



Illness and Infectious Diseases Policy
Wee Wisdom Education Group – Centre-Based
Criterion PF27, HS26 & HS34 & Early Childhood Regulations Clause 46 (a) & (b) / 57 (1)

Relevant Background

Licensing Criteria for Education and Care Services 2008

- **PF27** There is space (away from where food is stored, prepared, or eaten) where a sick child can:
 - be temporarily kept at a safe distance from other children (to prevent cross-infection);
 - lie down comfortably;
 - be supervised.
- **HS26** All practicable steps are taken to ensure that children do not come into contact with any person (adult or child) on the premises who is suffering from a disease or condition likely to be passed on to children and likely to have a detrimental effect on them. Specifically:
 - the action specified in Appendix 2 is taken for any person (adult or child) suffering from particular infectious diseases.
 - children who become unwell while attending the service are kept at a safe distance from other children (to minimise the spread of infection) and returned to the care of a parent or other person authorised to collect the child without delay.
- **HS34** Where there is a serious injury or illness or incident involving a child while at the service that is required to be notified to a specified agency, the service provider must also notify the Ministry of Education at the same time

Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008

• **Clause 46 Health and safety practices standard: general**

The health and safety practices standard: general is the standard that requires every licensed service provider to whom this regulation applies to—

(a) take all reasonable steps to promote the good health and safety of children enrolled in the service; and (b) take all reasonable precautions to prevent accidents and the spread of infection among children enrolled in the service;

• **Clause 57 Health and Safety of Children**

(1) if the service provider or educator has reasonable grounds to believe that a person employed or engaged in the service, or any other person (b) has an infectious or contagious disease or condition may ensure that the person is excluded from the service and does not enter

POSITION STATEMENT & PURPOSE

The health and wellbeing of all children and staff are of paramount importance to our service. Illness can strike anyone at any time and colds, flu and other contagious illnesses can prove to be a significant concern as they can spread rapidly in a school environment. The objective of our illness policy is to work together to make sure that our practices and decisions help keep each other safe.

We are guided in our decisions regarding illness by:

- Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 Regulations which require us to take appropriate action when a child is unwell (Health and safety: Child health and wellbeing HS24 through to HS30)
- Recommendations from the Public Health Service.

Inductions and Guidelines

- All persons will be made aware of our illness policy and procedure during the induction process.
- The enrolment form asks families to share information about chronic conditions or illnesses and for any information regards appropriate care. Parents do not have to inform early childhood centres that their child has HIV.
 - Our service is aware of our obligations under the Privacy Act. Personal information about a child or family will not be communicated in any way to other children, families, or to anyone else without permission.
- If a *child / staff member / parent/ caregiver* exhibits symptoms of illness such as vomiting, diarrhoea, high temperatures, a chesty cough, yellow/green runny nose (along with other flu like symptoms), conjunctivitis, impetigo (school sores) and any other contagious illness prior to attending school, we request he/she stay home, both for own comfort and to minimize the spread of illness to others in the school.
- Parents/ caregivers are requested to notify the school before 9:00 am if their child is sick and unable to attend.
- Any person with earache, severe cold symptoms (e.g., persistent cough or severe runny nose with thick mucus)

must not attend school. If your child has a mild cold, although it is acceptable for them to attend, please use discretion if their nose is very runny or yellow/green.

- Any person that has had diarrhoea or vomiting should be excluded from the school for minimum of 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.
- Any person with a fever at night, must not attend school the next morning. Temperatures are lower in the morning and a fever may occur again in the afternoon. You are required to wait 24 hours after the fever breaks before returning to school.

Note: A normal temperature is between 36°C and 37°C. Any child with a temperature of 37.4°C and higher must stay at home until the temperature returns to normal (without administering of medication).

- Illness prevents participation in programme activities comfortably and results in a greater care need than the school can reasonably provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children. Therefore, if a child arrives and is clearly not well, staff and management reserve the right to not allow that child to be left at school.

