

DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Aim

In its commitment to providing the highest quality care, The Little Village will aim to contain the spread of infectious diseases through two methods; exclusion and preventative hygiene. This is to limit common viruses, as well as more serious communicable diseases. For infectious diseases that are at the status of pandemic, stricter protocols are needed and a separate policy is instated, reserving the right to refuse attendance for the safety of the village as a whole.

National Quality Standard

This policy links to the following NQS: National Quality Standards 2.1.4

Links to other policies

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Keeping of Records Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Excursion and Incursion Policy
- Managing Pandemics Policy

Statutory legislation and consideration

- Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services Fifth edition Commonwealth of Australia 2012

Sources

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011






Strategy

EXCLUSION

To minimise the spread of Infectious disease between children, educators/staff and visitors, it is important to separate infected persons from the rest of the villagers. To achieve this, The Little Village will:

- Exclude from care and notify the local Public Health Unit (1300 066 055) in case of outbreak (3 or more children/staff) and provide details of any known or suspected persons with vaccine preventable diseases:
- Exclude a child or educator/staff member with any of the following symptoms which might indicate they have a potentially serious illness:
 - are unwell and unable to participate in normal activities or require additional attention, including wheezing or any difficulty breathing
 - have had a temperature/fever (38 degrees), or vomiting in the last 24 hours
 - have had vomiting or diarrhoea in the last 48 hours
 - have been given medication for a temperature prior to arriving at the Service
 - have started a course of anti-biotics in the last 24 hours or
 - rash, especially if purplish or hemorrhaging spots or blistering spots
 - weepy eyes, ring worm, lice, if has not been treated for 24 hours
 - TLV requires a medical clearance, if excluded from care for any of the above symptoms, to be able to return to care.
- Ensure all educators/staff and persons working at TLV conform to all infectious disease policies.
- If a child is suspected of serious illness/infectious disease, TLV will:
 - Isolate the child from other children. Make sure the child is comfortable, and is supervised by an educator/staff member
 - Contact the child's parents/guardians or, if they are unable to be contacted, an authorised nominee for emergencies as listed on the enrolment form. Inform the parents/guardian or authorised nominee of the child's condition, or suspected condition, and ask that the child be picked up from TLV as soon as possible
 - Ensure all bedding, towels, clothing, etc., which has been used by the child is disinfected – these articles should be washed separately and, if possible, aired in the sun to dry

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- Ensure all contact toys are separated and disinfected
 - Ensure all eating utensils are separated and sterilised
 - Inform all families of the presence of an infectious disease in the Service and provide information on the suspected disease so families may notice the signs.
 - TLV will uphold the privacy of any child/family or staff villager that has suffered from an infectious disease and will not divulge any information regarding their medical history and illnesses
 - Any Villager that has been absent from TLV due to an infectious illness will require a medical clearance to return to care. This clearance should state the name of the illness so symptoms can be observed in other village members
 - In the event that a child was sent home due to the suspicion of an infectious disease, a clearance must be obtained before returning to TLV
 - Often a child gets sick between TLV attendance and we ask families to consider the following general recommendation to prevent the illness from spreading – this will be related in the PREVENTION section of this policy
 - In case of outbreak, families will be notified of an increased 48 hour exclusion period, regardless of medical clearance, although one should still be obtained.
 - When a child/staff villager is hospitalised for treatment of symptoms, please notify HNE Population Health as this is often an indication of severity 4924 6477 or 6767 4800.

PREVENTION

To avoid the spread of disease and the possibility of cross-infection, The Little Village will put in place practices and procedures to ensure the safety and comfort of each villager. It is up to each educator/staff and visitor to follow the routines and precautions specified within this policy.

KNOWING THE SIGNS

The first step of prevention is to know the signs for exclusion of an infectious disease. We ask all villagers to follow the procedures to ensure all stakeholders of the service remain safe and comfortable at all times.

- It is generally recommended to keep your child at home for 24 hours after the last instance of diarrhea or vomiting, or in the case of external infection (e.g conjunctivitis) a minimum of 24 hours after treatment is first administered.
- TLV has reminders at every point of entry to remind families to check the wellbeing of their child before leaving them in care.

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- Regular contact is maintained with families to keep them informed of health updates, notifications and outbreaks.

