

# **Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus Outside School Hours Care**



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## **POLICY DOCUMENT**

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### **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) MANAGEMENT**

## BACKGROUND

COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that was originally identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. The World Health Organization (WHO), has declared that COVID-19 outbreak as a 'pandemic'- a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (effective 11 March 2020). This is mainly due to the speed and scale of transmission of the virus in countries around the world, including Australia. COVID-19 is transmitted from someone who is infected with the virus to others in close contact through contaminated droplets spread by coughing or sneezing or by contact with contaminated hands or surfaces. According to the Department of Health, the time of exposure to the virus and when symptoms first occur is anywhere from 2-14 days.

Symptoms can range from a mild illness, similar to a cold or flu, to pneumonia. People with COVID-19 may experience:

- Fever
- Flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue
- Shortness of breath

## POLICY STATEMENT

The Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus OSHC Service stakeholders will aim to minimise children's exposure to COVID-19 by adhering to all recommended guidelines from the Australian Government-Department of Health and local Public Health Units to slow the spread of the virus. We will implement practices that help to reduce the transmission of the virus including the exclusion of any person (child, educator, staff, parent, visitor or volunteer) that is suspected or has tested positive to having COVID-19. Our Service will implement effective hygiene practices as per our existing policies and procedures. Our Service will provide up-to-date information and advice to parents, families and educators sourced from the Australian Government, Department of Health and state Ministry of Health about COVID-19 as it becomes available. Recommendations and health measures mandated by the Health Department will always be strictly adhered to.

Our Service is constantly monitoring health alerts and implementing measures suggested by key health experts to minimise the transmission of COVID-19. Our Service has a range of comprehensive policies in place to guide best practice in relation to health and safety, dealing with infectious diseases and maintaining a child safe environment. Our duty of care and responsibilities to children, parents, families and all staff to provide a safe environment is of utmost importance. The evolving nature of COVID-19 and the unprecedented steps required to protect our community as recommended by the Australian Government, has resulted in the development of a specific policy to assist our Service manage this pandemic. This policy will change as required to ensure the protective management

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

| Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety |                                   |   |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 2.1  | Health                            | Each child's health is supported  |
| 2.1.1  | Wellbeing and comfort             | Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation   |
| 2.1.2  | Health practices and procedures   | Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines. Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented |
| 2.2  | Safety                            | Each child is protected   |
| 2.2.2  | Incident and emergency management | Plans to effectively manage incident and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities and implemented.   |

## EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

| Children (Education and Care Services) National Law |   |
|---|---|
| 77  | Health, hygiene and safe food practices                         |
| 85  | Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures    |
| 86  | Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness |
| 87  | Incident, injury, trauma and illness record                     |
| 88  | Infectious diseases   |
| 90  | Medical Conditions Policy                                       |
| 93  | Administration of Medication                                    |
| 162   | Health information to be kept in enrolment record               |

## RELATED POLICIES

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| First Aid                            |
| Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness |
| Infectious Diseases and Infestations |
| Medical Conditions                   |
| Sick children                        |
| Interactions with children           |

## HOW THE POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED.

Our Service is committed to minimise the spread of the COVID-19 virus by implementing recommendations provided by the Australian Government- Department of Health.

Our Service implements procedures as stated in the Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (Fifth Edition) developed by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council as part of our day-to-day operation of the Service.

We are guided by explicit decisions regarding exclusion periods and notification of any infectious disease by the Australian Government- Department of Health and local Public Health Units in our jurisdiction under the **Public Health Act**. COVID-19 is a notifiable condition in all states and territories of Australia.

In the event of any child, educator, staff member or visitor attending our Service who is suspected or confirmed to have the infection, the Approved Provider will contact their Public Health Unit.

|   |
|---|
| National Coronavirus (COVID-19) Health Information Line   |
| <b>1800 020 080</b>   |
| Call 131 450 for translating and interpreting service   |
| <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/local-state-and-territory-health-departments">https://www.health.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/local-state-and-territory-health-departments</a> |

### *Minimising the transmission of COVID-19*

Effective 15 March 2020, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee has made recommendations to the general public to help manage the spread of COVID-19. These measures include implementing good hygiene, self-isolation and social distancing.

