



4.13 Illness Policy

This policy was approved by the Nominated Supervisor in consultation with staff and families.

Date Approved: April 2026

Review Date: April 2029

Aim

Bermagui Preschool is committed to providing a healthy, safe and inclusive environment for children, educators, families, volunteers and visitors. As children learn and play together, infectious illnesses can spread despite appropriate hygiene and infection control measures.

This policy aims to minimise the risk of illness and the spread of infectious diseases by implementing effective hygiene, infection prevention and exclusion practices in accordance with Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (6th Edition), NSW Health advice and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

The preschool is unable to provide care for children who are unwell. Children who are ill require increased care, comfort and supervision, which may impact educators' ability to adequately supervise and support all children.

If, in the opinion of the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person, a child is too unwell to participate safely in the preschool program or presents a risk of infection to others, families will be contacted and required to collect the child as soon as practicable. Where parents are unavailable, authorised emergency contacts listed on the enrolment record will be contacted.

Families are requested to notify the preschool as soon as possible if their child is diagnosed with an infectious disease so appropriate control measures can be implemented.

Strategies

Infection Prevention and Control

Bermagui Preschool will implement effective infection prevention and control practices by:

- promoting effective hand hygiene for children, educators and visitors
- cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces, toys and equipment regularly
- following safe food handling procedures
- maintaining adequate ventilation and encouraging outdoor learning where appropriate
- providing appropriate cleaning and personal protective equipment, including disposable gloves, soap and cleaning products
- educating children about good hygiene practices appropriate to their age and development
- supporting educators through ongoing training in infection prevention and control
- notifying families and educators when an infectious disease has been identified within the service, while maintaining confidentiality.

Supporting Children's Health

Information regarding each child's health, medical conditions and wellbeing is obtained during enrolment and updated as required. Where necessary, Individual Medical Management Plans will be developed in consultation with families and health professionals to support children's ongoing health needs.

Educators will become familiar with each child's normal behaviour, participation and wellbeing to assist in identifying changes that may indicate illness.

Educators are not medical practitioners and will not diagnose illnesses. Where symptoms suggest an infectious illness or serious medical condition, families will be advised to seek medical assessment.

Recognising Signs of Illness

Educators will monitor children for signs and symptoms including, but not limited to:

- lethargy or unusual tiredness
- fever (38°C or above)
- reduced appetite or fluid intake
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- persistent coughing
- difficulty breathing
- rash
- unusual pain or discomfort
- irritability or inconsolable crying
- reduced urine output
- stiff neck
- sensitivity to light
- changes in behaviour or level of consciousness.

Children will be observed closely and families contacted promptly if symptoms develop.

If a child's condition deteriorates or becomes life-threatening, educators will administer appropriate first aid, contact emergency services (000) where required and notify the child's parent or authorised emergency contact immediately.

Refer to the 4.01 Medication, 4.31 Medical Conditions and 4.32 First Aid policies for procedures relating to medication administration, medical conditions and first aid. Incidents involving illness or injury are managed in accordance with the 4.12 Incident, Injury and Trauma Policy.

Exclusion from Preschool

Children, educators, volunteers and visitors who are unwell or displaying symptoms of an infectious illness may be excluded from the preschool to minimise the spread of infection.

Exclusion periods will be determined in accordance with:

- Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (6th Edition)
- NSW Health exclusion guidelines
- advice provided by the child's treating medical practitioner or Public Health Unit where applicable.
- Symptoms that may require exclusion include, but are not limited to:
 - fever (38°C or above)
 - vomiting
 - diarrhoea
 - persistent unexplained rash
 - contagious eye infections
 - symptoms of respiratory illness
 - any infectious disease requiring exclusion under current health guidelines.

Children must be well enough to participate fully in the preschool program before returning.

Caring for a Child with a Fever

Where a child develops a fever while attending preschool:

- the child will be separated from other children where practical while remaining supervised
- clothing may be adjusted to improve comfort
- fluids will be encouraged where appropriate
- the child's temperature and condition will be monitored
- educators will observe for additional symptoms such as rash, vomiting or difficulty breathing
- families will be contacted and requested to collect their child promptly.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea (Gastroenteritis)

Children experiencing vomiting or diarrhoea must remain away from preschool until they have been symptom-free for a minimum of 48 hours.