EDUCATION


- Children are given opportunities to learn about health and hygiene related issues throughout the year. Health and Wellbeing is embedded within the program.
- Posters about health and hygiene are placed in the TLV foyer promoting good health and hygiene for all villagers.
- When possible, visits will be conducted by health professionals at the centre for children to learn about relevant issues, such as hygiene, healthy eating and self-care.

PREVENTATIVE HYGEINE

To avoid the spread of disease and the possibility of cross-infection, The Little Village will put in place practices and procedures to ensure the safety and comfort of each villager. It is up to each villager to follow the routines and precautions specified within this policy.

Hand Hygiene

	Before	After
Educators and other staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting work, so germs are not introduced into the service • Eating or handling food • Giving medication • Putting on gloves • Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children • Going home, so germs are not taken home with you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking off gloves • Changing a nappy • Cleaning the nappy change area • Using the toilet • Helping children use the toilet • Coming in from outside play • Wiping a child’s nose or your own nose • Eating or handling food Handling garbage • Cleaning up faeces, vomit or blood • Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children • Touching animals
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting the day at the service; parents can help with this • Eating or handling food • Going home, so germs are not taken home with them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating or handling food • Touching nose secretions • Using the toilet • Having their nappy changed—their hands will become contaminated while they are on the change mat • Coming in from outside play • Touching animals



The process of thoroughly washing, rinsing and drying your hands or a child's hands should take around 30 seconds.

- There are five steps to washing hands:
 1. Wet hands with running water (preferably warm water, for comfort).
 2. Apply soap to hands.
 3. Lather soap and rub hands thoroughly, including the wrists, the palms, between the fingers, around the thumbs and under the nails. Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds (for about as long as it takes to sing Happy birthday once).
 4. Rinse thoroughly under running water.
 5. Dry thoroughly using paper towel or hand drier.
- If you wear rings or other jewelry on your hands, move the jewelry around your finger while you lather the soap to ensure that the area underneath the jewelry is clean.
- Always wet hands first before applying soap. This helps the soap to lather more and prevents the skin from drying.
- Using alcohol rub: only use an alcohol-based hand rub if your hands are not visibly dirty. The hand rub should contain at least 60–80% alcohol.
 1. Apply the amount of hand rub recommended by the manufacturer to palms of dry hands (usually two squirts).
 2. Rub hands together, making sure you cover in between fingers, around thumbs and under nails.
 3. Rub until hands are dry.
 4. In case of outbreak, alcohol gel should be used before and after any activity involved with children. Enhanced hygiene should be practiced.

Hand Protection

Wearing Disposable gloves:

- Disposable gloves should never be reused or washed for reuse. They must be thrown away as soon as you have finished the activity that requires gloves.
- Always wash your hands before and after wearing disposable gloves.
- Wear gloves on both hands
 - when changing nappies—there are billions of germs in faeces and sometimes in urine
 - when cleaning up feces, urine, blood, saliva or vomit, including when it is on clothes.


How to remove disposable gloves:

- Pinch the outside of one glove near the wrist and peel the glove off so it ends up inside out.
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- Keep hold of the peeled-off glove in your gloved hand while you take off the other glove—put one or two fingers of your ungloved hand inside the wrist of the other glove. Peel off the second glove from the inside, and over the first glove, so you end up with the two gloves inside out, one inside the other.
- Put the gloves in a plastic-lined, hands-free lidded rubbish bin, and wash your hands. If a hands-free lidded rubbish bin is not available, put the gloves in a bucket or container lined with a plastic bag, then tie up the bag and take it to the outside garbage bin.

Preventative Cleaning

Surface of area	Wash daily plus when visibly dirty	Wash weekly plus when visibly dirty
Bathrooms—wash tap handles, toilet seats, toilet handles and door knobs. Check the bathroom during the day and clean if visibly dirty	X	
Toys and objects put in the mouth	X	
Surfaces that children have frequent contact with (e.g. bench tops, taps, cots and tables)	X	
Beds, stretchers, linen and mattress covers (if children do not use the same mattress cover every day)	X	
Door Knobs	X	
Floors	X	
Common Areas (foyer, sign-in, key pad)	X	
Low shelves		X
Other surfaces not often touched by children		X





Cleaning Bathrooms:

- Bathrooms and toilets should be cleaned at least once a day, and more often if they are visibly dirty. Village Staff and visitor bathrooms should include appropriate disposal bins for sanitary products.
- Single-use paper towels should always be replenished with a handsfree bin to dispose of waste

Cleaning Nappy Change area:

- After each nappy change, Village Staff will clean the nappy change area thoroughly with disinfectant, rinsing and drying with single-use paper towel.
- If faeces or urine spill onto the change table or mat, clean it with disinfectant, then rinse and dry with single-use paper towel.
- At the end of the morning and at the end of the day, remove the nappy change surface (waterproof sheet or change mat), wash it with warm water and disinfectant and dry it, preferably in the sun.

