

INCIDENT, INJURY, TRAUMA & ILLNESS POLICY

The health and safety of all staff, children, families and visitors to Highland Grove Preschool is of the utmost importance. We aim to reduce the likelihood of incidents, illness, accidents and trauma through implementing comprehensive risk management, effective hygiene practices and the ongoing professional development of all staff to respond quickly and effectively to any incident or accident.

We acknowledge that in early education and care services, illness and disease can spread easily from one child to another, even when implementing the recommended hygiene and infection control practices. Our service aims to minimise illnesses by adhering to all recommended guidelines from relevant government authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases and adhere to exclusion periods recommended by public health units.

When groups of children play together and are in new surroundings accidents and illnesses may occur. Our Service is committed to effectively manage our physical environment to allow children to experience challenging situations whilst preventing serious injuries.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS

Sec.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 174	Offence to fail to notify the regulatory authority
12	Meaning of serious incident

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
89	First aid kits
90	Medical conditions policy
93	Administration of medication
95	Procedure for administration of medication
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care Service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
176	Time to notify certain circumstances to regulatory authority
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents

PURPOSE

Highland Grove has a duty of care to respond to and manage illnesses, accidents, incidents, and trauma that may occur at the centre to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, educators, staff and visitors. This policy will guide educators and staff to manage illness and prevent injury and the spread of infectious diseases and provide guidance of the required action to be taken in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness occurring when a child is educated and cared for.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, management, students, volunteers and visitors to Highland Grove.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for incident, injury, trauma and illness and take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. (ACECQA, 2021). In the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness all staff will implement the guidelines set out in this policy to adhere to National Law and Regulations and inform the regulatory authority as required.

Highland Grove implements risk management planning to identify any possible risks and hazards to our learning environment and practices. Where possible, we have eliminated or minimised these risks as is reasonably practicable.

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

INJURY, INCIDENT OR TRAUMA

In the event of any child, educator, staff, volunteer or visitor having an accident at the Service, an educator who has a First Aid Certificate will attend to the person immediately. Adequate supervision will be provided to all children attending the Service.

Any workplace incident, injury or trauma will be investigated, and records kept as per WHS legislation and guidelines.

DEFINITION OF A SERIOUS INCIDENT

Regulations require the approved provider or nominated supervisor to notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident at the Service through the [NQA IT System](#)

A serious incident (Reg. 12) is defined as any of the following:

a) the death of a child:

- (i) while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service or
- (ii) following an incident while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service.

(b) any incident involving serious injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service, which:

- (i) a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner or

(ii) for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital. For example: whooping cough, broken limb and anaphylaxis reaction

(c) any incident or emergency where the attendance of emergency services at the Education and Care Service premises was sought, or ought reasonably to have been sought (e.g.: severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis)

(d) any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service

(i) appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for *or*

(ii) appears to have been taken or removed from the Education and Care Service premises in a manner that contravenes these regulations *or*

(iii) is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the Education and Care Service premises or any part of the premises.

A serious incident should be documented as an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident, with any evidence attached.

INCIDENT, INJURY, TRAUMA AND ILLNESS RECORD

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* record contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for at the service. The record will include:

- name and age of the child
- circumstances leading to the incident, injury, illness
- time and date the incident occurred, the injury was received, or the child was subjected to trauma
- details of any illness which becomes apparent while the child is being cared for including any symptoms, time and date of the onset of the illness
- details of the action taken by the educator including any medication administered, first aid provided, or medical professionals contacted
- details of any person who witnessed the incident, injury or trauma
- names of any person the educator notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this
- signature of the person making the entry, and the time and date the record was made

Educators are required to complete documentation of any incident, injury or trauma that occurs when a child is being educated and cared for by the centre. This includes recording incidences of biting, scratching, dental or mouth injury. Due to Confidentiality and Privacy laws, only the name of the child injured will be recorded on the *Incident, Injury, Trauma or Illness Record*. Any other child/ren involved in the incident will not have their names recorded. If other children are injured or hurt, separate records will be completed for each child involved in the incident.

Parents/authorised nominee must acknowledge the details contained in the record, sign and date the record on arrival to collect their child. All *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Records* must be kept until the child is 25 years of age.

MISSING OR UNACCOUNTED FOR CHILD

At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision is provided to ensure children are protected from harm or hazards. However, if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for, removed from the centre premises that breaches the National Regulations or is mistakenly locked in or locked out of any part of the centre, a serious incident notification must be made to the regulatory authority.

A child may only leave the centre in the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee or because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or other emergency.

