
- Support a culture of safety, responsibility, and shared accountability.

This policy ensures a collaborative approach to preventing and managing the spread of illness in accordance with our legal and ethical responsibilities under the National Law and Regulations, and relevant public health legislation.

## **2. Background**

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to dealing with infectious diseases.

Infectious diseases can spread rapidly in education and care services. As noted in the National Health and Medical Research Council's *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*, when children – especially younger children – are in close contact with others, they often put objects in their mouths, and they may not always cover their coughs or sneezes. As some bacteria and viruses can survive on surfaces, children may touch a contaminated surface, then put their hands in their mouth and become infected. Additionally, if a child has an ill family member at home, they could be incubating the illness, and risk bringing germs from home into the service. It is for this reason that it is especially important for our service to have effective policies and procedures in place that can promote awareness of infectious diseases and safe hygiene practices, that help to prevent any infectious disease from occurring, and outline the processes to manage any outbreak

## **3. Procedure**

This section outlines the practical steps taken to manage illness and infectious diseases. It includes detailed procedures on hygiene practices, exclusion of unwell individuals, outbreak response, immunisation monitoring, and continuous improvement. These measures are designed to uphold the health and safety of all individuals in our service and ensure our legal obligations are consistently met.

### **3.1. Hygiene Practices**

Educators and children must practise correct handwashing techniques at critical times, including after toileting and before eating. Standard precautions, such as using gloves and

hand sanitiser when handling bodily fluids, are mandatory. The service frequently cleans and disinfects surfaces, toys, and high risk areas such as bathrooms and kitchens. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is used as needed, and educators' model and teach respiratory hygiene practices to children.

### 3.2. Exclusion Practices

Children or staff exhibiting symptoms of infectious disease (diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, or rash) will be excluded in line with the NHMRC's (Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services) minimum exclusion periods. Re-entry may require a medical clearance, especially following serious or vaccine-preventable illness. Families are expected to notify the service immediately if their child is diagnosed with or has been exposed to an infectious condition.

### 3.3. Outbreak and Incident Management

In the event of a confirmed case, families will be notified within 24 hours while maintaining confidentiality. The service will display information about the illness onsite. Significant outbreaks will be reported to the Public Health Unit and the Regulatory Authority. An isolation area will be made available for any child who becomes unwell during care. During these periods, thorough cleaning procedures will be implemented to ensure the hygiene of the service.

### 3.4. Immunisation

All children's immunisation records must be submitted upon enrolment and kept up to date. Staff are encouraged and supported to maintain current immunisations, including seasonal vaccines such as influenza and COVID-19. During outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases, unvaccinated children may be temporarily excluded to protect the broader service community.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

#### Approved Provider

- Ensure the service has current, evidencebased policies and procedures for infection prevention and control.
- Allocate resources (PPE, cleaning supplies, professional

	<p>development) to support effective hygiene practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the service complies with all relevant legislative and public health reporting requirements.</li> <li>• Report any notifiable disease outbreaks to the Public Health Unit and the Regulatory Authority in accordance with legal requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person In Charge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor children's health throughout the day and initiate exclusion procedures if symptoms emerge.</li> <li>• Notify families of confirmed infectious diseases promptly and support staff to implement exclusion periods.</li> <li>• Maintain up to date immunisation and illness records for all children and staff.</li> <li>• Ensure isolation protocols are followed when a child becomes unwell while at the service.</li> <li>• Display and enforce current exclusion guidelines, including updates from public health authorities.</li> <li>• Liaise with families sensitively and confidentially regarding health concerns and outbreaks.</li> <li>• Coordinate enhanced cleaning procedures during an outbreak and ensure compliance from staff.</li> <li>• Complete documentation of incidents, illnesses, and responses in accordance with Regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>Educators and Support Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe and document signs of illness in children and report concerns immediately.</li> <li>• Follow correct hygiene procedures, including handwashing, use of PPE, and safe disposal of contaminated items.</li> <li>• Stay home if unwell or after known exposure to infectious illness, especially during outbreaks.</li> <li>• Support children's understanding of hygiene through routine modelling and guided activities.</li> <li>• Maintain up to date immunisation and notify management of any changes.</li> <li>• Participate in training and apply updated practices as required.</li> </ul>
<b>Families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the service if their child is unwell, has an infectious disease, or has been in close contact with someone who has.</li> <li>• Comply with exclusion periods and supply medical clearance when requested.</li> </ul>

- Provide up-to-date immunisation documentation and inform the service of changes.
- Collaborate with educators in maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all children.

## 5. References

### 5.1. Statutory Authority

- National Health and Medical Research Council (2024). *Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services* (6th Edition)
- Public Health Act 2010 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Regs 85–88, 103, 168–175)

### 5.2. Relevant Service Policies

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Food and Nutrition Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Medical Conditions and Allergies Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy

### 5.3. National Frameworks

- National Quality Standard
- My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care in Australia, V2.0

## 6. Legislative Requirements.

### Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Regulation 85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
Regulation 86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
Regulation 87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
Regulation 88	Infectious diseases
Regulation 103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 173	Prescribed information to be displayed
Regulation 175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority

### Revision Chronology

Version Number	Date	Reason for Change
1.0	November 2018	Endorsed by OOSH executive committee

1.1	September 2020	Review and evaluation
1.2	February 2021	Endorsed by OOSH executive committee
2.0	July 2025	Reviewed and updated in new policy template