Communication and Consultation

- We invite you to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's health and well-being with us at any time. If you are concerned that your child may be unwell, share this information with us at the time of drop off. This means that we can be vigilant and alert to any changes in behaviour or signs of illness and can respond to your child's needs promptly. If we have any concerns while they are in our care, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible.
- Please advise us if you have administered paracetamol to your child before they arrive at school. ➤ Paracetamol masks high temperatures, illness and can mask more serious symptoms associated with being unwell and it is important that our staff are aware to watch your child more carefully. If your child requires pain relief regularly (e.g. every four hours) then they are probably not well enough to be at school. **Please note that Ministry of Education regulations prohibit us from administering Pamol to your child unless following criteria apply:**
 - Pamol/Paracetamol can be administered if it is **prescribed** to your child for a specific condition. We are prohibited by regulations from administering over the counter Pamol.
 - If prescribed, teachers can administer Pamol/Paracetamol **only** when a parent has signed the medicine book to authorise its use.
 - A parent may authorise Pamol/Paracetamol use but they must provide this on the specified day, and it must **only** be used for the named child for a specified period of time

Parent/Whanau Responsibilities

- Provide the school with up to date emergency contact numbers.
- Discuss concerns about children's health with teachers at school and let teachers know if you have given medicine to you child during the night or prior to arriving at school.
- Provide written authority for any medication required while the child is at school (as per outlined in Medicine policy).
- Children should be collected as soon as possible if unwell and allow your child time to recover before returning to school.
- Provide details of immunisations that your child has had at the time of enrolment and at ages 15 months ➤ and 4 years (a legal requirement under the Health (Immunisation) Regulations 1995).

In the event of **a child or staff member becoming ill whilst at our Montessori school**, we have the following procedure in place to ensure;

- the illness is contained to reduce the risk of infection to others
- the person is cared for appropriately according to their condition until a family member can take over
- any treatment or action is documented
- if appropriate due to contagion, families are informed of that the disease has been present in the school.

We also recognise the importance of preventing disease through the use of immunisation. We believe as a service we

must provide information to individuals so they may make an informed decision regarding immunisation. We fully respect the parents right to choose whether or not to immunise their child and a staff member's right to immunise themselves or not.

PROCEDURE

In this procedure a patient can be considered as either a child or staff member.

In the event of an illness

1. Staff will assess the severity of the illness to the best of their ability.
2. All illnesses will be recorded in the accident and illness register. Details will include;
 - the date and time of the onset of the illness
 - the name of the patient
 - any details concerning the illness
 - treatment given and time

The staff member dealing with the patient will record and sign the accident and illness register. 3.

An emergency contact person will be contacted as soon as possible to collect the patient.

Note: *Head Teachers and/or Management reserves the right to send home children and staff to ensure the well being of the patient and to minimize the spread of illness to others in the school.*

4. The patient will be placed in the office and supervised at all times by a delegated staff member. 5. The patient will be offered water if appropriate.
6. The patient will be kept cool if he/she has a fever or warm if he is cold.
7. If a child develops a temperature while attending the centre, staff will carry out the following procedures until the child is collected by parents/caregivers.
 - Remove extra clothing
 - Encourage the child to drink cool fluids to avoid dehydration
 - Encourage the child to rest – activity can increase body temperature.
8. If illness is sudden and severe an ambulance will be called. If practicable and appropriate the patient will be accompanied to the hospital by a staff member. The patient's emergency contact will be updated.
9. The Schedule of Contagious Diseases will be displayed in the school for staff to refer to.
10. If the illness is contagious (for example – chickenpox, nits, slap cheek) families will be notified that the disease has been present at the school and the symptoms to be aware of.
11. The identity of the patient must remain anonymous.
12. In the event of a contagious illness, the patient must have a doctor's certificate to return to the school. In certain cases, although not a contagious illness, a doctors' letter maybe requested at the discretion of Management stating patient is fit to resume school.
13. Any medical certificates will be stored on the patients personal file.

Immunisation

14. Parents will indicate on their child's enrolment form the immunisations that their child has received, or sign to say they have chosen not to immunise their child.
15. Parents of children who have been immunised will be asked to provide a copy of the child's immunisation certificate which will be kept with the child's enrolment form.
16. The administrator will record the child's immunisation details in the Infocare system.
17. Staff will be encouraged to ensure their immunisations are up to date. It will be the responsibility of each staff member to ensure he/she has immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, and chickenpox. It will be recommended that all adults have a booster dose of adult tetanus-diphtheria vaccine every 10 years or after an injury as well as an annual influenza vaccination. Adult whooping cough (pertussis) booster vaccination every 10 years will also be recommended. Any staff member who has chosen not to immunise, will be required to notify management so appropriate decisions can be made in the event of an outbreak.