Our Service will ensure hand hygiene posters and procedures (including alcohol-based hand sanitiser) and information about COVID-19 is clearly displayed at the front entry and communicated to families through email, newsletters and social media. Alcohol-based hand sanitiser will be kept out of reach of young children and only available for adults to use. If parents decide to apply this to their child, they must supervise the child to avoid rubbing it into their eyes or a child swallowing the gel/liquid.

Information provided to families may include:

- Symptoms of COVID-19
- Transmission of the virus
- Self-isolation and exclusion
- Prevention strategies- including hygiene and self-isolation
- Contact details for health assistance

Our Service will supply disposable tissues and have bins available with plastic liners available in several locations for disposing used items.

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, families and visitors will comply with the following:

### *Exclusion/ Self-isolation/ Quarantine*

- Any person entering Australia from any destination, is required to follow the current government guidelines.
- Any person entering South Australia, is required to follow the current government guidelines.
- Any person who has been in close contact with someone who has a positive diagnosis, or suspected diagnosis of the virus, is required to follow the current government guidelines.
- Household members of a person (including children) who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 must be isolated from the childcare Service and general public.
- The Public Health Unit will provide further information on a case-by-case basis as to the length and place of isolation. ([see: COVID-19 home isolation](#))
- Families must immediately advise the Service if they, or anyone in their family, develops any symptoms of the virus or receives a positive result of the virus whilst in isolation.
- Any person (employee, enrolled child, parent, caregiver, visitor or contractor) who is displaying symptoms such as: fever, coughing, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath, must seek urgent medical attention to determine if they need to be tested for COVID-19 and not attend our Service under any circumstance, **and if returning to care must provide a doctor's clearance.**
- A medical certificate is not required to return to care following 14 days of isolation.

### *Implement effective hygiene measures*

The national campaign Help Stop the Spread and Stay Healthy, launched by the Australian Government has emphasised that effective handwashing is a vital strategy to help reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds whenever you cough, sneeze or blow your nose, prepare food or eat, touch your face or use the toilet is recommended.

Our Service will adhere to National Regulation requirements, and Government guidelines to ensure all educators, children, families and visitors to the Service implement best practice.

Our Service will ensure:

- All employees, parents, children and visitors must wash their hands with soap and water or use the alcohol-based hand sanitiser provided upon arrival to the service (Children) under the supervision of an educator.
- Hands must be thoroughly dried using disposal paper and disposed of in the bin provided.
- Disposable tissues must be used to wipe noses, eyes or mouths and disposed of in the bin provided immediately after use.
- Hands must be washed following the use of tissues.
- Hands must be washed thoroughly using soap and water before and after using the toilet.
- Cough and sneeze etiquette must be used- cover your cough and sneeze into a tissue or elbow.
- Children are supervised when washing hands.
- Educators and staff must adhere to effective food preparation and food handling procedures.
- Educators will wash their hands or use alcohol based sanitiser, before wearing gloves and wash their hands after wearing gloves.
- Educators and staff must adhere to our Health and Safety Policy for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and equipment (such as toys, puzzles, outdoor toys, bedding, playdough etc) as per *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services Recommendations*.