Educators must ensure that:

- the attendance record is regularly cross-checked to ensure all children signed into the Service are accounted for
- children are supervised at all times
- visitors to the Service are not left alone with children at any time.

Should an incident occur where a child is missing from the centre, educators and the nominated supervisor will:

- attempt to locate the child immediately by conducting a thorough search of the premises (checking any areas that a child could be locked into by accident)
- cross check the attendance record to ensure the child hasn't been collected by an authorised person and signed out by another person
- if the child is not located within a **10-minute** period, emergency services will be contacted, and the approved provider will notify the parent/s or guardian
- continue to search for the missing child until emergency services arrive whilst providing supervision for other children in care
- provide information to Police such as: child's name, age, appearance, (provide a photograph), details of where the child was last sighted.

HEAD INJURIES

It is common for children to bump their heads during everyday play, however it is difficult to determine whether the injury is serious or not. Therefore, any knock to the head is considered a *head injury* and should possibly be assessed by a doctor. In the event of any head injury staff

will administer any urgent First Aid, complete the afore mentioned injury form and notify parents/guardians to collect their child if required.

Emergency services will be contacted immediately on 000 if the child:

- has sustained a head injury involving high speeds or fallen from a height (play equipment)
- loses consciousness
- seems unwell or vomits several times after hitting their head

TRAUMA

Trauma is defined as the impact of an event or a series of events during which a child feels helpless and pushed beyond their ability to cope. There are a range of different events that might be traumatic to a child, including accidents, injuries, serious illness, natural disasters (bush fires), assault, and threats of violence, domestic violence, neglect or abuse and war or terrorist attacks. Parental or cultural trauma can also have a traumatising effect on children. This definition firmly places trauma into a developmental context: *“Trauma changes the way children understand their world, the people in it and where they belong.”* (Australian Childhood Foundation, 2010).

Trauma can disrupt the relationships a child has with their parents, educators and staff who care for them. It can transform children’s language skills, physical and social development and the ability to manage their emotions and behaviour.

Behavioural responses for pre-school aged children who have experiences trauma may include:

- new or increased clingy behaviour such as constantly following a parent, carer or staff around
- anxiety when separated from parents or carers
- new problems with skills like sleeping, eating, going to the toilet and paying attention
- shutting down and withdrawing from everyday experiences
- difficulties enjoying activities
- being jumpier or easily frightened
- physical complaints with no known cause such as stomach pains and headaches
- blaming themselves and thinking the trauma was their fault.

Children who have experienced traumatic events often need help to adjust to the way they are feeling. When parents, educators and staff take the time to listen, talk, and play they may find children begin to say or show how they are feeling. Providing children with time and space lets them know you are available and care about them.

It is important for educators to be patient when dealing with a child who has experienced a traumatic event. It may take time to understand how to respond to a child's needs and new behaviours before parents, educators and staff are able to work out the best ways to support a child. It is imperative to realise that a child's behaviour may be a response to the traumatic event rather than just 'naughty' or 'difficult' behaviour.

EDUCATORS CAN ASSIST CHILDREN DEALING WITH TRAUMA BY:

- observing the behaviours and expressed feelings of a child and documenting responses that were most helpful in these situations
- creating a 'relaxation' space with familiar and comforting toys and objects children can use when they are having a difficult time
- having quiet time such as reading a story about feelings together
- trying different types of play that focus on expressing feelings (e.g., drawing, playing with play dough, dress-ups and physical games such as trampolines)
- helping children understand their feelings by using reflecting statements (e.g., 'you look sad/angry right now, I wonder if you need some help?').

ILLNESS MANAGEMENT

To reduce the transmission of infectious illness, Highland Grove implements effective hygiene and infection control routines and procedures as per the *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services guidelines*. If a child is unwell or displaying symptoms of a cold or flu virus, parents are requested to keep the child away from the centre. Infectious illnesses can be spread quickly from one person to another usually through respiratory droplets or from a child or person touching their own mouth or nose and then touching an object or surface.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS

Practising effective hygiene helps to minimise the risk of cross infection within our centre. Educators model good hygiene practices and remind children to cough or sneeze into their elbow or use a disposable tissue and wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after touching their mouth, eyes or nose.

Handwashing techniques are practised by all educators and children routinely using soap and water before and after eating and when using the toilet and drying hands thoroughly with paper towel. (See *Handwashing Policy*).

After wiping a child's nose with a tissue, educators will dispose the tissue in a plastic-lined bin and wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water and dry using paper towel.

All surfaces including bedding (mat, cushions) used by a child who is unwell, will be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected.

