



## ▲ SICKNESS AND EXCLUSION

### ▲ NQS

**Element 2.1:** Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.

**Element 2.1.2** Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

**Element 2.2.1:** At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

**Education and Care Services National Regulations:** 77; 85-89; 90-96; 101; 161-162

### ▲ PURPOSE

To provide clear protocols to manage sickness and exclusion and ensure healthy and safe environments for children, families, and employees.

### ▲ POLICY

Children and employees may become symptomatic with possible signs of illness during their time at FROEBEL. The following procedures have been developed to ensure that parents, employees and visitors understand what happens in the event of becoming unwell, or displaying symptoms of possible illness or infection, when you may be contacted to collect your child and when it is reasonable to return to FROEBEL.

Educators at the service will inform parents/guardians if their child becomes unwell or develops symptoms of possible illness or infection while in care. The centre will inform parents if they are required to collect their child from care to minimise the spread of illness and infection.

Educators and children are to stay at home until they are clear of all symptoms of illness or infection and may be required to provide a medical clearance before they can return to the centre.

### ▲ PROCEDURES

#### **UNWELL CHILDREN**

Educators are **Not** health care professionals and are unable to diagnose an illness or infection. If a child is observed to have possible signs or symptoms of illness or infection whilst at FROEBEL, we will ask you to seek further medical advice and clearance that your child is clear of any illness or infection and is fit to attend care.

Educators are aware that there are several symptoms which may present in isolation or in conjunction when children become unwell or who may have a viral or bacterial infection. These may include but are not limited to, signs or symptoms such as a runny nose and coughing.

In the event your child develops possible signs or symptoms whilst at the service, you may be contacted to collect your child as soon as possible they may not be well enough to continue participating in the day-to-day experiences. Some signs and symptoms



include, but are not limited to:

- High fever (above 38°C)
- Drowsiness – the child is less alert than normal, making less eye contact, or less interested in their surroundings;
- Lethargy and decreased activity – the child wants to lie down or be held rather than participate in any activity, even those activities which would be of interest usually
- Breathing difficulty
- Poor circulation
- Poor feeding
- Poor urine output
- Red or purple rash
- Stiff neck or sensitivity to light
- Pain
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting

Your child's educators will monitor your child's signs and symptoms and if they persist the educators

- Will notify the Centre Director / the educator will contact the parents/guardians to inform them of the situation. Parents/Guardians are asked to be contactable (where possible) whilst their child is at the centre.
- If the parents/guardians cannot be contacted the educator will inform the Centre Director / Responsible Person and the educator will contact the nominated emergency contacts.
- Where the nominated emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the Centre Director /Responsible Person will contact the Managing Director to inform them of the situation.
- The Managing Director or Quality and Compliance Manager will also be contacted should we have to call an ambulance if the situation requires emergency medical attention.

Where possible educators will remove the child from the main group of children or create a space for the child within the room away from the other children, allowing the child space to rest. An educator will remain with the child until the parent/caregiver arrives to take the child home.

Educators will **not** make any assumption on the condition of the child, however, as a precaution they will request that the child be taken to a medical practitioner for clarification of signs or symptoms observed.

In the event of more children presenting with similar signs or symptoms over a short period of time, the Centre Director will update all families via Storypark and share information about the current illness and what signs and symptoms to be aware of.

### **COVID-19**

In accordance with Education and Care regulations, and Department of Health FROEBEL will implement COVID Safe practices and policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within a centre.

- Children who become unwell with COVID symptoms whilst at the centre are to be collected by their parents/ carers and it is recommended they undergo



testing for COVID-19

- If positive, follow the local Department of Health recommendations.
- If symptomatic, they should not attend the centre until symptom free.
- Children who are symptomatic but not positive to COVID-19 should not attend the centre until symptom free.

Parents are to advise their Centre Director if their child receives a positive COVID-19 test result.

### **Employees**

As per Department of Health guidelines it is strongly recommended that employees who test positive for COVID-19

- stay home until symptom free and follow local health guidelines
- who have not tested positive but are symptomatic not attend until symptom free

Educators are to advise their Centre Director if they receive a positive COVID-19 test result.

FROEBEL will monitor the number of COVID-19 positive cases associated with the centre and follow the department reporting obligations as per infections disease outbreak requirements.

### **CHILDREN WITH FEVER**

A fever is when the body's temperature is higher than normal. The normal temperature for a child is up to 38° Celsius.

A fever is a temperature above 38° Celsius. Should your child have a temperature of 38° Celsius educators will;

- Attempt to keep the child as comfortable as possible by removing excess clothing. The child must not be allowed to become cold; should this occur, the child must be redressed,
- Encourage the child to drink small amounts of water frequently to avoid dehydration,
- Should the fever raise above 38° Celsius and the child appears to be distressed, the educator will notify the Centre Director and the educator will contact the parents/guardians to request that they collect their child immediately; the child's temperature will be continually monitored at least every fifteen (15) minutes until the parents/guardians arrive,
- Parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to give a verbal direction to administer a single dose of Paracetamol to the child. Parents / guardians will still need to provide a verbal direction in addition to the enrollment form authorisation. A record of the direction to administer Paracetamol will be noted on the Incident/Illness form and signed by the parents/guardians when they collect their child.
- Where a parent/guardian cannot be contacted nor their authorised emergency contacts, the Centre Director/ Responsible Person will authorise from the administration of a single dose of Paracetamol first checking there is consent to administer on the enrollment form. A record of the direction to administer Paracetamol will be noted on the Incident/Illness Form and signed by the parents/guardians when they collect their child;



- Always have a witness to administer medication; the witnesses' name must be recorded on the form alongside the person who has administered
- Complete the Illness/Incident Report Form to document the child's illness; this form must be co-signed by the parents/guardians.