Kitchen area:

- All surfaces to be disinfected before and after each meal is prepared.
- Hand-washing procedures to be strictly adhered to
- Floors to be cleaned at the end of each day

Sand pit:

- Sandpit to be checked each morning for the possibility of foreign objects
- Sandpit is to be securely covered each afternoon.
- Rake the sandpit regularly, to remove rubbish and to stir up the sand so it gets aired (fresh air is a good disinfectant).
- Staff to remove any dirt and rubbish you can see daily.
- Staff to hose the sand with tap water if it is not regularly washed by the rain.
- Disinfecting sand pits is only needed when they are obviously dirty (e.g. if a child does a poo in the sandpit). Use a mild detergent or household disinfectant diluted in water in a watering can. Follow the instructions for washing floors and surfaces that are on the container (careforkids.com.au)



Preventative Washing

Clothing:


- Village Staff clothing should be washed daily with detergent, preferably in hot water.
- It is recommended that children's dress-up clothes are washed once a week in hot water and detergent, plus when they are visibly dirty.
- Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag, labelled and kept separate from anything else then attached to child's bag. Solids will be removed from undergarments. If too soiled, parents should understand that undergarments may be binned.

Bed Sheets:

- Wash linen in detergent and hot water. Do not carry used linen against your own clothing or coverall—take it to the laundry in a basket, plastic bag or alternative.
- Treat soiled linen as you would a soiled nappy, and wear gloves.
- If the item will be washed by village staff, they should be:
 - soaked in water and detergent to remove the bulk of the contamination
 - washed separately in warm to hot water with detergent
 - dried in the sun or on a hot cycle in the clothes dryer.

Bedding and Cots:

- All bedding will be wiped down with detergent after each sleep session.
- All cots to be wiped down at the end of each day.
- If a child attends 0-2 room for consecutive days, the same sheets may be used if they are in good health. Once a child shows symptoms of illness, the linen will be washed accordingly.
- If a child soils a cot:
 - Use TLV nappy change procedure (see below)
 - Wear gloves
 - remove the bulk of the soiling or spill with absorbent paper towels
 - place the soiled linen in a plastic-lined, lidded laundry bin
 - remove any visible soiling off the cot or mattress by cleaning thoroughly with disinfectant.

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- remove your gloves and wash your hands
 - provide clean linen for the cot.

Dummies:

- Children will never be allowed to share dummies. When not in use, dummies should be placed in a separate container with a lid and labelled with child's name.
- Store dummies out of children's reach, and do not let the dummies come in contact with another dummy or toy
- Dummies should be disinfected with hot water or suitable food-safe disinfectant such as Milton Antibacterial.

Toys:

- Washing toys effectively is very important to reduce spread of disease. Toys need to be washed at the end of each day, especially those in rooms with younger children.
- Wash toys in warm water and detergent, and rinse them well—many toys can be cleaned in a dishwasher (but not at the same time as dishes). All toys, including cloth toys and books, can be dried by sunlight.
- Only buy washable toys, and discard non-washable toys that are for general use. Individual non-washable toys may be assigned to a child and kept in the child's cot for the use of that child only.
- Books should be inspected for visible dirt. They can be cleaned by wiping with a moist cloth with detergent on it, and allowing to dry. Keep damp or wet books out of use until they are dry.
- Remove toys for washing during the day. Start a 'Toys to wash' box and place toys in it during the day if you see a child sneeze on a toy or put a toy in their mouth, or if the toy has been used by a child who is unwell.
- Toys can also be split into two lots and rotated between washing one day and in use the next.
- In the nappy change area, have a box of clean toys and a box of toys to be washed. Give a child a clean toy if they need one while being changed. Immediately after the nappy change, place the toy in the 'toys to wash' box



Cushions:

- Make sure that all cushions, including large floor cushions, have removable cushion covers that can be changed and washed daily, as well as when they are visibly dirty.