Parents, families and visitors are requested to wash their hands upon arrival and departure at the Service or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. (Note: alcohol-based sanitizers must be kept out of reach of children and used only with adult supervision.)

CHILDREN ARRIVING AT HIGHLAND GROVE WHO ARE UNWELL

Management cannot accept a child into the centre if they:

- have a contagious illness or infectious disease
- are unwell and unable to participate in normal activities
- **have had a high temperature in the last 24 hours**
- **have had diarrhoea or vomiting in the last 48 hours**
- **have started a course of antibiotics in the last 24 hours**
- have been given medication for a temperature prior to arriving at the centre (for example: Panadol)

IDENTIFYING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

Early childhood educators and management are not doctors and are unable to diagnose an illness or infectious disease. To ensure the symptoms are not infectious and to minimise the spread of an infection, medical advice may be required to ensure a safe and healthy environment.

Children who appear unwell will be closely monitored and if any symptoms described below are noticed, or the child is not well enough to participate in normal activities, parents or an emergency contact person will be contacted to collect the child as soon as possible.

A child who is displaying symptoms of a contagious illness or virus (vomiting, diarrhoea, fever) will be moved away from the rest of the group and supervised until he/she is collected by a parent or emergency contact person.

SYMPTOMS INDICATING ILLNESS MAY INCLUDE:

- behaviour that is unusual for the individual child
- high temperature or fevers
- loose bowels
- faeces that are grey, pale or contains blood
- vomiting
- discharge from the eye or ear

- skin that displays rashes, blisters, spots, crusty or weeping sores
- loss of appetite
- dark urine
- headaches
- stiff muscles or joint pain
- continuous scratching of scalp or skin
- difficulty in swallowing or complaining of a sore throat
- persistent, prolonged or severe coughing
- difficulty breathing
- a stiff neck or sensitivity to light

HIGH TEMPERATURES OR FEVERS

Children get fevers or temperatures for all kinds of reasons. Most fevers and the illnesses that cause them last only a few days. However sometimes a fever will last much longer and might be the sign of an underlying chronic or long-term illness or disease. Recognised authorities suggest a child's normal temperature will range between 36.0°C and 37.0°C, but this will often depend on the age of the child and the time of day.

WHEN A CHILD DEVELOPS A HIGH TEMPERATURE OR FEVER AT THE CENTRE

If a child becomes ill whilst at Highland Grove, educators will respond to their individual symptoms of illness and provide comfort and care. Educators will closely monitor the child focusing on how the child looks and behaves and be alert to the possibility of vomiting, coughing or convulsions. The child will be cared for in an area that is separated from other children in the service to await pick up from their parent/guardian.

- Educators will notify parents when a child registers a temperature of **38°C**
- The child will need to be collected from the centre as soon as possible.
- The child is then excluded from preschool for 24 hours after the last elevated temperature.
- Educators will check that written parental permission to administer paracetamol has been provided during enrolment and filed in the child's individual record
- If a child has a temperature over 38 degrees, staff can administer paracetamol. Staff will call families prior to administering to check if they would like this to be given and when last medication was administered.
- Educators will monitor the child closely and be alerted to vomiting, runny stools, coughing or convulsions
- Educators will complete an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* record and note down any other symptoms that may have developed along with the temperature (for example, a rash,

vomiting, etc.) The Medication Record will also be completed if paracetamol was administered.

- Emergency services will be contacted should the child have trouble breathing, becomes drowsy or unresponsive or suffers a convulsion lasting longer than five minutes
- In the event of any child requiring ambulance transportation and medical intervention, a serious incident will be reported to the regulatory authority (Reg. 12) by the approved provider.

DEALING WITH COLDS/FLU (RUNNY NOSE)

It is very difficult to distinguish between the symptoms of COVID-19, influenza and a cold. If any child, employee or visitor has any infectious or respiratory symptoms (such as sore throat, headache, fever, shortness of breath, muscle aches, cough or runny nose) they **may be** requested to either stay at home or self-test using a Rapid antigen test (RAT). (See: Australian Government [Identifying the symptoms](#))

Colds are the most common cause of illness in children and adults. There are more than 200 types of viruses that can cause the common cold. Symptoms include a runny or blocked nose, sneezing and coughing, watery eyes, headache, a mild sore throat, and possibly a slight fever. Children can become distressed and lethargic when unwell. Discharge coming from a child's nose and coughing can lead to germs spreading to other children, educators, toys, and equipment.

Influenza is a highly contagious illness and can spread to others for 24 hours before symptoms start. To prevent the spread of influenza, our Service encourages staff and children to be vaccinated once a year.