There are several indicators or factors that define when a fever requires **immediate medical attention**. The child may:

- be less than 3 months old with a fever above 38° Celsius
- listless, lethargic, or not responding to your voice
- be losing consciousness or having a fit
- be breathing rapidly
- has a rash
- be vomiting
- has a stiff neck
- has bulging of the fontanelle (the soft spot on the head in babies); or
- be very sleepy or drowsy

Fevers can be an early symptom of an undiagnosed infectious disease. Children with fevers will be excluded from the service for a period of at least twenty-four (24) hours. Children and educators who have had a fever will need to have been fever free for 24 hours prior to returning to the centre.

For further information on infections or immunisable diseases refer to the Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy.

### **FEBRILE CONVULSIONS**

If a child develops a febrile convulsion while in care, educators will comply with the following:

- The Centre Director or Responsible Person will contact Emergency Services on 000 immediately,
- The Centre Director or Responsible Person will contact the parents/guardians immediately,
- Educators will apply appropriate First Aid to manage the convulsions and
- Sponging or bathing is **not** recommended to reduce a child's temperature and may cause the child distress and/or shivers.
- The Centre Director or Responsible Person is required to immediately inform the Managing Director of any febrile convulsions which occurs while a child is in care at the service.



### **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. Gastroenteritis can cause dehydration due to large loss of fluids. Gastroenteritis is highly contagious, and children, educators and volunteers will be excluded should they present with symptoms.

**Children**, who become ill with symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting will be excluded until the symptoms have ceased for **48 hours**.

Should your child's symptoms cease after 24 hours of exclusion, we require a medical certificate stating that your child is fit to return within the 48-hour exclusion period.

**Educators, other staff and volunteers** who become ill with diarrhoea and/ or vomiting will be excluded until the symptoms have ceased for **48 hours** and will be required to provide a medical certificate.

**NB:** Educators, staff and volunteers who are involved with **food preparation** may require longer exclusion.

- Those who have had norovirus, are usually infections while they have symptoms and for 48 hours after symptoms have stopped. 'Some people are still infections up to 10 days after symptoms have stopped.
- Food handlers will require a medical certificate in these circumstances and will be required to complete the Food Handler illness/ Condition Record Form.

If a child has an episode of vomiting or diarrhoea educators will notify the Centre Director. Should the child present with a second episode, the child's parent/caregiver will be notified to collect the child from the service.

The Centre Director or person in day to day charge will:

- Contact the local public health unit if two or more people are ill. We will be guided by any additional measures as advised by the Local Health Unit that are required eg: additional requirement of medical certificates when unwell, extra exclusion periods etc
- Ensure children, educators and volunteers always practice effective hand hygiene;
- Ensure appropriate cleaning practices are being followed.

### **Teething**

Some babies who begin teething may experience discomfort, as the tooth begins to emerge from under the gums. The discomfort may present in the following ways

- Crying often
- Doesn't feed well
- May suck on objects more frequently
- May pull on their ears
- May require more nappy changes than usual

These may be signs of teething or they may a sign that there is an underlying illness.



As educators are **not** health care professionals, they are unable to diagnose if the symptoms they observe are related to teething or an underlying illness. Should a child present with a fever, the educators will follow the procedures as outlined above for managing a fever and will advise parents to visit their health care professional. Children who have a fever will be excluded from the service until the child is fever free for 24 hours.

### **RETURNING TO CARE FOLLOWING ABSENCE OF ILLNESS**

- Children can only return to FROEBEL when they are well and symptom free.
- A medical clearance is required if a child has symptoms but has been cleared by a doctor as not infections after being absent with illness or infection.

### **▲ SOURCES AND FURTHER READING**

- National Health and Medical Research Council: Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th Edition)", June 2013  
[http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/\\_files\\_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55\\_staying\\_healthy\\_5th\\_edition\\_updated\\_130701\\_0.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_5th_edition_updated_130701_0.pdf)
- Infection Control and some common Infections in Young Children, Childcare and Children's Health, Vol. 8 (3), 1-4, 2005:  
[www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCH\\_Vol8\\_No3\\_May2005.pdf](http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCH_Vol8_No3_May2005.pdf)
- A guide to for the management and control of gastroenteritis outbreaks in children's centres:  
[https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/getfile?sc\\_itemid=%7B1F9D96D6-7218-4137-9D1E-F44954B00C12%7D&title=A%20guide%20to%20for%20the%20management%20and%20control%20of%20gastroenteritis%20outbreaks%20in%20childrens%20centres](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/getfile?sc_itemid=%7B1F9D96D6-7218-4137-9D1E-F44954B00C12%7D&title=A%20guide%20to%20for%20the%20management%20and%20control%20of%20gastroenteritis%20outbreaks%20in%20childrens%20centres)
- Care for Kids  
<https://www.careforkids.com.au/newsletter/2014/july/30/sick-kids.html>

### **▲ ASSOCIATED POLICIES**

- Food Preparation Serving and Storage
- Hygiene and Infection Control Policy
- Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion
- Medication
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

### **▲ POLICY REVIEW**

- The Service (together with educators) will review this policy every 12 months.
- The Approved Provider and Centre Director ensure that at all times all educators maintain and implement this policy and its procedures.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the Service to review the policy and procedures.



- **Last review:** 1.02.2024
- **Next review:** 1.02.2025

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