

Illness Policy

Reference: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, regulation 45, 46, 57
Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008, HS26-27, PF19, PF21
Ministry of Health, 1997, *Nga Kupu Oranga, Healthy Messages, a health and safety resource for early childhood services.*
Canterbury District Health Board, Early Childhood Information Pack Pg 31-35

Rationale: At Little Explorers we recognize that consistent good health and wellbeing can positively affect a child's learning and development. While most children are likely to experience illness at some stage during their time at Little Explorers due to the nature of early learning centres, we believe that if children are unwell they are better to be away from the centre where they can rest and recuperate. When children are unwell at the centre we take preventative measures to prevent the illness spreading to other children and teachers.

Objectives:

- To reduce the risk of an illness spreading within the centre, prior, during and after illnesses have occurred.
- To ensure the health and well-being of every person in the centre is respected.

Procedures:

If a child becomes ill in the centre

- When a child or staff member becomes ill they will be sent home as soon as possible. They will be recommended to stay home until well again.
- If a child is unable to go home immediately they will be kept in the office or parents/staff room away from others. When not possible due to staffing the child will be seated on the couch away from others. They will be monitored and an appropriate treatment will be administered, for example, tepid sponging, the removal of clothing, drinks of water and comforting if necessary.
- Parents will be contacted immediately and advised to seek medical advice, then asked to ring the centre to inform us of the confirmed illness. If parents are unavailable the child's emergency contact will be notified.
- Other parents will be informed of infectious illnesses in the centre through whiteboard notices or laminated cards displayed in the appropriate place and via e-mail and Facebook updates.
- **Staff may seek immediate assistance from a doctor or paramedic if you notice a child who:**

General

- has been ill, or is ill and seems to be getting much worse
- cannot be woken or is responding less than usual to what is going on around them
- has glazed eyes and is not focusing on anything

- seems more floppy, sleepy or less alert than usual
- has a seizure or fit (unless they are already known to have fits or seizures and the parent/ caregiver and centre have discussed what to do)
- has an unusual cry that lasts for one hour or more
- has a severe stomach pain that makes them bend over and scream or cry
- has been badly injured
- has stomach pain without vomiting or diarrhoea after a fall, a blow or injury
- has fallen and knocked their head and appears dazed, or was knocked out for any length of time

Temperature

- feels too cold or too hot (a temperature of 38.3 degrees or more)

Circulation and skin colour

- body is much paler than usual or suddenly turns very blue or white
- nails are blue or big toe is completely white and after squeezing the toe, normal colour takes more than three seconds to return
- has a rash which covers a large part of the body
- has a blood-red or purple rash of tiny spots or bruises, but has not been injured
- goes blue

Breathing

- goes blue or stops breathing
- breathes more quickly than normal or grunts when breathing
- makes a wheezing noise when breathing out
- breathes so fast and hard that they cannot speak, eat, cry or play
- skin below the ribs sucks in as the child breathes

Vomiting and diarrhea

- has vomited at least half of the last three feeds
- has green vomit
- has feces that are black or bloody
- has vomiting and diarrhea together, is refusing fluids and has passed less urine than usual.

Preventing transmission of illnesses

- All staff will remain a high standard of hygiene to prevent transmission of illnesses.
- Children and staff need to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer:
 - Before and after preparing, handling, serving food or eating.
 - After using the toilet, helping a child to use the toilet or changing nappies.
 - After blowing their nose or helping a child to blow their nose.
 - After touching a pet or other animals
 - After handling rubbish.

- Children will be taught through role-modelling to wash their hands carefully and not to rush. Making sure that around nails, between fingers and the backs of hands are included in the washing. Staff will also ensure that children thoroughly dry their hands.
- Paper towels are used for drying hands and then discarded.
- Soap will be readily available and used at all times.
- Babies' hands will be wiped regularly throughout the day.
- Staff will encourage children to independently wash hands through role-modelling, posters and chants.
- Disposable gloves will be worn:
 - Whenever dealing with faeces, urine or blood
 - If skin is cut or non-intact (e.g. chapped or dermatitis)
 - The children's feelings will be taken into account to avoid any feeling of rejection by the child by a staff member wearing them.
- Children should stay away from the centre when they are ill and causing concern or:
 - Have little interest in activities or play
 - Have little energy, want or need to sleep or rest for long periods
 - Cry easily, are irritable or in pain
 - Constantly want to be held or comforted
 - Have a fever. Above 38.3 degrees.
 - Any child with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away until symptoms cease and they are well, 48 hours after last symptom.
- Educators along with children can not attend when they have a contagious illness or when their sickness affects their ability to perform their required duties.
- Parents, whānau members or any other person with an infectious or contagious condition or disease will be excluded from the centre, this may mean a child is greeted at the gate to prevent a person from entering if the child in immediate contact is cleared to attend by a doctor.
- The management team may exclude a child from the centre that is unwell and require doctor's diagnosis prior to the child returning.
- The health schedule is situated in the *Nga Kupu Oranga* file with individual illnesses being highlighted to parents when they are present in the centre. Page 31 lists the illnesses and the recommended absences; these are the guidelines that Little Explorers abide by. Children that have an infectious disease must remain away from the centre until they have doctor's clearance to return, have had the recommended exclusion period as listed in the *Nga Kupu Oranga* Pages 15-18 or have been approved to return to the centre by centre management.
- Illnesses are recorded in the centre diary.
- A computerised immunisation register is held and updated regularly at the centre. This must be sighted on enrolment or at the age of 15 months if they enrolled prior to being 15 months old. The decision to immunise a child is up to the parents and whānau and the centre will respect that but the centre needs to be aware of the child immunisation status so that immediate contact can be made should an outbreak occur.
- During the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease staff will increase the frequency of cleaning and the strength of the cleaning products used.

Headlice

- When a staff member notices a child has headlice, their parents will be contacted for pick-up and treatment as soon as possible. Prior to pick up staff will try to eliminate as much head to head contact with other children as possible. The parent will be given the Ministry of Health guidelines for treating headlice. The child is then able to return the following morning after treatment. If live lice are again noticed the parent will be contacted again for further treatment.
- All children with long hair will be requested to have their hair tied up while at the centre.
- Other parents will be notified with a notice on the door to prompt them to check their child when an incident occurs
- Regular prompting in the centre newsletter
- Centre floors are vacuumed daily
- Dress-up are washed regularly
- Sharing of hats will be discouraged
- All children will have individual bedding

Existing Conditions

- It is the parent's responsibility to inform staff of any existing conditions their child has on enrolment or should a condition develop subsequently e.g. asthma, allergies. Staff should be advised of any special medical treatment that may be required. All staff will be made aware of children's needs or allergies. A list of allergies is displayed in both kitchens and updated as required. If children require continuous medication this is to be recorded on the continuous medication form in the health and safety file.
- Parents need to update staff if the condition changes and the treatment or plan changes.
- Staff need to read information on the child's condition when they become aware of it and to inform other staff members. Read: *Nga Kupu Oranga* Pages 40-46 or source information from the parents or a doctor.

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