

Title	ELC and SAC Management of Infectious and Immunisation Preventable Diseases Policy
Description of policy	Outlines the strategies and actions of Early Learning Centres (ELCs) and School Age Care (SAC) in relation to the management of infectious and immunisation and preventable diseases
Required because	To comply with the obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations and the Public Health Act 2000 and Regulations
Description of changes	Clarified that lack of immunisation is not grounds for refusing enrolment. Updated exclusion period for Covid.
Applies to	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisation-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ELCs&SACs <input type="checkbox"/> Staff only <input type="checkbox"/> Students only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and students
Status	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision of existing document <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision of existing document

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Related documents	Public Health Regulation 2000 (ACT) Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Education and Care Services National Regulations National Quality Standard (schedule to the Education and Care Services National Regulations) ELC and SAC First Aid, Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
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1. Summary

- 1.1 Primary responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious diseases lies with individuals, families and the public health authorities.
- 1.2 This policy outlines responsibilities and exclusion periods to assist Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) Early Learning Centres (ELCs) and School Age Care Centres (SACs) to manage infectious diseases contracted by children.
- 1.3 This policy also outlines the requirements for record keeping, reporting and management of immunization preventable diseases.
- 1.4 Medical issues that do not involve infectious diseases are dealt with in line with the [ELC and SAC First Aid and Incident, Injury, Trauma and Serious Illness Policy](#).
- 1.5 This policy operates in conjunction with other CECG policies.

2. ELC & SAC Management of Infectious and Immunisation Preventable Diseases Policy

- 2.1 The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) suggests the three most effective methods to reduce the occurrence of infectious disease and the risk of contagion are:
 - Immunisation
 - Exclusion of sick students, staff and visitors
 - Effective hygiene practices.
- 2.2 The NHMRC maintain the publication – [Staying Healthy, Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services](#). The guidance in this publication is widely regarded as best practice for education and care services and should be referenced for practices to prevent infection and staff are encouraged to be familiar with this.
- 2.3 Parents must notify the ELC or SAC if their child contracts an infectious disease.

3. Immunisation

- 3.1 The ACT [Public Health Regulation 2000](#) (Health Regulations) set out the requirements for obtaining and keeping up-to-date immunisation records for children attending ELCs and SACs.
- 3.2 Parents or carers must provide an original immunisation record for inspection setting out the immunisation status of the child for each vaccine preventable disease.
- 3.3 The Nominated Supervisor must ensure a copy of the immunisation record is kept on every child's record in a form that is readily accessible to the Nominated Supervisor and the ACT Chief Health Officer.

4. Notifications of Vaccine Preventable Diseases

- 4.1 Under the Health Regulations the Nominated Supervisor, as the person in charge of the service, must notify a parent or guardian of a child and the Chief Health Officer, if the person in charge believes, on reasonable grounds:
 - That a child enrolled at the service either has a vaccine preventable disease, or

- Has not been immunised against a vaccine preventable disease and has been in contact with a person infected with the disease.
- 4.2 The following diseases are vaccine preventable diseases under the Health Regulations:
- Diphtheria
 - Haemophilus influenza type b (hib) infection
 - Measles
 - Poliomyelitis
 - Rubella (German measles)
 - Tetanus
 - Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
 - Hepatitis B.

5. ELC & SAC Management of Infectious Diseases

- 5.1 Under Health Regulations, a parent or guardian must not allow a child enrolled at service to attend the service if they have an infectious disease as outlined in Appendix 1 for the period specified. Penalties apply under the Health Regulations for failing to comply.
- 5.2 The Nominated Supervisor must not allow a child to attend the service if they have an infectious condition as outlined in Appendix 1 for the period specified. Penalties apply under the Health Regulations for failing to comply.
- 5.3 If there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at an education and care service, the Nominated Supervisor must ensure all reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of the infectious disease ([r88](#)). Specific steps include:
- Notifying a parent or emergency contact of each child as soon as practicable about the occurrence of an infectious disease
 - Posting notification signage in prominent locations at the service of the occurrence of the infectious disease
 - Implementing exclusion periods set out in Appendix 1.
- 5.4 All ELCs and SACs must implement procedures in line with the recommendations made by the NHMRC's [Staying Healthy, Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services](#) to manage the occurrence of an infectious condition.
- 5.5 The Nominated Supervisor must notify the ACT Chief Health Officer if a child or worker contracts particular diseases as outlined in Appendix 1: ACT List of Diseases with Exclusion Periods marked with a # symbol.
- 5.6 Notifications should be made by telephone as soon as possible: Telephone: 6205 2155.
- 5.7 The telephone advice should be followed up in writing by email: cdc@act.gov.au
- 5.8 Workers or parents of children who are partially vaccinated, unvaccinated or immunocompromised should consider self-exclusion during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.
- 5.9 The ELC or SAC may also require children or workers who are partially vaccinated, unvaccinated or immunocompromised to remain at home for a period during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, at the discretion of the ELC or SAC Nominated Supervisor.