18. Infectious diseases as outlined in Appendix 2 of the Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 are (those marked with a * are notifiable).

- Chicken Pox
- Conjunctivitis
- Hepatitis A*
- Hepatitis B*
- Measles*
- Meningitis*
- Mumps*
- Ringworm
- Salmonella*
- Streptococcal (sore throat)
- Whooping Cough*
- COVID-19*

19. HIV is not listed by the Ministry of Education as an infectious disease. The Human Rights Act 1993 does not allow exclusion of a child because of HIV/AIDS.

20. If a there is serious harm or a significant event occurs (defined under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015), the Centre manager will report the incident to the correct agency as soon as possible and send a completed accident/incident form within 7 days.

- Ministry of Education; Traumatic incident team 0800 848 326 or National Office 0800 622 222 ▪
Worksafe New Zealand 0800 030 040
- Oranga Tamariki 0508 332 774
- Education Council 04 471 0852
- Ministry of Health 0800 855 066

21. Worksafe must be notified as soon as possible in the event of; (See Appendix 1 of accident procedure for definitions)

- a. A death
- b. A notifiable injury or illness
- c. A notifiable incident

In the event of a notifiable disease

22. In the event of an outbreak of a notifiable disease, parents will be notified immediately.

23. An immunisation report will be printed from the Infocare system and a second manual check of information from the enrolment form will be performed before contacting parents.

24. Families of children that are not immunised will be notified immediately by phone.

25. Children who are not immunised cannot attend school for the incubation period related to the disease in question. See *the schedule of contagious disease chart*

26. If unsure of incubation periods call Health Line on 0800 611 116 for further information.

27. If the child is at the school and a staff member suspects he has a notifiable disease the Head Teacher or supervisor in charge must inform the family immediately and recommend that the child is taken directly to their doctors or an A & E service.

28. Any child or adult suspected of having an infectious/notifiable disease must be isolated from the point of suspicion to the time they leave the school. See *procedure above*.

29. If there is an outbreak of a notifiable disease (two or more cases) the Service will notify the local regional health service on (09) 623 4600 (Auckland) or (07) 838 2569 (Waikato).

30. **If the centre is experiencing more staff and/or attendees with vomiting and/or diarrhoea illness than usual, this will be notified to the local public health unit (Auckland Regional Public Health Service 09 623 4600)**

In the event of a pandemic event

Note: A pandemic is an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects

an exceptionally high proportion of the population

30. Our School will remain open for as long as safely practicable.
31. Our School will open/close only after receiving instructions from the Ministry of Health, local health authorities or the Ministry of Education.
32. In the case of the School being closed down under the request of the Ministry of Health we will follow our response plan below.
33. Management will work closely with the Ministry of Health and other relevant authorities, following their advice.
34. Our service will maintain communication with other schools and Early Childhood Centre's in the area.
35. Our emergency contact details will be regularly updated and a process in place for contacting families.
36. We will ensure the school has adequate emergency supplies of tissues, medical and hand hygiene products, cleaning supplies and masks. These may be difficult to purchase once a pandemic begins
37. A process is in place for recording details of staff or child illness
38. Management will coordinate communication to families and staff at different phases of a pandemic.
39. Our service will ensure that all cases and status reports are notified to health authorities and assist health authorities to track 'contacts' of people showing symptoms.

Pandemic Procedure

In the case of an outbreak of a pandemic or the School being closed down under the request of the Ministry of Health we will follow this procedure.

