DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES

POLICY STATEMENT

Lake Mac Newy OOSH will provide a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health and well-being of the children (*"My Time, Our Place"* Outcome 3). We will take all reasonable steps to prevent and manage the spread of infectious diseases through the implementation of procedures that are consistent with the guidelines of State Health Authorities.

The Service also implements the recommendations outlined in *Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (6th Edition, 2024)* and follows advice from NSW Health and the local Public Health Unit (PHU).

In implementing this policy, the service will prioritise the safety, health and wellbeing of children at all times. Decisions relating to infection control, exclusion, supervision and health management will be guided by the best interests of the child and the need to protect children, educators and families from harm or risk of infection.

PROCEDURE

Prevention

- Universal precautions will be consistently applied across service practices to ensure prevention of the spread of infections is effective.
- A regularly updated copy of the Department of NSW Health guidelines on infectious diseases will be kept at the service for reference by staff, management and families.
- If a child is showing symptoms of an infectious disease whilst at home, families are not permitted to bring the child to the service. Children who appear unwell when being signed in by their family will not be permitted to be left at the service.
- Hand washing will be practised by all educators and children upon entering the service, before preparing or eating food and after all dirty tasks such as toileting, cleaning up any items, wiping a nose, before and after administering first aid, playing outside or handling an animal. In addition, educators will wash their hands before leaving the service.
- Where practical, the Service will support infection control through adequate ventilation and the use of outdoor environments.
- The service will be cleaned daily, and rosters maintained as evidence of the cleaning tasks being undertaken.
- All toilet facilities will have access to a basin or sink with running water and soap and paper towel for washing and drying hands.
- Women and girls will have access to proper feminine hygiene disposal.
- Soap and paper towel will also be available in the kitchen area.
- All toilets, hand basins and kitchen facilities used by the service will be cleaned and disinfected daily. General surfaces will be cleaned after each activity and at the end of the day and all contaminated surfaces will be disinfected.
- Toys will be washed, cleaned, and disinfected on a regular basis with material items such as dress ups and cushion covers laundered as required but a minimum of quarterly.
- Educators will maintain and model appropriate hygiene practices and encourage the children to adopt effective hygiene practices. As part of children taking increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing, educators should acknowledge children who are modelling hygiene practices.
- Informal education in proper hygiene practices will be conducted on a regular basis, either individually or as a group through conversations, planned experiences, inclusion in service routines and reminders. Health and hygiene

practices will be highlighted to families or caregivers, and where appropriate, information sheets or posters will be used by educators to support these practices.

- Educators will aim to provide a non-judgmental approach to differences in hygiene practices and standards between families in order to support children's developing sense of identity. Where practices differ to standards expected in the service remind children that these are practices to be followed in the service, but they may be different for them at home.
- All educators will be advised upon appointment to the position to maintain their immunity to common childhood diseases, tetanus and Hepatitis B through immunisation with their local health professional.
- An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) will be requested for each child upon enrolment and maintained on the child's record.

Management of infectious diseases:

- Children, visitors and staff with infectious diseases will be excluded from the service for the period recommended by the Department of NSW Health.
- The Service will follow the current NSW Health "Recommended Exclusion Periods for Infectious Conditions in Schools and Children's Services" table when determining exclusion and return to care timeframes.
- The Service will follow current NSW Health, Public Health Unit (PHU) and Australian Government advice regarding COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.
- Children, educators, volunteers and visitors who are unwell, including those with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should remain at home and only return when they are well enough to participate in the program.
- Where advised by NSW Health or the Public Health Unit, the Service may implement additional infection control measures, outbreak management strategies or exclusion requirements.
- In all decisions relating to infection control and communicable disease management, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is paramount.
- Where there is an outbreak of an infectious disease, each enrolled child's family/emergency contact will be notified within 24 hours under ordinary circumstances. The service will maintain confidentiality when issuing the notification and ensure it is not prejudicial or identifies any children or staff. Information provided will include the nature of the illness, exclusion period requirements and any recommended monitoring advice.
- In the event of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease at the service or school attended by children at the service, families of children not immunised will be required to stay at home for the duration of the outbreak, for their own protection.
- If a child develops symptoms of a possible infectious disease whilst at the service, their family will be contacted to take the child home. Where they are not available, emergency contacts will be called to ensure the child is collected from the service promptly.
- While awaiting collection, the child will be comforted, appropriately supervised, and supported in a way that maintains their dignity, privacy and emotional wellbeing.
- All staff dealing with open sores, cuts and bodily fluids shall wear disposable gloves and practice universal precautions.
- Staff with cuts, open wounds, or skin diseases such as dermatitis should cover their wounds and wear disposable gloves.
- Disposable gloves will be properly and safely discarded, and staff are to wash their hands after doing so.
- If a child has an open wound, it will be covered with a waterproof dressing and securely attached.
- If bodily fluids or blood gets on the skin but there is no cut or puncture, wash away with warm soapy water.
- In the event of exposure through cuts or chapped skin, promptly wash away the fluid, encourage bleeding and wash in cold or tepid soapy water.
- In the event of exposure to the mouth, promptly spit it out and rinse mouth with water several times.