- equipment, resources and surfaces including taps, door handles etc will be cleaned after every session (or more frequently as required) using detergent and water followed by disinfectant
- cleaning contractors hygienically clean the Service to ensure risk of contamination is removed as per [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Principles for COVID-19](#)

According to the World Health Organisation, COVID-19 may survive on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. (March 14, 2020)

### *Social distancing in OSHC*

Social distancing is important because COVID-19 is most likely spread from person-to-person through close contact with a person while they are infectious, close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes or from touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection and then touching your nose or mouth. (source: Australian Government Department of Health. Coronavirus disease)

To reduce the spread of germs:

- If your child is sick, do not send them to our Service.
- Do not visit our Service if you or another family member is unwell.
- Sanitise your hands at regular intervals throughout the day and when entering our Service.
- Avoid physical contact with other people who may be sick- such as older people and people with existing health conditions.
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces regularly (door handles, light switches, toys, mobile phones).
- Promote strictest hygiene measures when preparing food at home and at the Service.
- Where possible, outdoor play will be promoted within our Service to provide children with additional personal space.
- Large groups will be monitored to provide flexible learning to ensure groups are smaller in both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Ventilation within the Service will be increased.
- Contact parents of children who have chronic medical conditions or immunosuppression as they may be at an increased risk of disease and require additional support/care.

### *Suspected cases of COVID-19 at our Service*

As per our *Sick Child Policy* we reserve the right to refuse a child into care if:

- We have reasonable grounds to believe that a child has a contagious or infectious disease (this includes COVID-19).
- Are unwell and unable to participate in normal activities or require additional attention.
- They have had a temperature/fever or vomiting in the last 24 hours.
- They have had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours.
- they have been given medication for a temperature prior to arriving to our Service.
- they have started a course of anti-biotics in the last 24 hours.

If your child becomes ill whilst at the Service, educators/staff will respond to their individual symptoms of illness and provide comfort and care. Educators will take your child's temperature. If the temperature is above **38°C** you will be contacted immediately and **required to collect your child within 30 minutes**. If you are unable to collect your child, an emergency contact person will be contacted, and they must collect your child within 30 minutes.

Educators will attempt to lower your child's temperature by:

- Removing excessive clothing (shoes, socks, jumpers).
- Encourage your child to take small sips of water.
- Move your child to a quiet area where they can rest whilst being supervised.
- Educators will wear disposable gloves and a face mask to avoid possible contamination.
- Educators will keep accurate records of the child's temperature, time taken, time parent/s were contacted, staff member's name and time of collection.
- All information will be recorded in our Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Record. Parents will be required to sign this record upon collection of their child.

Parents are reminded to ensure their contact details are current and emergency contact details are updated if required. Our Service also reserves the right to prevent employees, parents, family members or visitors to enter our premises if the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor suspects instances of COVID-19.

#### *Notification*

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor is mandated by law to notify the Public Health Unit or [Health Information hotline](#) on 1800 020 080 of any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. In addition, the Approved Provider must also notify the [Regulatory Authority](#) in their state or territory within 24 hours.

Management reserves the right to request employees to self-isolate if they suspect they have come into contact with someone who has a confirmed COVID-19 infection.

#### *Talking to children about COVID-19*

As per our Interactions with Children Policy, our Service is committed to maintaining positive interactions and relationships with children and their families. Information provided to children about COVID-19 will be age appropriate and sensitive to their emotional wellbeing. Educators will both acknowledge children's concerns and be open to discussions about COVID-19.

Educators will:

- inform children about the virus and emphasise preventative measures such as handwashing, use of tissues, cough and sneeze techniques and limiting touching other children's faces
- display posters to demonstrate correct handwashing methods will be referred to and educators will model techniques.
- closely monitor children's emotional well-being and any concerns communicated with families
- respect and support children's questions

In the event of the Service being closed as a precaution to limit the spread of the virus, information will be provided to parents/families to help explain the situation to young children.

### *What happens if our Service is forced to close?*

The decision to close our Service will be made, and advised, by relevant state and territory governments or the Regulatory Authority. This may be due to a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our Service community.

Should this occur, all families will be notified immediately via email or phone.

The Approved Provider will notify the [Regulatory Authority](#) within 24 hours of any closure via the [NQA IT System](#).

### *Staff entitlements if sick or suspected to have COVID-19*

Under workplace health and safety laws, our Service must ensure the health and safety of all employees.

