

Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus Outside School Hours Care



POLICY DOCUMENT

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

COVID-19 is a strain of coronavirus that was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in late 2019. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared it a pandemic and a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 11 March 2020 due to rapid global transmission.

COVID-19 spreads from an infected person to others through close contact, particularly via respiratory droplets produced by coughing, sneezing, or talking, as well as through contact with contaminated hands or surfaces. People with COVID-19 can experience a range of symptoms, from mild illness similar to a cold or flu to more serious respiratory conditions. Common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough, sore throat, fatigue
- Shortness of breath

In Australia, COVID-19 continues to be monitored as a notifiable condition, and public health advice focuses on staying home when unwell, practicing good hygiene, and seeking medical guidance when needed.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus OSHC Service is committed to minimising children's exposure to COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses by following current public health advice from the Australian Government Department of Health and local Public Health Units.

Our Service will:

- Implement practices to reduce transmission, including encouraging any child, educator, staff member, parent, visitor, or volunteer who is unwell or symptomatic to stay home.
- Maintain effective hygiene practices as per existing policies and procedures, including handwashing, respiratory etiquette, and cleaning routines.
- Provide up-to-date information and guidance to parents, families, and educators from official sources such as the Department of Health, state health authorities, and local Public Health Units.
- Follow current public health advice and recommendations to protect children, staff, and the wider community.

Our Service continually monitors health alerts and implements guidance from health experts to minimise transmission within the OSHC environment. Comprehensive policies guide best practice in relation to:

- Health and safety
- Management of infectious diseases
- Maintaining a child-safe environment

Our duty of care to children, families, and staff remains a priority. This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the latest public health guidance, ensuring the ongoing protection and wellbeing of our OSHC community.

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 minimising the spread of COVID-19 by implementing recommendations provided by the Australian Government – Department of Health.

Day-to-day operations follow procedures outlined in *Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care (Fifth Edition)*, developed by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

Exclusion periods and notifications for any infectious disease, including COVID-19, are guided by directions from the Department of Health and local Public Health Units, in accordance with the Public Health Act.

For further guidance or information:

- **Australian Government – Department of Health (COVID-19 information & updates):** <https://www.health.gov.au/topics/covid-19>
- **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) – for language support:** 131 450

Minimising the transmission of COVID-19

Our Service supports public health advice to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses. Key measures include practising good hygiene and staying home if unwell.

Our Service will:

- Display hand hygiene posters.
- Communicate relevant information to families through emails, newsletters, and social media.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitiser for use by adults only, kept out of reach of young children. Parents who choose to apply sanitiser to their child must supervise use to prevent accidental eye contact or ingestion.

Additionally, our Service provides disposable tissues and bins with plastic liners in multiple locations for safe disposal, supporting good hygiene and reducing the risk of transmission.

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

Exclusion

To protect the health and safety of children, families, and staff, our Service follows current government and public health advice regarding COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses.

- Any person (child, educator, staff member, parent, caregiver, visitor, or contractor) who is unwell or displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, or shortness of breath is required to stay home and not attend the Service until symptoms have resolved.
- Families must notify the Service if they, or anyone in their household, test positive for COVID-19 or develop related symptoms.
- The Service encourages good hygiene, including handwashing and respiratory etiquette, to reduce transmission risks within the OSHC environment.
- All procedures will be updated in line with current public health advice, ensuring the Service remains a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and staff.

Implement effective hygiene measures

Effective handwashing and hygiene are essential strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses. Our Service follows guidance from the **Australian Government, National Regulations**, and **Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care (Fifth Edition)** to ensure all educators, children, families, and visitors implement best practice.

Our Service will ensure:

- All employees, parents, children, and visitors wash hands with soap and water or use the alcohol-based hand sanitiser provided upon arrival. Children are supervised by educators when washing hands.
- Hands are thoroughly dried using disposable paper towels and disposed of immediately.
- Disposable tissues are used to wipe noses, eyes, or mouths and are disposed of in bins immediately after use, with hands washed afterward.
- Hands are washed before and after using the toilet, preparing or eating food, or touching the face.
- Cough and sneeze etiquette is practiced: cover the mouth or nose with a tissue or elbow.
- Educators and staff follow effective food preparation and handling procedures, including washing hands before and after wearing gloves.
- All equipment, resources, and surfaces (toys, puzzles, bedding, outdoor equipment, taps, door handles, etc.) are cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Cleaning contractors maintain hygienic standards according to Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Principles for COVID-19.

