

# BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



## 4.36 Pandemic COVID-19

### Written By

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### Introduction

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.” (World Health Organisation)

### Policy Statement

Bermagui Preschool is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment that reduces the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19. In recognition of the rapid spread of this disease and the ongoing release of information from authorities, our service will respond swiftly and correctly to advice from authorities.

### Policy Goals

At Bermagui Preschool we will apply measures that prioritise health and safety measures. We will;

- Implement vigilant hygiene practices that prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19,
- Encourage good health and sanitation
- Monitor sources of public health information
- Implement all measures recommended by authorities and
- Educate and inform our community with current and trusted information

### Strategies

Practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 will include:

- Follow current advice from NSW Health Authorities and Department of Education.
- During periods of high risk of COVID-19 in the local community we will...
- Encourage outside activities where possible, small grouping, restrict gathering for meal times and group time. No shared fruit time, water play, playdough or other shared/messy activities.
- Provide staff with face to face and non-contact work options where possible.
- Implement Online Preschool Program for families staying at home.
- On arrival, departure and regularly during the day, thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or with soap and water.
- Encouraging children to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.
- Following good respiratory hygiene, when coughing or sneezing:
  - cover mouth and nose with bent elbow or tissue and
  - dispose of the used tissue immediately and
  - wash hands with soap and water or, if water is not available, use hand sanitiser
- Excluding children or staff who are unwell and reasonably suspected to have a communicable disease from the service.

- Restricting excursions, incursions & visitors to the service during this heightened risk period and conducting risk assessments prior in consideration of:
  - the latest advice from the Australian Health Protection Principle Committee (AHPPC) and
  - those at high risk such as those with medical conditions.
- Encourage staff to be vaccinated for COVID-19

Should there be any concerns regarding the health of a child at the service, families will be asked to seek medical attention. Further guidance may be sought from our local Public Health Unit: 1300 066 055 and or Healthdirect on 1800 022 222.

### **Cleaning and hygiene**

- Practice good hygiene, as per “Staying Healthy in Child Care: Ed 5”. (Frequent handwashing, cover your cough or sneeze with elbow or tissue).
- Our Preschool maintains a clean and hygienic environment. During any infectious disease outbreak, routine environmental cleaning is increased in frequency, particularly on high-touch surfaces such as door handles, tables, light switches and bathroom areas and any toys/ surfaces which may have been mouthed or in contact with bodily fluids.
- Surfaces are cleaned to reduce any soil, then disinfected to remove germs.
- Further advice regarding infectious cleaning will be sought from the local Public Health Unit should there be any direct concern regarding the exposure of COVID-19 at the service.

### **Service of food and water**

- Restrict gathering for meal times to maximise social distancing. No shared fruit time or cooking activities.
- Our Preschool follows strict food preparation and handling procedures, including properly cooking food and following good hand hygiene.
- Our Preschool will follow any direction from the local Public Health Unit in relation to changes in food preparation procedures or water quality.

### **Keeping Informed**

In recognition of the rapid and consistent release of information related to COVID19, our Preschool will refer to reliable authorities daily. Advice, directions and guidance will be:

- Follow the official advice for Department of Education Schools, Early childhood education and care services, the Federal and State Government and the Department of Health website.
- Follow advice accordingly
- Implement Online Preschool Program for families staying at home.
- Maintain regular communication via emails, newsletters, Facebook and text/ phone calls with all staff, Board Members, families and children to ensure clear communication and connections with the Preschool are maintained.
- Trusted sources of information include:
  - Australian Government Department of Health: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
  - Coronavirus information for schools and early childhood centres, students and parents:
  - [www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-schoolsand-early-childhood-centres](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-schoolsand-early-childhood-centres)
  - Corona Health Information Line: 1800 020 080
  - Public Health Unit: 1300 066 055 (NSW)
  - The Regulatory Authority relevant to the service location

### **Notifying the Regulatory Authority**

- Any incident that requires the Approved Provider to close or reduce the number of children at our service for a period will be notified to the State or Territory Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.
- If a child or staff member at the service is diagnosed with COVID-19 this will be reported to the:
  - Regulatory Authority and
  - Local Public Health Unit: 1300 066 055 (NSW)
- A confirmed case of COVID-19 is a serious incident and as such will be notified as soon as practicable within 24 hours.
- Notifications will be made through the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS) or through direct contact via phone or email.
- Our Preschool will remain diligent in reporting responsibilities and any directions provided to the service by the Ministry of Health.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### ***Approved Provider: Board of Directors***

