



# POLICY

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## INFECTION CONTROL

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT AND/OR PURPOSE

Catholic Early Learning & Care (CELIC) is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all children and workers within our services. Infection control practices are used to reduce illness in children and workers in childcare settings.

While it is not possible to prevent the spread of all infections and illnesses within services, this procedure details CELC strategies to reduce risks.

### 2. APPLICATION

This procedure applies to all Catholic Early Learning and Care Services in the Diocese of Cairns.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

#### **Nominated Supervisor Responsibilities:**

- Promoting infection control practices.
- Ensuring educators have effective induction and training in infection control and understand the requirements within this procedure.
- Promoting hand hygiene practices and ensuring adequate handwashing equipment is available.
- Confirming children's immunisation status with parents through the enrolment process.
- Managing infectious conditions within the service.
- Establishing and implementing documented cleaning schedules with minimum cleaning standards as detailed in this procedure in the CELC Child Care Management System (CCMS)
- Reporting health-related incidents to the Operations Manager.
- Routinely observing educators to ensure compliance with this procedure.
- Display visual and written information for children, educators, families, and visitors about the service's hygiene and infection control practices and procedures.
- Notify families of illness within the service and the exclusion periods if their child/children were to become ill.
- On the advice of the Director, a medical clearance may be required for a child to return to the service after being diagnosed with an infectious illness.

#### **Educators' Responsibilities:**

- Educators will promote and encourage effective hand washing hygiene with children.
- Educators will ensure handwashing equipment and facilities are well-maintained at all times.
- Educators will assist the Nominated Supervisor in identifying infectious condition outbreaks.
- Educators will complete and document cleaning schedules in the CCMS.
- Educators will follow guidelines and safe operating procedures when carrying out cleaning tasks.

- Educators will attend training on infection control as organised by the Nominated Supervisor.
- Educators with signs and symptoms of illness are required to follow Queensland Department of Health “Time Out” guidelines & Staying Healthy Guidelines.
- Educators will report infection control incidents immediately to the Nominated Supervisor.
- Educators will teach and encourage children to follow simple rules of hygiene.
- Educators will discuss health and hygiene practices with children during daily routines.

#### **Parents/Guardians Responsibilities:**

- Parents/Guardians will inform the service if their child has signs or symptoms of an infectious disease.
- Children who are unwell will be excluded from the service in accordance with Australian Government’s [Staying Healthy Guidelines](#).
- If requested by the Director, parents/guardians will provide a medical clearance prior to the child returning to the service after being diagnosed with an infectious illness.
- Parents/Guardians are required to always ensure that the service is provided with current health information and emergency contact details.
- Children who are not immunised, have incomplete immunisation, or have no record of immunisation at the service will be excluded for the prescribed period during any outbreak of an immunisation preventable disease. Throughout the child’s attendance at the service, parents/guardians are required to continue to provide the centre with records of immunisation updates.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to advise the service when other family members are unwell so their child’s health may be monitored.

## **4. PROCEDURE**

### **Handwashing**

For guidelines regarding hand hygiene and hand washing refer to pp 28 – 31 of the [Staying Healthy Guidelines 6<sup>th</sup> edition](#).

#### **4.1.1 Hand Washing Facilities:**

The service is responsible for ensuring:

- Soap and paper towel or air dryer is always available.
- Hand washing basins are kept clean and free from any waste/residue.
- The basins are free of cracks and chips which can harbour infection.
- The taps are working correctly and being kept clean

#### **4.1.2 Hand drying:**

Disposable paper towel or hand dryers are used by all services.

Cloth towels are not to be used within CELC services.

#### **4.1.3 Educating children and educators in effective hand washing technique:**

Educators and children must be educated on hand washing best practice as part of their induction and introduction to the service. Posters are to be prominently displayed in bathrooms and kitchens.

Educators will model positive hygiene and infection control practices, such as washing hands after going to the toilet and before handling food. Educators will emphasise the importance of hand washing within the services play and learning experiences.

## 5. IMMUNISATION OF EDUCATORS AND CHILDREN

For information regarding the Immunisation of educators and children refer to the [Immunisation and Exclusion policy](#).