- 5.10 Partially vaccinated, unvaccinated or immunocompromised children and workers are at a significantly increased risk of infection. Exclusion may be warranted because other children or workers may have contracted the illness but may not be diagnosed or exhibiting symptoms. Excluding people at higher risk of infection can reduce the risk of illness spreading, in line with the ELC's and SAC's obligations under the Health Regulations.

6. Record Keeping

- 6.1 Records of children's vaccination and health status must be retained for seven years after the child stops attending the ELC or SAC.

7. Definitions

- 7.1 **Regulation (r):** Education and Care Services National Regulations
7.2 **National Law (s):** Education and Care Services National Law Act.

8. Related Documents and Legislation

- 8.1 Related CECG Documents:
- [ELC and SAC First Aid Incident Injury Trauma and Illness Policy](#)
- 8.2 Related legislation or Standards
- [Staying Healthy, Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services](#)
 - [Public Health Regulation 2000 \(ACT\)](#)
 - [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)
 - [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
 - [National Quality Standard](#) (schedule to the Education and Care Services National Regulations)

9. Contact

- 9.1 For support or further questions relating to this policy, contact the CECG Early Learning Centre team.

10. Appendix 1 – ACT List of Diseases with Exclusion Periods

- 10.1 The Nominated Supervisor must notify the ACT Chief Health Officer if a child or worker contracts any disease marked with a hash symbol (#)
- 10.2 Medical practitioners must notify the ACT Chief Health Officer of any diseases marked with an asterisk (*).
- 10.3 Notifications should be made by telephone as soon as possible: Telephone: 6205 2155. The telephone advice should be followed up in writing by email: cdc@act.gov.au

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
Amoebiasis (entamoeba histolytica)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*Campylobacteriosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Chicken pox (varicella and herpes zoster)	Exclude until the last blister has scabbed over The child should not continue to be excluded only because of some remaining scabs	Not excluded Any child with an immune deficiency (eg with leukaemia, or because of receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection Urgent medical advice should be sought and varicella-zoster immunoglobulin (ZIG) administered if necessary
Conjunctivitis (acute infectious)	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases	Not excluded
#COVID-19	Exclude while symptoms persist. Refer to Health Direct for the most up to date recommendations.	Not excluded
*Cryptosporidiosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Diphtheria	Exclude until: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 2 negative throat swabs have been taken (the first not less than 24 hours after antibiotic treatment ceases and the second not less than 48 hours later); and a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease 	Exclude family and household contacts until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer
Giardiasis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*# <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (hib) infections	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease	Not excluded

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Exclude if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child is unwell; or • the child is drooling and not all blisters have dried, or an exposed weeping blister is not covered with a dressing 	Not excluded
*Hepatitis A	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusions should cease	Not excluded
#Hepatitis B	Not excluded	Not excluded
Herpes (cold sores)	Exclude young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices while the lesion is weeping. Lesion to be covered by a dressing in all cases, if possible	Not excluded
Impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has begun and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
*#Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appears	Immunised contacts not excluded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclude non-immunised contacts until 14 days after the first day of appearance of the rash in the index case • Non-immunised contacts immunised with measles vaccine within 72 hours after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being immunised • Non-immunised contacts who are given normal human immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 7 days after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being given NHIG
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has begun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not excluded if receiving rifampicin or other antibiotic

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
		<p>treatment recommended by the Chief Health Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Otherwise, excluded until 10 days after last contact with the index case
*#Mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms, or until parotid swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
*#Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days after the onset of symptoms and until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma	Exclude until effective treatment has begun	Not excluded
Rotavirus	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Rubella (German measles)	Exclude for 4 days after the appearance of the rash	<p>Not excluded</p> <p>Female staff of child-bearing age should ensure that their immune status against rubella is adequate</p>
*Salmonellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*Shigellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has recovered or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours	Not excluded
#Tetanus	Exclude until the person has recovered	Not excluded
*Tuberculosis	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
*Typhoid and paratyphoid fever	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not excluded unless the Chief Health Officer notifies the person in charge of the school If the Chief Health Officer gives notice, exclusion is subject to the conditions in the notice
*#Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from start of cough, or for at least 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer	Exclude non-immunised household, home-based care and close childcare contacts under 7 years old for 14 days after the last exposure to infection, or until 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer (whichever is sooner)

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
Worms (Intestinal)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*These conditions must be notified by medical practitioners to the Chief Health Officer #These conditions must be notified by the ELC or SAC Director to the ACT Chief Health Office		