

## Managing Illness Policy

### Rationale

Elsie Ey Children's Centre is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for its staff, children and visitors. Whilst providing services for children and adults, there will be times when illness occurs. Providing guidelines that incorporate policies and recommendations supports families and staff to understand their roles, responsibilities and expectations.

This policy will be used in conjunction with Health, DECD and NQF regulations and guidelines.

### Policy

This policy aims to ensure that all children and staff attending the centre are protected as much as practicable from disease and infection. It covers events such as sudden and temporary illness (see definition), temporary contagious condition as well as incidental soiling or "wetting" of clothing.

It considers the physical resources of the preschool (no "sick room" or bed, limited access to warm water for cleaning children/clothing nor access to medication). It also considers Child Protection issues around changing and cleaning of soiled children.

It does not apply to ongoing or permanent illnesses such as asthma, incontinence, allergies or other conditions of a permanent nature that can be managed through medical plans.

Any long term or permanent illness or condition should be discussed with the Director to organize an appropriate Health Management Plan to support the child's attendance at preschool.

### Definition

"illness": (for the purpose of this policy) refers to any **temporary** condition that affects a child's ability to participate in the preschool curriculum and/ or requires additional care or attention.

Illness includes:

- Influenza and influenza like illnesses
- Running noses where this is not able to be managed independently
- Earache, headache, stomach ache
- Temperature
- Bladder infection or loose bowels
- Gastro-enteritis
- Head lice infestation – before successful treatment ie while live eggs and/or lice are present
- Vomiting, diarrhoea within the last 24 hours
- Any illness or temporary condition that requires the application or administration of any medication or ointment during the preschool day
- Conjunctivitis
- When on a course of antibiotics for the first 24 hours of being medicated
- Any infectious disease – chicken pox, measles, etc.
- Any infectious skin complaint – school sores, ring worm etc
- Any illness where the child is unable to fully participate in the curriculum
- Excessive and/or continuous nose bleed ie a nose bleed that does not stop within a reasonable period of time
- Or any illness or temporary condition where the child would require additional supervision or care, without this first being negotiated with the Director

It excludes:

- Asthma
- Eczema – or other ongoing skin complaints
- Allergies or sensitivities
- Any ongoing, long term or chronic condition that requires care

These exclusions and some other illnesses and or conditions will require Health Management Plans and/or Medication Permission forms to be completed by parent, director and doctor to ensure the child's health can be managed appropriately by the staff in the preschool. It will sometimes also include negotiations with the department and/or others to ensure an appropriate level of training and/ or health care support is provided. Any medication required (negotiated through this process) will need to be kept on site, with appropriate permission forms.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD BECOMES ILL?

In the event of a child becoming ill at the preschool, staff will initially monitor the child's participation and behaviour. If concerned staff will contact the family using the emergency contacts provided on enrolment. As staff have basic first aid training, the decision to contact the family will be based on their observations and history of the child. It is therefore important that parent/carer inform staff of ANY (daily) medical concerns or medical history that may help staff. For

example, if your child regularly suffers from vomiting, headache, hay fever, earache, nose bleeds etc this information could be discussed to determine the preferred course of action.

If staff are significantly concerned an ambulance will be called.

As with anything at preschool, any concerns or preferences should be discussed with the Director.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD SOILS AT PRESCHOOL?

In the event of a child soiling/wetting themselves at preschool, the child will be encouraged to change themselves (in a private area) and place soiled clothing in a plastic bag for collection by the parent/carer. If the child is particularly messy, distressed or upset, the parent will be contacted. For Child Protection reasons if a child should require adult support with cleaning, staff will inform other staff members of the situation and ensure clear visibility, or two staff will be present to support the child. In most cases children will be supported, guided and encouraged to develop their own self help skills in toileting and managing instances of soiling/wetting. Unfortunately due to lack of facilities clothing cannot be washed or cleaned prior to bagging, as this could pose a health risk (using sinks unsuitable for this purpose). Every effort will be made to inform parents of the incident. There are times when children at kindy have Contenance and/or Toileting Plans developed between staff, parents and other professionals.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

- Inform staff of any illness or condition and provide any documentation as may be required.
- Ensure an Authority to Administer Medication form is completed if medication is required at preschool this is available via the DECD website
- Consider the health of all and keep home any child with a contagious illness.
- Support children with appropriate toileting strategies as required and share these with staff.
- Let us know if you are concerned about your child's health at any time.
- Consider appropriate insurance to cover medical and ambulance where possible.
- Discuss any medical concerns or preferences with the Director.
- Ensure emergency contact information is provided and advise staff promptly of any changes.

## WHAT WILL STAFF DO?

- Staff are not able to administer any medication without a health care / medication plan in place. A link to the appropriate Authority to Administer Medication is available via the DECD website and will be the form staff refer to when administering medication.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring Child Protection Principles are considered when managing an incident that may require changing of a child.
- Staff will support children in developing appropriate hygiene practices to help manage control of disease and illness, including washing hands before eating and after toileting, putting tissues in the bin etc.
- Staff will include "being healthy" as part of the curriculum.
- Staff will regularly plan experiences that include aspects of the Child Protection Curriculum.
- In the event that staff believe a child is unwell due to the child approaching staff and/or changes in the child's behaviour and with the absence of any physical symptoms and/or the child can continue to participate in the preschool program staff will:
  - Contact families to inform and gather any additional information
  - Encourage child to participate in a quieter area of the preschool
  - Encourage child to try and have a drink or something to eat, or to go to the toilet
  - Monitor – regularly check on the child's well being, at least once every ½ hour
  - Encourage child to lay in a quiet area and rest
  - Document concerns
  - Inform the responsible person
- In the event staff believe a child to be unwell or injured and unable to participate in the preschool program staff will:
  - Administer 1<sup>st</sup> aid
  - Seek support from responsible person
  - Contact ambulance if required
  - Contact family using emergency contact information to inform and request the child be picked up
  - Document incident
  - Monitor throughout checking on child at least once every 15 minutes or remaining with the child depending upon the severity of the illness or injury.