

DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

Policy Statement

Highgate School Outside School Hours Care (Highgate OSHC) takes active steps to prevent the spread of infectious disease through hygiene practices and adherence to first aid and health guidelines. Whilst it is acknowledged that it is not possible to prevent all infectious diseases and infestations, Highgate OSHC has a responsibility and legal obligation to take action to help prevent the spread of these.

When an outbreak of head lice or other transmittable infestation occurs, the service will follow procedures as for infectious diseases. It is not required that this is reported to the Regulatory Authority, Education Standards Board of South Australia, but families need to be notified within the service.

General

Highgate OSHC will act to prevent the spread of infectious diseases/infestations by:

- Ensuring current information about infectious diseases is available at the service to encourage best practices and procedures.
- Providing information to families regarding infectious diseases and exclusion from the service as part of the Family Handbook.
- Providing appropriate hand washing facilities and supplies.
- Encouraging effective hand washing techniques.
- Providing appropriate first aid supplies (as outlined in the Highgate OSHC's *Incident, Illness, Trauma, and the Administration of First Aid Policy*).
- Excluding children from the service who are suffering from an infectious disease (as per the guidelines in *Staying Healthy in Child Care*).
- Notifying families when an infectious disease has occurred at the service.

The Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the service's practices and procedures minimise the spread of infection/infestation by:
 - Regularly cleaning and sanitising all equipment.
 - Ensuring that drinking/eating utensils are not shared.
 - In the case of head lice, removing soft furnishings (bean bags), washing the 'dress ups' and restricting access to them until the immediate risk passes.
- Ensuring the service holds information on specific diseases and exclusion periods and this information is available to educators and families.
- Ensuring the *Staying Healthy in Child Care* document is readily accessible to educators at all times.
- Ensuring that information regarding the service's policy on exclusion of children with infectious diseases is made available to families in the Family Handbook, along with the recommendation that families keep children who are unwell at home.

Procedure for dealing with infectious diseases

In the event of an educator suspecting that a child arriving at the service is suffering from an infectious disease:

- The educator will approach the Assistant Director or Director for a second opinion.
- If the Assistant Director or Director also suspects the child is suffering from an infectious disease, they will advise the person signing in the child that the child is suspected of suffering from an infectious disease and request that the child be removed from the service until a medical practitioner has determined that
 - the child is not suffering from an infectious disease
 - the child has completed the applicable exclusion period as outlined in the current edition of Staying Healthy in Child Care.

In the event that an educator suspects that a child in attendance at the service is suffering from an infectious disease:

- The child will be withdrawn from the main group and taken to a separate area, where the educator will further assess the child's current health condition and maintain surveillance whilst making the child comfortable.
- The educator with the Assistant Director or Director will refer to Staying Healthy in Child Care for details on symptoms the child is presenting with (but will not make a diagnosis however can present the symptoms to the family and indicate that other children with similar symptoms have been diagnosed with a similar condition).
- The Responsible Person on duty, Assistant Director or Director will contact the family or, if unsuccessful, the emergency contacts in order of priority and advise the emergency contact of the child's condition and request that the emergency contact make immediate arrangements to collect the child from the service.
- In an event where the child does not have to be collected immediately, precautions as described in Staying Healthy in Child Care will be implemented.

In the event that a child with an infectious disease has been in attendance at the service, the Director will:

- Ensure that the families of children in attendance that day, or any other previous day the child has attended and may have been infectious, are notified as soon as practicable. Confidentiality will be maintained and only the name and nature of the infectious disease will be disclosed.
- Ensure that information regarding the infectious disease is available to families.
- Ensure information regarding the occurrence and nature of the infectious disease is prominently displayed on the family notice board.
- Ensure that documentation regarding the infectious disease and the actions taken by the service comply with National Regulations.

Head Lice

In the event that a child is suspected of being infested with head lice:

- The family will be notified as soon as possible and provided with information about treatment options when they pick up their child (Information is available in Staying Healthy in Child Care)
- The family will be informed that the child will only be readmitted to care after approved and appropriate treatment has been administered.
- Other families will be advised when there is an infestation of head lice within the service while maintaining confidentiality regarding the children involved.

Approved by Highgate School Governing Council 15th September 2021

DATE OF EFFECT: 30th September 2021

REVIEWED: 31st October 2022

TO BE REVIEWED: 31st October 2023

Related Documents

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-law-and-regulations/national-regulations>

Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations 88, 168

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care (2010) – Standards 2.1

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/out-school-hours-care-oshc>

Staying Healthy in Child Care—Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care. Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council, at

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/clinical%20guidelines/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>