- Follow practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 as listed above.
- Regularly check updates from reliable sources and communicate these to the Nominated Supervisor and action accordingly.
- Ensure that required notifications are made within the defined time frame.
- Provide hand washing facilities and make sure these are kept clean, adequately stocked and in good working order.
- Provide PPE, including face masks and gloves where necessary
- Ask staff who are sick with respiratory illness to stay home until recovered.
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, cooperate with directions from the health authorities and maintain confidentiality.
- Make appropriate arrangements so that staff who need to self-quarantine stay away from work
- Encourage staff to be vaccinated for COVID-19

#### ***Nominated Supervisor***

- On arrival, departure and regularly during the day, thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or with soap and water.
- Follow “Arriving Safely at Home” recommendations (see attached).
- Work with the Approved Provider to ensure that current and reliable information is communicated to families and staff and actioned accordingly.
- Adhere to quarantine requirements and enforce self-quarantine as directed by the Public Health Unit.
- Notify the Approved Provider immediately if you need to self-quarantine, have a confirmed case of COVID-19, have recently travelled to an overseas destination or been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Make appropriate arrangements so that staff who need to self-quarantine stay away from work.
- Assist the Approved Provider to make the required notifications within the defined timeframes
- Arrange for any maintenance or ordering of supplies to ensure there are adequate hand washing facilities.
- Ensure tissues, hand sanitiser, PPE and cleaning products are available for use

- Promote good hygiene practices such as through posters on handwashing and respiratory hygiene
- Keep the Preschool clean and hygienic
- Ask staff who are sick with respiratory illness to stay home until recovered and seek medical advice.
- If children become sick while at the service, follow illness procedures to ensure they are isolated, and families are contacted.
- Advise families of sick children to seek medical advice. If they are very unwell, call an ambulance.
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, cooperate with directions from the health authorities and maintain confidentiality.
- Follow practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 as listed above
- Maintain a record of staff vaccination

#### ***Early Childhood Educators and Staff***

- On arrival, departure and regularly during the day, thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or with soap and water.
- Follow “Arriving Safely at Home” recommendations (see attached).
- Keep the service clean and hygienic.
- Assist in regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces
- Advise families of sick children to seek medical advice. If they are very unwell, call an ambulance.
- If children become sick while at the service, follow illness procedures to ensure they are isolated, and families are contacted.
- Stay home if unwell.
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, cooperate with directions from the health authorities and maintain confidentiality.
- Follow practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 as listed above.
- Follow food preparation and handling procedures in conjunction with regular hand washing.
- Notify the Nominated Supervisor immediately if you need to self-quarantine, have a confirmed case of COVID-19, have recently travelled to an overseas destination or been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- Consider recommendations of COVID-19 vaccination. Provide Bermagui Preschool with updated vaccination records.

#### ***Families***

- On arrival, departure and regularly during the day, thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or with soap and water.
- Follow “Arriving Safely at Home” recommendations (see attached).
- Follow practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 including regularly and thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand or with soap and water and following good respiratory hygiene when coughing or sneezing.
- Follow directions From the Local Public Health Unit (such as the need to self-quarantine) and inform the Nominated Supervisor if you have recently travelled to an overseas destination, have a confirmed case of COVID-19 or been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Seek medical attention for your child should they be unwell.

- Children/ people with existing medical condition or vulnerable people are encouraged to self-isolation while risk is high. A medical practitioner should be consulted for advice and strategies to minimise risks before returning to Preschool.
- Immediately collect your child from the service if requested to do so by staff due to concerns for their health

### Evaluation

All policies are living documents and will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements, current research and best practice. All policies are part of a 3-year review cycle. Families and staff are important stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given the opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved. Bermagui Preschool will ensure that families of children enrolled at the Preschool are notified at least 14 days before making any changes to a policy

### Resources & References

- Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for COVID-19: [www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/environmental-cleaning-and-disinfectionprinciples-for-covid-19.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/environmental-cleaning-and-disinfectionprinciples-for-covid-19.pdf)
- World Health Organisation – Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Outbreak: [www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019](http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)
- Fairwork Australia: [www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/websitenews/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/websitenews/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws)
- Australian Government Department of Health: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
- Coronavirus information for schools and early childhood centres, students and parents: [www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-schools-and-early-childhood-centres](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-schools-and-early-childhood-centres)
- Corona Health Information Line: 1800 020 080
- Public Health Unit: 1300 066 055 (NSW)
- The Regulatory Authority
- Australian Health Protection Principle Committee (AHPPC): [www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc](http://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc)

National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety – Standards 2.1, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2

National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities – Standard 6.1, 6.2

### Relevant Legislation

2010: Section 167. Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 78-80  
 Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Public Health Regulation 2012  
 Public Health Act 2010  
 Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children Attending Child Care Facilities) Bill 2013  
 Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code (FSANZ)

### Date Adopted:

March 2023

### Review Date:

March 2026