Good hygiene and cleaning practices remain critical because viruses like COVID-19 can survive on surfaces for hours or days, depending on conditions, making regular cleaning essential to reduce transmission risk.

Social distancing in OSHC

COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses are most commonly spread through close contact with an infectious person, respiratory droplets from coughing or sneezing, or by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the nose, mouth, or eyes.

To help reduce the spread of germs, our Service will implement the following measures:

- Children who are unwell should not attend the Service.
- Families and visitors who are unwell or have household members who are unwell should avoid visiting the Service.
- Regular hand sanitising throughout the day, including on arrival.
- High-touch surfaces (door handles, light switches, toys, mobile phones, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Strict hygiene practices will be promoted when preparing food, both at the Service and at home.
- Outdoor play will be prioritised where possible to provide additional personal space.
- Group sizes will be monitored to allow flexible learning and reduce crowding indoors and outdoors.
- Ventilation within the Service will be optimised to improve airflow.

These measures complement existing hygiene and health practices and are designed to maintain a safe environment for children, families, and staff.

Suspected cases of COVID-19 at our Service

Our Service follows the Sick Child Policy and reserves the right to refuse entry to a child if:

- There are reasonable grounds to believe the child has a contagious or infectious illness, including COVID-19.
- The child is unwell, unable to participate in normal activities, or requires additional attention.
- The child has had a temperature/fever or vomiting in the last 24 hours.
- The child has had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours.
- The child has been given medication for a temperature prior to arrival.
- The child has started a course of antibiotics in the last 24 hours.

Responding to Illness at the Service

If a child becomes unwell while at the Service:

- Educators/staff will respond to the child's symptoms and provide comfort and care.
- The child's **temperature will be taken**. If it is above **38°C**, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and required to collect.

Educators may attempt to lower the child's temperature by:

- Removing **excessive clothing** (shoes, socks, jumpers)
- Encouraging the child to take **small sips of water**
- Moving the child to a **quiet, supervised area** to rest
- Wearing **disposable gloves and a face mask** to reduce the risk of contamination

Accurate records will be maintained, including:

- Child's temperature and time recorded
- Time parents/guardians were contacted
- Staff member's name
- Time of child collection

All information will be documented in the Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Record, which parents are required to sign upon collection.

Additional Precautions

- Parents/guardians must ensure their contact details and emergency contacts are current.
- The Service reserves the right to deny entry to employees, parents, family members, or visitors if the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor suspects COVID-19 or another infectious illness.

RESOURCES

The following resources guide our OSHC Service in managing COVID-19 and infectious diseases:

Government & Public Health

- Australian Government Department of Health – COVID-19: Guidance on symptoms, prevention, testing, and public health advice. health.gov.au
- Fair Work – COVID-19: Workplace guidance for staff. coronavirus.fairwork.gov.au
- Department of Education – Child Care Guidance: COVID-19 information for OSHC services. dese.gov.au/covid-19/childcare

Legislation & Regulations

- Public Health Act 2011 & Amendment Act 2021 – Legal framework for infectious disease control.
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 – Supports public health measures.
- Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations (2017) – OSHC compliance framework.
- National Quality Standard Guide (2020) – Service quality and safety standards.

Early Childhood Health & Safety

- NHMRC – Staying Healthy (5th Edition, 2012) – Hygiene and infectious disease management for early childhood services.
- ACECQA (2014) – Guidance for staff responsibilities and OSHC compliance.

School Board reviews and develops policies that consider our context, regulations, and standards.

Principal's Signature

PAUL BENNETT

DATE

OSHC Director

DIANE GRIGUOL

Ratified by the OSHC Management Committee

Chairperson's Signature

DATE