### 5.1 Prescribed immunisation-preventable condition

Where there is a confirmed case of an immunisation-preventable condition of an employee or child attending a service, there is a requirement to exclude identified non-vaccinated children and employees for a period of time. The Nominated Supervisor in conjunction with CELC Operations Manager and WHS Officer under the guidance of Qld Health will assess this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

Where an exclusion direction is given to non-vaccinated children or employees, the Nominated Supervisor is responsible for keeping records. The written record will include all advice given and received regarding management of the prescribed vaccine-preventable condition.

It is the responsibility of employees/families to inform the service if they/the child has come into contact with someone with an immunisation preventable condition.

For information regarding the **Immunisation of Children** and **Non-vaccinated children**, refer to the [Immunisation and Exclusion Policy](#).

### 5.2 Pregnant Employees:

Employees are required to inform the Nominated Supervisor as soon as possible if they are pregnant and follow the recommendations in the latest edition of Staying Healthy in Childcare.

The Nominated Supervisor will advise pregnant employees, or employees who expect to be pregnant, to discuss 'infections in childcare' with their general practitioner.

For further information regarding the protection of pregnant employees refer to pp. 46-48 of [Staying Healthy in Childcare 6th Edition](#).

## 6. INFECTIOUS DISEASE MANAGEMENT

### 4.1.0 Infectious Diseases

Where an employee or child is suspected of having an **infectious disease**, the following process will be followed:

- Parents/Guardians/Employee are required to inform the Nominated Supervisor as soon as possible after suspecting or being diagnosed with symptoms of an infectious disease, so that educators may monitor and protect other children.
- The Nominated Supervisor, in consultation with the Director, informs the parent or employee that they must provide a medical clearance before returning to the service.
- Once a diagnosis is confirmed, seek relevant information to manage the infectious disease e.g. contact WHS Advisor, access QH fact sheets or contact Tropical Public Health Unit. Refer to Queensland Health "Time Out" Poster and Staying Healthy Guidelines – Fact Sheets for exclusion guidelines.
- CELC services are not required to notify Queensland Health if a child has a prescribed contagious condition, as this is the responsibility of their doctor.
- When a person has been infectious while at the service and others may have been exposed, it is recommended that the service provide information to those persons as well as others such as parents or carers.
- While maintaining confidentiality, provide information home to parents (email, post on OWNA) indicating that a person has been unwell while at the service.
- The service will also attach and display the relevant Queensland Health/Staying Healthy Fact Sheet.

- Parent/Guardians/Employees are to provide a medical clearance prior to child/ren returning to the service.

## 6.2 Exclusion Guidelines

CELC services follow the Department of Health 'Time Out' guidelines for exclusion requirements. The guidelines are to be followed by all persons attending the service (including children, educators, visitors, students, contractors).

[timeout\\_poster.pdf](#)

Services consult the Fact Sheets found in Staying Healthy Guidelines for information on illness and diseases that outline exclusion periods, responsibilities of educators and other staff as well as actions for parents and carers. These fact sheets are to be provided to families when an illness or disease occurs at the service.

[Staying-healthy-guidelines.pdf](#)

## 6.3 Outbreaks of Infectious Disease within a service

It is required that the "Illness and Infectious Disease" register in the CCMS be used to record details and symptoms of illnesses experienced by children. This will assist in the management of potential outbreaks to allow early intervention.

In the event several children or employees are identified with similar symptoms, as per the Staying Healthy Guidelines and Infectious Disease register, Cairns Tropical Public Health Unit will be contacted for assistance. They will provide guidance or manage the outbreak if required. CELC services are to follow all recommendations made by Cairns Tropical Public Health Unit in relation to the management of an outbreak.

If an outbreak occurs the service must:

- Review infection control practices,
- Prominently display a health alert at the service (maintaining confidentiality). The alert will include information from recognised Health Authorities; and
- Notify the school and Parish of the outbreak.

# 7. EFFECTIVE CLEANING

Regular cleaning reduces the number of germs in the environment and breaks the chain of infection.

## 7.1 Cleaning Records

Nominated Supervisors are responsible for maintaining cleaning schedules and cleaning records.