### *Confirmed COVID-19*

If an educator or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, they are unable to attend the workplace and cannot return unless they have a **clearance from a General Practitioner of Public Health Unit**.

Full and part-time employees who cannot attend work due to illness can take paid sick leave.

### *Caring for a family member or emergency*

If an employee cannot attend work due to caring for a family member due to COVID-19, they are entitled to take paid carer's leave. Casual employees are eligible to have 2 days unpaid carer's leave per occasion. See Fair Work Act for entitlements for casual, part time and full-time employees.

### *Self-isolation due to travel*

As per Australian Government's new measures for COVID-19, any person returning from interstate must self-isolate for at least 14 days. The employee is not entitled to be paid (unless they use paid leave entitlements).

### *Self-Isolation directed by Service*

Where an employee is directed to stay home and self-isolate, and the employee is not sick and able to work, our Service will continue to pay the employee as per their contract.

Should our Service be requested to close for a period of time due to COVID-19, permanent employees will be paid.

### *Self-isolation as a precaution*

If an employee wants to stay home as a precaution of contracting COVID-19 they may negotiate to take unpaid leave, annual leave or long service leave with Management.

### *Waivers*

In the event of staff members requiring to self-isolate due to possible infection of COVID-19, the Approved Provider will apply to the Regulatory Authority for waivers for qualifications and/or ratios to minimise disruptions to our provision of care.

### *Community Child Care Fund Special Circumstance Grant Opportunity*

To ensure services impacted by COVID-19 can continue to operate and provide continuity of care, in communities, Services can access funding to help cover business costs, including wages. The amount of funding will be determined on a case-by-case basis and includes Family Day Care educators. Further information is available through the [CCCF Special Circumstances Grant Opportunity webpage](#).

### *Communicating with families*

Due to the fluid nature of COVID-19 and the necessity of self-isolation for some staff members, our Service will endeavour to inform parents and families of any staff changes on a daily basis. Staff who have approved leave will be replaced with casual staff and families will be informed as per our usual practices to ensure continuity of care where possible.

### *Caring for our community*

We understand that the outbreak of COVID-19 and the constant amount of information received through the media may be very stressful to young children and parents. The anxiety about this disease may be overwhelming and cause fear and anxiety to some people, especially children.

Our Service is committed to continue to provide quality education and care to all children and support families responsibly during this unprecedented challenge with the COVID-19 outbreak.

Knowing how to look after yourself, and others is very important during this crisis.

We will promote a safe and supportive environment by:

- Reassuring children they are safe.
- Acknowledging and listening to children's questions.
- Promoting and implementing hygiene routines for handwashing and cough and sneezing.
- Keeping regular and familiar routines within our Service.
- Ensuring children eat well throughout the day.
- Engaging children in play, games and other physical activities.
- Being alert to children's level of anxiety and provide quiet and relaxing activities.
- Ensuring children are provided with rest and sleep when needed.
- Providing information to families and support services as required.

Dr Michelle Dickinson- Video for kids about COVID-19

<https://youtu.be/OPsY-jLqaXM>

### *More information and resources*

[UNICEF- How to talk to your child about COVID-19](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) frequently asked questions](#)

[Information for people with a suspected case](#)

[Home Isolation Information](#)

[Information for employers](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) resources](#)

[Local state and territory health departments](#)

[Information on Social distancing](#)

[Recently travelled overseas Poster](#)

[Simple Steps to Help Stop the Spread Poster](#)

## SOURCES

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Health [Health Topics Coronavirus COVID-19](#)

Australian Government Fair Work Ombudsman Coronavirus and Australian workplace laws (updated 13 March 2020) <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/coronavirus-and-australianworkplace-laws>

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment Information for child care providers and services <https://docs-edu.govcms.gov.au/node/53362>

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020)

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services.*

Public Health Act 2010

Public Health Amendment Act 2017

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019

Victoria Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

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**(Chairperson)**

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**(Date Reviewed)**

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**(Principal)**

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**(Date Reviewed)**