



IMMUNISATION & EXCLUSION (Infectious Diseases) POLICY

Rationale

- While responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious diseases rests primarily with individuals, families and public health authorities, schools also have an important role to play.
- Schools are required to request and record the immunisation status of each child, i.e. primary aged children prior to enrolment and must follow exclusion requirements, as required.
- Schools must follow exclusion requirements, as required.
- Schools can support the prevention and control of transmission of infectious diseases by supporting immunisation programs and providing prompt and consistent response to detected or suspected cases of disease.
- Schools should not be expected to give expert advice or treat students. This is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities, as appropriate.
- The Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 require children with certain infectious diseases, and children who have been in contact with certain infectious diseases, to be excluded from school for a specified period.
- During an outbreak of an infectious disease Principals of primary students must:
 - be aware of and abide by exclusion requirements
 - not allow a child to attend school if:
 - they have been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease, that requires exclusion, as described in Column 2 of Schedule 7 (the school exclusion table).
 - they have been informed that a child is a contact of a person who is infected with an infectious disease as described in Column 3 of Schedule 7 (the school exclusion table).
 - they have not been immunised against a vaccine preventable disease and are directed to do so by the Secretary and until the Secretary directs that such attendance can be resumed.
- Schools are legally authorised to share parent and student contact details with the local council for the purpose of immunisation.
- Schools can support the prevention and control of transmission of infectious diseases by
 - supporting immunisation programs
 - providing prompt and consistent response to detected or suspected cases of disease
 - are not expected to give expert advice or treat children, which is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities as appropriate.

Note: Head lice and scabies are infestations not infections.

Purpose

- To help prevent and control the transmission of infectious diseases in Footscray North Primary School.
- To ensure the school is informed about the immunisation responsibilities and exclusion processes during an infectious disease outbreak.
- To ensure the school complies with DET policy and legislative requirements.

Definitions

Vaccination means having a vaccine – that is, receiving an injection.

Immunisation means both receiving a vaccine and becoming immune to a disease as a result of being vaccinated.

Exclusion is the period of time for which a student is required to not attend school.

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). For more detailed information about hand hygiene, see: Personal Hygiene in Related policies

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.

Respiratory hygiene or **cough etiquette** are terms used to describe infection prevention measures. Practices include:

- covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing

- using tissues and disposing of them appropriately
- attending to hand hygiene immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing nose.

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.

Implementation

- The school has developed the mandatory Health Care Needs Policy.
- Please refer to the school's *Enrolment Policy* and the *Admission Policy* for full details of the enrolment and admission processes and immunisation requirements.
- The school will request that parents/carers provide an Immunisation History Statement for their child from the Australian Immunisation Register, maintain records of all Immunisation History Statements and record information regarding the immunisation status of each enrolled child on CASES21 (whether an Immunisation History Statement has been received or not).
- The school will support the prevention and control of transmission of infectious diseases by providing a prompt and consistent response to detected or suspected cases of disease in accordance with the legislative requirements and by being vigilant to children who may have head lice or some other public health pest.
- Unwell children will be sent home as soon as possible.
- The school will 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 we believe a doctor has already done so.

Notification is through Communicable Disease Prevention and Control; telephone: 1300 651 160 (24 hours).

Whilst maintaining student confidentiality, the school community will be advised.

- In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, the school will:
 - be aware of and abide by exclusion requirements
 - not allow a child to attend school if:
 - they have been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease, that requires exclusion, as described in Column 2 of Schedule 7 (the school exclusion table).
 - they have been informed that a child is a contact of a person who is infected with an infectious disease as described in Column 3 of Schedule 7 (the school exclusion table).
 - they have not been immunised against a vaccine preventable disease and are directed to do so by the Secretary and until the Secretary directs that such attendance can be resumed
- The Principal will ensure a first aid kit is appropriately stocked and contains advice on handling spills of body fluids and substances.
- The school will take specific precautions to assist with infection prevention and control which must be followed by all people in a school at all times. They include hygiene and body fluids and substance precautions.
- Procedures that deal with inappropriate behaviour resulting in children and staff being exposed to body fluids and substances will:
 - protect children and staff
 - educate children and staff about why the behaviour is inappropriate and the consequences of the behaviour.
- Hand hygiene is considered one of the most important infection control measures for reducing the spread of infection. Soap will be provided and/or other hand hygiene consumables to support good hand hygiene. The teaching of hand hygiene routines will be incorporated into the curriculum and daily activities.

Hygiene

General precautions include:

- good hygiene practices, particularly washing and drying hands before and after meals, after using the bathroom, after nose blowing, and after contact with contaminated objects
- the use of protective barriers which can include gloves and masks
- safe handling of 'sharps'
- use of non-touch technique, as appropriate.

Blood and other body fluids

Interaction between people at schools should minimise contact with body fluids and substances, including:

- blood, whether wet or dry
- secretions
- excretions other than sweat
- other body substances

Staff members and students should:

- cover broken skin on their hands or lower arms with waterproof occlusive dressings at all times
- treat blood and other body fluids and substances as being potentially infectious
- avoid direct contact with blood and other fluids and substances, where possible
- be familiar with recommended hygiene and standard precautions
- deal with spills by using single use gloves or until it is possible to get someone wearing gloves to take over, then thoroughly wash their hands and any body parts that were in contact with the spill using warm water and liquid soap
- use a resuscitation mask, if available, if mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is required

Note: CPR training should be practiced with the use of a single-use resuscitation mask and manikins should be cleaned, dried and disinfected.

- The school will not give medical advice or treat students which is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities as appropriate.
- For further information, the school will refer to the other resources available on the website below.
- Please refer also to the school's *Blood-Borne Viruses (Hepatitis & HIV) Policy*, *First Aid Policy* and the *Bleeding Students/Blood Spills Policy*.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review or if guidelines change (latest DET update mid-January 2019).

This policy was ratified by School Council 25/3/2019

References:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/infectiousdiseases.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/immunisation.aspx