The following templates can be localised to suit the service.

- Cleaning Schedule – Daily and Weekly
- Cleaning Schedule – Monthly & Annual

Cleaning tasks should be included in employee's daily responsibilities. Where required, safe operating procedures will be used for cleaning tasks conducted by CELC employees.

## 7.2 Cleaning Equipment and Chemicals (minimum CELC standards)

- Cleaning equipment
  - Colour-coded mops with detachable heads (to allow laundering in washing machine using hot water)
  - Colour-coded disposable cloths and reusable cloths that can be laundered

- Vacuum cleaners with HEPA (high-efficiency particular air) filters to reduce dust dispersion.
- Utility gloves
- Cleaning chemicals:
  - Food grade sanitiser for kitchen and food handling areas
  - Disinfectant – for cleaning of biological hazards
  - Detergent – for general cleaning

### 7.3 KITCHEN CHOPPING BOARDS:

GREEN	Vegetables and Fruit
WHITE	Bakery and Dairy
YELLOW	Poultry
RED	Raw Meat
BROWN	Cooked Meat
BLUE	Seafood

### 7.4 CLEANING CLOTHS & MOPS

Single-use paper towels are better than cloths. If cloths are used, they must be laundered and allowed to dry after every use.

BLUE	General Cleaning
GREEN	Kitchen & Food Preparation Areas
RED	Toilet & Bathroom
YELLOW	Infection Areas

Mops within services must have detachable heads and be washed regularly in a washing machine using hot water. Different coloured mops must be used for different areas within service to reduce the risk of cross contamination between different areas.

BLUE	General cleaning areas/Communal areas
GREEN	Kitchen & Food Preparation Areas
RED	Toilet & Bathroom
YELLOW	Bodily Fluids

### 7.5 Sandpits (minimum CELC standards)

Minimum Standards for CELC services:

- When solely used by the OSHC, sandpits are covered when service is unattended.
- Raked daily to screen for foreign objects.
- If contaminated by animal or human faeces, blood or other body fluids the following steps are to be taken:
  - Use a shovel and dispose of the sand in a plastic bag.
  - Rake remaining sand at intervals during the day and leave exposed to the sun

Where extensive contamination has occurred, replace all the sand.

For information regarding what to clean and how often and special considerations refer to pp. 53 – 56 and pp. 59 – 62 of the [Staying Healthy Guidelines 6<sup>th</sup> Edition](#).

## 8. Food SAFETY

CELC recognises the importance of Food Safety as an important part of infection control. For information regarding food safety refer CELC's [Food Handling and Preparation Procedure](#) pp. 63 – 65 of the [Staying Healthy Guidelines 6<sup>th</sup> Edition](#).

For information regarding the preparing and storing of bottles refer to CELC'S [Nutrition and Menu Planning Policy and Procedure](#) pp. 66 – 67 of the [Staying Healthy Guidelines 6<sup>th</sup> Edition](#).

## 9. BODILY FLUIDS

### 8.1 SAFELY DEALING WITH BODY FLUIDS

Body fluids spills:

- Wear gloves
- Wipe up spill immediately with paper towel
- Place paper towel and gloves in a plastic bag; seal the bag and place in the rubbish bin (preferably the industrial bin)
- Wash surface with detergent and warm water
- Wipe the area with disinfectant and allow to dry
- Wash your hands with soap and water

### 8.2 EXPOSURE TO BODY FLUIDS

Immediately following exposure to blood or body fluids, it is recommended that the exposed person undertakes the following steps as soon as possible:

- wash wounds and skin sites with soap and water
- apply a sterile dressing as necessary, and apply pressure through the dressing if bleeding is still occurring
- do not squeeze or rub the injury site
- if blood gets on the skin, wash well with soap and water
- irrigate mucous membranes and eyes (remove contact lenses) with water or normal saline
- if eyes are contaminated, rinse while they are open, gently but thoroughly (for at least 30 seconds) with water or normal saline
- if blood or body fluids get in the mouth, spit them out and then rinse the mouth with water several times
- if clothing is contaminated, remove clothing and shower if necessary
- seek prompt medical advice by accessing a medical practitioner
- maintain confidentiality regarding incidents

### 8.3 WASTE

Handling rubbish bins

- Do not place hands where you can't see
- Do not manually compress rubbish bags
- Hold rubbish bags away from the body at all times
- Rubbish bins must not be overfilled
- It is recommended that gloves be worn when handling contaminated waste bags and containers.