40. We will communicate with families immediately, following the guidelines from the Ministry of Health.
41. We will put up notices at all entry points advising people not to enter if they have pandemic symptoms.
42. We will display information from the Ministry of Health on pandemic outbreaks for parents and staff.
43. We will record details of all staff or child illnesses (we do this irrespective of a pandemic).
44. A system will be implemented to manage children and staff who become ill, involving immediate isolation, and sending home immediately.
45. We will continue to ensure regular hygienic cleaning and sanitation of the school, learning materials and equipment.
46. All internal spaces will be well-ventilated.
47. Teachers will emphasise handwashing and cough/sneeze etiquette with the children and display posters and will create awareness at mat times on how to stay safe by following safety practices and procedures in our learning environment, homes, and our wider community.
48. During the pandemic period, we will not use playdough or shared food.
49. We will hot-wash laundry etc and dry in a dryer where possible or hang in the sun to dry
50. If our School closes, parents will be notified, notices will be posted on doors and relevant groups updated through text alert, e-mails, Facebook and website
51. We will follow the guidelines from the Ministry of Health on when children and staff can return to the School.

Recovery plan:

52. There will be a debrief of the pandemic event for staff and families.
53. We will ensure the School has been cleaned and disinfected.
54. We will only re-open when we have the capacity of staff to resume normal Centre operations
55. We will continue to support and monitor the wellbeing of staff and children.
56. We will re-stock our emergency supplies kit.
57. We will review our pandemic plan and procedures.

COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)

COVID-19 is a highly contagious new illness that can affect lungs and airways. Symptoms can vary from mild to severe and can lead to life-threatening pneumonia and organ failure.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are a cough, a high temperature (at least 38°C), shortness of breath, sore throat, sneezing and runny nose, temporary loss of smell which are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

It can threaten the young and elderly alike hence prioritising the wellbeing of our children, staff, whanau and community is of utmost importance.

The following requirements are in place to respond effectively to eliminate the risk of infection in our learning environment.

a) Meticulous hygiene practices

- On entry to the school premises each morning, parents are asked to take their child to the bathroom and wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds (parents to wash their own hands too) and then dry them thoroughly, before unpacking the child's bag or touching any items.
- Hand sanitizer will be available and is to be used by all other visitors.
- Staff and adults will practice appropriate hand hygiene, including thoroughly washing their hands on arrival and throughout the day, and using hand sanitizer as appropriate.

b) Social distancing

- Only one parent can enter the school with their child/children
- Parents are encouraged to practise social distancing from staff, other parents, and other children, as much as is possible
- Only adults from the same 'bubble' can drop off or collect their child/children.
- At pick up, a staff member will bring your child/children to the door on your arrival, to minimise the number of adults that enter the school.
- If someone in your bubble or close contacts has been confirmed to have Covid-19 or where you are a close contact of someone confirmed to have Covid-19, we ask you and your child/children to remain away from school until you have been tested and confirmed not to have Covid-19.
- Staff will only travel to and from school in their own vehicles, not on public transport.
- All meetings, travel, gatherings, workshops etc will be cancelled or conducted electronically (via Zoom, Skype or similar).
- Visitors are not welcome at this time.

c) Restriction of entry of people with respiratory or influenza symptoms

- Children, parents/caregivers, or staff who are unwell should remain at home. If anyone unwell arrives to school, staff, and management reserve the right to request to leave the premises to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone. We will strictly enforce this rule, for the safety of all.
- Children will be regularly monitored throughout the day. Parents will be contacted if staff observe concerning symptoms and will request to collect the child. Where practical, the child may be isolated and put on a bed in the office or staff room and supervised by a staff member. If you are phoned and asked to collect the child, we do ask that you respond to this as a matter of priority. It is critical that adults are vigilant to the subtle physical changes for early detection and treatment.
- Anyone sent home will need to provide a medical certificate of health before they can return to school.

d) Return to school following recovery from Covid-19

- Children, staff, or parents who have had a confirmed case of Covid-19 may only return to the school once they have completed any required quarantine period and are healthy.
- A medical certificate from your GP or such other medically recognized organization (e.g. the Ministry of

Health) will be required before any such return.

e) Contact Tracing

- Our usual daily sign in sheets will be amended to require parents to both sign in and provide a printed name. This will enable easy contact tracing should it be required.

Review

This procedure will be reviewed within a three-year period or when there is a significant change in the area of the topic.

Reviewed by:	Deanne Fernandopulle (January 2023)
Consultation Undertaken:	Reviewed by staff and Management: 07.04.2020 Sent out for parent consultation:
Approved by:	Anna Chan