If two or more cases of gastroenteritis occur within the preschool, the Nominated Supervisor will contact the local Public Health Unit for advice and implement any additional control measures required.

Caring for an Unwell Child

When determining whether a child can remain at preschool, educators will consider:

- the child's ability to participate comfortably in the educational program
- whether the child requires one-to-one care beyond what educators can safely provide
- the child's ability to manage personal hygiene
- the risk of infection to other children and educators
- the child's overall presentation and wellbeing.

Where practical, one educator will supervise and monitor the child until they are collected to minimise cross infection and ensure accurate monitoring of symptoms.

Recording Illness

Educators will document symptoms, observations and actions taken whenever a child becomes unwell.

Records may include:

- temperature readings
- symptoms observed
- times symptoms developed
- first aid provided
- communication with families
- collection time
- medical or emergency services contacted where applicable.

Confirmed infectious diseases will be recorded in the Preschool Illness Register.

Illness records assist educators, families and health professionals to monitor illness trends and evaluate infection control practices.

Infectious Diseases

Where an infectious disease is identified within the preschool, Bermagui Preschool will:

- notify families as soon as practicable
- provide information regarding symptoms, exclusion periods and NSW Health advice
- maintain the privacy and confidentiality of affected individuals
- implement additional hygiene and cleaning measures where required
- follow all directions provided by the Public Health Unit.

Disease Outbreaks

In the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease, Bermagui Preschool will:

- consult NSW Health and the local Public Health Unit
- implement enhanced cleaning and infection control procedures
- reinforce hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- communicate with families regarding symptoms and exclusion requirements
- comply with any public health directions.

The preschool will also follow current NSW Health advice relating to emerging infectious diseases or public health risks.

Notifications

All illnesses must be reported to the Nominated Supervisor.

Confirmed notifiable diseases will be managed in accordance with NSW Health requirements. Where required, notification of a notifiable disease will be displayed at the preschool without identifying the affected individual.

Serious incidents or serious illness requiring notification will be reported to the Regulatory Authority in accordance with the 2.13 Notification to the Regulatory Authority Policy.

Where an educator experiences a work-related illness or injury, reporting and management will also occur in accordance with the 4.20 Workplace Health and Safety Policy and applicable workers compensation requirements.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Information relating to a child's illness or health status will be managed confidentially and in accordance with the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy. Personal health information will only be shared where authorised or required by law.

Resources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
- NSW Health
- Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- Safe Work Australia
- Raising Children Network
- NSW Department of Education – Early Childhood Education Directorate

References

Education and Care Services National Law

Education and Care Services National Regulations

- Regulation 77 – Health, hygiene and safe food practices
- Regulation 85 – Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
- Regulation 86 – Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
- Regulation 88 – Infectious diseases
- Regulation 90 – Medical conditions policy
- Regulation 168 – Education and care service policies and procedures
- Regulation 173 – Prescribed information to be displayed
- Regulation 176 – Time to notify certain information to the Regulatory Authority

National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety

- Standard 2.1
 - Element 2.1.1
 - Element 2.1.2
 - Element 2.2.1

Other References

- Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (6th Edition), NHMRC.
- NSW Health – Infectious Disease Factsheets and Exclusion Guidelines.
- Public Health Act 2010 (NSW).
- Public Health Regulation 2022 (NSW)

Related Documentation

- 1.03 Safe Arrival and Departure Policy
- 2.06 Confidentiality Policy
- 2.13 Notification to the Regulatory Authority Policy
- 3.01 Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- 4.01 Medication Policy
- 4.05 Hygiene Policy
- 4.09 Nutrition, Food, Beverages and Dietary Requirements Policy
- 4.12 Incident, Injury and Trauma Policy
- 4.14 Immunisation Policy
- 4.20 Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- 4.31 Medical Conditions Policy
- 4.32 First Aid Policy
- 4.36 Pandemic COVID-19 Policy
- Illness Register
- Medication Record
- Attendance Record
- Individual Medical Management Plans

Version History

V1.0 – First Published: Pre-October 2021

V2.0 – April 2026: Comprehensive review completed. Updated to reflect Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (6th Edition); revised infection prevention and exclusion procedures; strengthened illness monitoring, outbreak management and notification requirements; updated Resources, References and Related Documentation; reformatted to align with Bermagui Preschool policy framework.