## 10. Sharps

“Sharps” refer to any object that can pierce or penetrate the skin easily. This includes ice picks, broken glass and needles. Employees may be required to dispose of needles that are found in toilets or carparks or clean up broken glass that has been contaminated with blood.

### 10.1 Safe Handling of Sharps

Educators are trained in safe working practices to prevent skin penetrating injuries from sharps through the WHS General Training.

CELC prevention strategies:

- Daily inspections
- Employee training

### 10.1.2 How to use a sharps disposal container

The empty sharps container should be kept securely, and out of reach of children, with the First Aid kit.

- Step 1. Put on disposable glove (if manual dexterity is able to be maintained with the glove). Do not recap syringe.
- Step 2. Bring the sharps container to the syringe
- Step 3. Place the container on the ground beside the syringe
- Step 4. Pick up the syringe by the middle of the barrel
- Step 5. Place the syringe in the container sharp end first
- Step 6. Securely place the lid on the container and ensure it is sealed. Carry the container by the top.
- Step 7. Dispose of the sharps container in a secure bin outside of the service area that children access.
- Step 8. Remove gloves carefully. Wash your hands with running water and soap.

Other items that have come into contact with blood should be placed into double plastic bags and then into the rubbish.

### 10.1.3 Needle stick injury – What to do:

- As soon as possible, wash the area around the puncture for at least 30 seconds, using soap and warm water. Bottled water can also be used if no hand washing facilities are available.
- Cover the site with band-aid or similar dressing.
- Seek medical advice immediately.
- Don't panic - the risk of catching a serious infection as a result of an accidental needle stick injury is very low, because these viruses do not survive for long outside of the body.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding incidents.

**SHARP INCIDENTS ARE TO BE REPORTED VERBALLY TO THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND OPERATIONS MANAGER AND THEN DOCUMENTED IN SAFETY CULTURE/CHILD'S INCIDENT REPORT.**

## 11. SOILED CLOTHING

- Soiled items are to be placed in a sealed bag. The bag will be named and stored away from children, in a labelled container.
- A private notification may be sent to the parent on OWNA.
- The soiled item should be given to the parent on collection of the child.

*If parents do not collect soiled items within 48 hours the bag and the garments must be disposed of.*

## 12. RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Forms

- Immunisation Information Checklist
- Employee Immunisation Record
- [Fact sheet 'Cytomegalovirus \(CMV\) in early childhood education and care services' WHS Qld.](#)
- Agreement to withdraw a non –immunised child
- Record of Illness
- Cleaning schedule – Daily and Weekly (10 week)
- Cleaning Schedule – Monthly & Annual

### Other

- Enrolment & Orientation
- Food Handling and Preparation
- Immunisation and Exclusion
- Record Management
- Incident Management
- First Aid & Medical Conditions
- Supervision of Children
- Risk Management
- Immunise Australia Program Australian Gov. Department of Health.
- National Quality Standards 2,3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.1.1, 6.1.1,7 1.1, 7.1.2

## 13. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who is found to have breached the requirements contained within this document. Action taken will depend on the nature and circumstance of each breach and could include: an official warning and note on the individual's personnel file or suspension or dismissal for very serious matters.

## 14. SEE ALSO

### Legislation:

- Education and Care Services National regulations 2011 [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* [Education and Care Services National Law \(Queensland\)](#)
- The National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care 2009 [Guide-to-the-NQF-March-2023.pdf](#)
- Work Health & Safety Act & Regulations 2011 [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- Staying Healthy, 6th Edition [Staying-healthy-guidelines.pdf](#)

## 15. ENQUIRIES

Catholic Early Learning and Care Director - [admin@cclc.catholic.org.au](mailto:admin@cclc.catholic.org.au)

## APPROVAL



Alison Forster  
Director, Catholic Early Learning and Care

**Date:** 26/11/2025