Carpets, mats and curtains:

- Carpets and mats should be vacuumed daily and steam cleaned at least every 6 months.
- Curtains should be washed every 6 months and when they are visibly dirty. Spot clean carpets, mats and curtains if they are visibly dirty in a small area.

Preventative Procedures and Practice

Nappy Preparation and Changing:

Village Staff are always required to follow this procedure to minimise the chance of cross-infection:

- Wash your hands
- Put disposable gloves on both hands
- Place a single-use nappy sheet on the change mat
- Remove the child's nappy and put in a hands-free lidded bin. Place any soiled clothes in a plastic bag
- Clean the child's bottom using baby wipes
- Remove the paper and put it in a hands-free lidded bin
- Remove your gloves and put them in the bin
- Place a clean nappy on the child
- Dress the child
- Take the child away from the change table
- Wash your hands and the child's hands
- Clean the change table with disinfectant after each nappy change
- Wash your hands.




Toilet Training:

- Ask families to supply ample clean clothing for children who are toilet training.
- Once clothes are soiled, remove feces from clothing and then place in a sealed plastic bag, labelled and attached to child's bag. If too soiled, parents should understand that undergarments may be binned.
- Help the child use the toilet. TLV avoids using potties to minimize risk of cross-infection
- Children, especially girls, should be encouraged to wipe front to back, to reduce the chance of introducing bowel bacteria to the urinary tract.
- After toileting, help the child wash their hands. Ask older children if they washed their hands. Explain to the child that washing their hands and drying them properly will stop germs that might make them ill.
- Always wash your own hands after helping children use the toilet.

Dealing With Bodily Fluids:

- If a spill does occur, it is important to avoid direct contact with body fluids. Healthy skin is an effective barrier against infectious body fluids, so make sure any cuts or abrasions on any villager's hands are covered with a waterproof dressing, and wear gloves, if possible.
- Have a spill kit readily accessible for educators and other staff to use. The spill kit can be in the form of a bucket filled with all the necessary equipment to clean up a spill, including:
 - disposable gloves
 - Vomit absorber
 - paper towel
 - single-use towels
 - detergent
 - disposable scraper and pan to scoop
 - bleach



Cleaning bodily fluids:

When cleaning up spills of faeces, vomit, blood or urine, the following procedures should be followed:

- Wear gloves on both hands
- Pour vomit absorbing agent (e.g Norfolk) over spill and allow spill to soak in.
- Remove agent with a pan and dispose of in a plastic bag.
- Place paper towel over the remainder of the spill. Carefully remove the paper towel and any solid matter. Place it in a plastic bag or alternative, seal the bag and put it in the rubbish bin.
- Clean the surface with warm water and detergent and allow to dry.
- If the spill came from a person who is known or suspected to have an infectious disease (e.g. diarrhea or vomit from a child with gastroenteritis), use a disinfectant on the surface after cleaning it with detergent and warm water.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and running water (preferably warm water).

Nasal Discharge:

- Washing your hands every time you wipe a child's nose will reduce the spread of colds. If you cannot wash your hands after every nose wipe, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- It is not necessary to wear gloves when wiping a child's nose. If you do wear gloves, you must remove your gloves and wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand rub afterwards.
- Dispose of dirty tissues immediately.

Blood:

- If a child is bleeding, through either an injury, bites from other children or a nosebleed, staff villagers need to:
 - Avoid contact with the blood.
 - Put on gloves, if available, or if there is time.
 - If gloves are not available, take the first opportunity to get someone wearing gloves to take over from you. Then wash your hands
 - Comfort the child and move them to safety, away from other children.
 - If the bleeding is excessive, contact 000 immediately.



- Apply pressure to the bleeding area with a bandage or paper towel.
- Elevate the bleeding area unless you suspect a broken bone.
- Send for the first-aid officer (if appropriate).
- If wound is manageable, dress the wound.
- When the wound is covered and no longer bleeding, remove your gloves, put them in a plastic bag or alternative, seal the bag and place it in the rubbish bin.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and running water (preferably warm water).
- Ensure there is an immediate check of spilled blood in or near the area.
- Ask children or village staff if they have come into contact with the blood.
- All blood to be treated as bodily fluid spill and all precautions should be taken (see above).
- Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag, labelled and kept separate from anything else then attached to child's bag. If too soiled, parents should understand that garments may be binned.