- In the event of exposure to the eyes, promptly rinse gently with cold or tepid tap water or saline solution.
- In the event of having to perform CPR, disposable sterile mouth masks are to be used, or if unavailable a piece of cloth.
- Any exposure should be reported to the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor and management to ensure proper follow up procedures occur.
- All cases of infectious illness occurring at the Service will be documented in the Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Record within 24 hours. Records will be stored confidentially in accordance with the Service's record-keeping procedures.
- Children will be encouraged to self-manage toileting and hygiene practices where appropriate. Where assistance is required, staff will support the child in a safe and respectful manner, maintaining hygiene practices and the child's dignity and safety at all times.
- Staff will consider the resources they are using when assisting school age children when toileting to ensure they are age appropriate and ensure privacy for the child and ease of use by staff.
- Any soiled clothing shall be handled using disposable gloves and be placed in a sealed plastic bag for the parents to take home for laundering. The service will never rinse soiled clothing.
- Any blood or bodily fluid spills will be cleaned up immediately, using gloves and the area fully disinfected. Cloths used in cleaning will be wrapped in plastic bags and properly disposed of according to current infection control guidelines.
- Payment of fees will be required for children during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, unless other arrangements discussed and agreed to by management, have been made.
- The Service Coordinator will at all times follow the recommendations as outlined in the Health Department document.
- The decision to exclude or re-admit a child or staff member will be the responsibility of the Coordinator based on the child's symptoms, medical opinion and Department of NSW Health guidelines for children who have an infectious disease or who have been exposed to an infectious disease.
- The Coordinator or staff members have the right to refuse access if concerned about the child's health.
- A medical clearance certificate may be required where recommended by NSW Health or the Public Health Unit (PHU) for certain infectious diseases such as measles, mumps, diphtheria, varicella, hepatitis A, polio, tuberculosis, typhoid and paratyphoid before returning to the service.

Reportable Diseases

- Outbreaks of communicable diseases and contagious viruses represent a threat to public health. To help prevent outbreaks, the Department of Health monitors the number of people who contract certain infectious diseases. The recent travel or attendance of infected people in a public place or on public transport and works with health specialists and doctors to help prevent the transmission of diseases to other people.
- The Public Health Act 2010 lawfully requires and authorises doctors, hospitals, laboratories, school principals and childcare centre directors to confidentially notify NSW Health of patients with certain conditions, and to provide the required information on the notification forms. Specialist trained public health staff review this information and if necessary, contact the patient's doctor, and sometimes the patient, to provide advice about disease control and to complete the collection of information.
- Management is required to notify the local Public Health Unit (PHU) by phone (call 1300 066 055) as soon as possible after they are made aware that a child enrolled at the Service is suffering from one of the following vaccine preventable diseases:
    - Diphtheria
    - Mumps
    - Poliomyelitis
    - Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib)

- Meningococcal disease
- Rubella (‘German measles’)
- Measles
- Pertussis (‘whooping cough’)
- Tetanus
- An outbreak of 2 or more people with gastrointestinal or respiratory illness

- Management will closely monitor health alerts and guidelines from Public Health Units and the Australian Government- Department of Health for any advice and emergency health management in the event of a contagious illness outbreak.
- Nominated supervisors will be encouraged to seek advice from their local PHU when they suspect an infection disease outbreak is affecting their centre, such as outbreak of gastrointestinal or respiratory illness.
- The Public Health Unit may need to review the centre's immunization register to determine which children are at risk from the outbreak.
- Following assessment of the situation, the public health officer may instruct the director to exclude certain children for a period or provide advice regarding preventive measures.
- The service will notify their local public health unit if any child or educator contracts a vaccine-preventable disease.
- Where an outbreak or infectious disease presents a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children attending the Service, the Approved Provider will notify the Regulatory Authority through the NQA ITS portal within 24 hours in accordance with Regulation 175(2)(c), where required.
- Following an outbreak, the Service will review infection control practices and record any improvements required.

<u>Please Note:</u>
In the event of supplies such as tissues, toilet paper, hand towels, soap, hand sanitizer and disinfectants being limited to or not available to the consumer Lake Mac Newy OOSH may not be able to keep up with the demand of sterilisation of all equipment and therefore some items which will include games and toys may be removed to help minimise the spread of any infectious disease.

CONSIDERATIONS

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
S167 R77, 85, 86, 87, 88, 106, 109	Standards 2.1 Elements 2.1.2 Child Safe Standards 1,3,4,5,7,8,9, 10	- Parent Handbook - Staff Handbook - Enrolment & Orientation Policy - Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy - Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy - Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (6th Edition, 2024)	- Disability Discrimination Act 1975 - NSW Anti – Discrimination Act 1975 - Work, Health& Safety Act 2011 - NSW Dept. of Health Guidelines - Parent Handbook - Staff Handbook

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

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