



Lyrebird Preschool

# **POLICY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF UNWELL CHILDREN**

**Reference:** *Education and Care Services National Law Act: 167, 174*

*Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulation 88, 92, 93, 95, 168, 171*

## **Aim:**

To ensure that an unwell child is identified and cared for swiftly and that appropriate action is taken to prevent the spread of infection and to treat appropriately until the child's parent or other authorised person arrives at the preschool.

## **Explanation:**

- Children who attend the centre should be well enough to fully participate in the centre's program.
- The centre DOES NOT have the facilities or the staff to care for sick children.
- The risks of cross infection and re-infection increase with the attendance of unwell children in a childcare environment as many illnesses are easily spread through coughing, sneezing and direct contact.
- The staff should be aware of and monitor any changes in the child's health and well-being throughout the day.
- If a child does not seem 'right' or 'their normal self' he/she may be unwell even though the exact problem cannot be seen.
- A child may be considered unwell if he/she has elevated temperature, vomiting, diarrhoea, open, weeping sores or requires constant monitoring and continued one-to-one care from staff.
- The nominated/certified supervisor has the discretionary right to refuse a child or send a child home if they deem the child to be too unwell to attend at the centre.

# *Strategies and Procedures*

## Practice for children who are unwell:

### **Parents.**

If your child has been unwell prior to attending the centre the following guidelines must be followed:

- A child who has been prescribed antibiotics for an illness should be kept at home for at least 24 hours after the first dose of medication.
- Children with fevers of more than 38 degrees Celsius should be kept at home until the child has been fever free without the use of paracetamol for at least 24 hours.
- A child with diarrhoea should be kept at home until at least 24 hours after the last loose motion.
- A child who has been vomiting should be kept at home until at least 24 hours after the last vomit.
- A child with conjunctivitis should be kept at home until after 24 hours on medication and until discharge has cleared.

If your child becomes unwell at the centre and the centre requests that the child is to be taken home parents are to arrange prompt collection of the child (within an hour). If parents are unable to collect the child promptly alternative arrangements may need to be made, eg: emergency contacts or other authorised persons may be called to collect the child.

Parents should read and sign and receive a copy of the **Illness Reporting Form**.

### **Staff:**

If a child is unwell and unable to participate in the normal activities of the centre the staff will:

- Inform the nominated/certified supervisor and arrange for parents to be informed.
- Separate the unwell child from the other children until the child is collected by the parent or other authorised person. Nominate a staff member to be responsible for the children and keep the child comfortable, encourage rest and assess the situation.
- Administer first aid as required, eg. Take the child's temperature and take action to bring the child's fever down.
- Record the illness on the **Illness Reporting Document**. Once signed hand a copy to the person collecting the child.
- Inform parents of conditions of exclusion and re-admission.

- a) If the child's illness has needed medical attention a doctor's clearance may be required.
  - b) If a child has not received medical attention re-admittance of the child will be at the nominated/certified supervisor's discretion and they may insist on a doctor's clearance if the child's recovery is unsure.
- Ensure all bedding and toys used by an unwell child are sanitised.
  - The nominated /certified supervisor is to inform the Public Health Unit and Department of Families and Community Services where required. (See '**Immunisation**' and '**Exclusion of Sick Children and Staff**' policies.) Public Health Unit: Ph: 4221 6700 and Department of Families and Community Services Children's Services Team: 4222 8400/4422 8499

### **Treatment of fever.**

Where a child's temperature is elevated above 38 degrees Celsius the nominated/certified supervisor or staff member responsible will contact the parents and ask them to collect their child.

#### Until the child is collected the staff will:

- Remove any excess clothing.
- Keep in a cool (not cold) room,
- Offer sips of cool water,
- Check temperature every twenty minutes and record on Illness Reporting document.

#### **If a parent or authorised collector cannot be contacted or is not in the immediate area to be able to pick the child up within a short period of time and the child's temperature is continuing to climb over 39 degrees Celsius:-**

- permission will be sought to administer Panadol to the child.
- The nominated/certified supervisor will assess the child's situation and contact the parent/emergency contacts to gain permission over the phone to administer the appropriate amount of Panadol as stated on the medication bottle.
- A second staff member will be required to listen to the permission to give Panadol from the parent/emergency contact.
- Panadol will be administered to the child and their condition will be continued to be monitored until a parent/emergency contact arrives at preschool.

- A medication administration form listing the Panadol dosage given to the child will be written up by staff members involved and the parent/emergency contact will be requested to sign this upon their arrival.
- Where a child's temperature is in excess of 39 degrees and a parent or emergency contact can not be contacted within half an hour of first trying, an ambulance will be called.

Where a child goes into a convulsion or requires urgent medical assistance:

- Administer first aid immediately.
- DO NOT SPONGE CHILD.
- Seek medical assistance.

### Practice for children who have an infectious disease

(Also refer to the Immunisation Policy)

It is the policy of this centre to adhere to recommendations of exclusion for infectious diseases as stated by the National Health and Medical Research Council (N H M R C), contained in the book "Staying Healthy in Child Care 4<sup>th</sup> ed." supplied by the Department of Health and Family Services.

The Centre retains the right to **exclude any child who is regarded by the Nominated/Certified Supervisor to be a health risk to other children, or any child who is obviously unwell.** (Refer to copy of N H M R C exclusion list – attached below.)

Consequently, if a child does become ill during the day the staff will:

- follow the **same procedure as for an unwell children** AND minimise contact with other children and staff (especially if symptoms suggest a communicable disease.)
- Alert the Nominated/Certified Supervisor and record action taken on the Illness Reporting document and in the day book.

#### **NOTE:**

Recommended non-exclusion means there is NOT a significant risk of infection to others.

A person who is not excluded may still need to stay home because they do not feel well.