Management has the right to send children home if they appear unwell due to a cold or general illness.

DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING (GASTROENTERITIS)

Gastroenteritis (or 'gastro') is a general term for an illness of the digestive system. Typical symptoms include abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, and vomiting. In many cases, it does not need treatment, and symptoms disappear in a few days.

However, gastroenteritis can cause dehydration because of the large amount of fluid lost through vomiting and diarrhoea. Therefore, if a child does not receive enough fluids, he/she may require fluids intravenously. If a child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting whilst at the centre, management will notify parents or an emergency contact to collect the child immediately. In the

event of an outbreak of viral gastroenteritis, management will contact the local Public Health Unit.

Public Health Unit- Local state and territory health departments

Management must document the number of cases, dates of onset, duration of symptoms. An outbreak is when two or more children or staff have a sudden onset of diarrhoea or vomiting in a 2-day period. (NSW Government- Health 2019). (See: *Illness or Infectious Disease Register*)

Children that have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting will be asked to stay away from the Service for **48 hours** after symptoms have ceased to reduce infection transmission as symptoms can reappear after 24 hours in many instances.

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* must be completed as per regulations. Notifications for serious illnesses must be lodged with the regulatory authority and Public Health Unit.

NOTIFYING FAMILIES AND EMERGENCY CONTACT- SICKNESS OR INFECTIOUS ILLNESS

- Families will be notified of any outbreak of an infectious illness (e.g.: Gastroenteritis, whooping cough) to assist in reducing the spread of the illness
- When a child has been diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease, the centre will refer to information about recommended exclusion periods from the Public Health Unit (PHU) and *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/RESPONSIBLE PERSON AND EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- each child's enrolment records include authorisations by a parent or person named in the record for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and if required, transportation by an ambulance service
- parents or guardians are notified as soon as practicable and no later than 24 hours of the illness, accident, or trauma occurring
- an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed accurately and in a timely manner as soon after the event as possible (within 24 hours)

- if the incident, situation or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of any person present at the Service, or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours of the incident
- families are advised to keep their child home until they are feeling well, and they have not had any symptoms for at least 24-48 hours (depending upon the illness and exclusion periods)
- children or staff members who are diagnosed with an illness or infectious disease may be excluded as per recommended exclusion periods
- families are notified of any infectious disease circulating the Service within 24 hours of detection
- families of a child with complex and chronic medical conditions will be notified in the event of an outbreak of an illness or infectious disease that could compromise their health
- first aid kits are suitably equipped and checked regularly
- first aid kits are easily accessible when children are present at the centre and during excursions
- that the following qualified people are in attendance at all times that the centre is providing education and care to children [Reg. 136]
 - at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor who holds a current ACECQA approved first aid qualification including emergency life support and CPR resuscitation
 - at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor of the Service who has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training
 - at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor of the Service who has undertaken current approved emergency asthma management training

NOTE: All permanent educators at Highland Grove complete first aid and CPR training, keeping these qualifications up to date, and far exceeding the required amount of first aid trained staff.

- staff and children always practice appropriate hand hygiene and cough and sneezing etiquette
- cold food is kept cold (below 5 °C) and hot food, hot (above 60°C) to discourage the growth of bacteria
- appropriate cleaning practices are followed
- toys and equipment are cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis
- additional cleaning will be implemented during any outbreak of an infectious illness or virus

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the centre's policies regarding *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness*
- provide authorisation in the child's enrolment record for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or educator to seek medical treatment from a medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and if required, transportation by ambulance service
- provide up to date medical and contact information in case of an emergency
- provide emergency contact details and ensure details are kept up to date
- provide Highland Grove with all relevant medical information, including Medicare and private health insurance
- provide a copy of their child's medical management plans and update these annually or whenever medication/medical needs change
- adhere to recommended periods of exclusion if their child has a virus or infectious illness
- keep up to date with their child's immunisation, providing a copy of the updated AIR Immunisation History Statement to the Service following each immunisation on the National Immunisation Schedule
- inform the centre if their child has an infectious disease or illness

RESOURCES

[beyou Bushfire resource](#)

[Emerging Minds Community Trauma Toolkit](#)

[Fever in children- \(health direct.gov.au\)](#)

[Head Injury and concussion](#)

[Minimum periods for exclusion from childcare services](#)

NSW Health [Gastro Pack NSW Health](#)

NSW Health [Stopping the spread of childhood infections factsheet.](#)

Staying Healthy: *Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*

[Time Out Keeping your child and other kids healthy!](#) (Queensland Government)

Time Out Brochure [Why do I need to keep my child at home?](#)

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