

Dealing with infectious diseases (COVID-19)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

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

Berkeley Vale Pre-school 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 needs to respond swiftly and correctly to advice from authorities.

What will we do?

Berkeley Vale Pre-school will apply measures that prioritise health and safety measures, including:

- Implementing vigilant hygiene practices that prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19
- Encouraging good health and sanitation
- Monitoring sources of public health information
- Implementing all measures recommended by authorities
- Educating and informing our community with current and trusted information.

How will we do it?

- Children and educators are having extended play outdoors to promote "social distancing".
- When appropriate, weather permitting, children are having a picnic lunch outdoors to again to access fresh air, sunshine and adhere to "social distancing".
- Families are dropping and collecting children within our front entry way to eliminate the risk of further people entering the pre-school learning environment.
- Hand sanitiser is being offered to children and parents / carers upon arrival and upon collection in the afternoon.
- Educators have engaged children in discussions about the importance of handwashing and hygiene practices.
- Educators are modelling handwashing practices e.g. Washing hands whilst they sing "Happy birthday" and then rinsing their hands whilst they sing "Happy Birthday" again.
- Educators and contract cleaners have increased their frequency of cleaning surfaces that children touch throughout the day.
- All resources are being cleaned daily with freshly cleaned toys provided each day.
- Removal of sensory play e.g. Playdough, cooking experiences, finger painting.

- The sandpit is being more regularly sanitised.
- Children that are unwell will be sent home.
- Keeping abreast with the daily updates from NSW Health, ACECQA and Department of Education.
- All unnecessary visitors / events have been cancelled at this time e.g. Speech Therapy, Vision Screening, Early Intervention visits, Accountant, AGM and staff meetings. Conference calls are being conducted where appropriate.
- Any supply deliveries are not permitted to enter beyond our front gate.

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 Healthdirect on 1800 022 222.

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.

Trusted sources of information

In recognition of the rapid and consistent release of information related to COVID-19, our service will refer to reliable authorities daily. Advice, directions and guidance will be:

- communicated to staff and families immediately
- followed accordingly:

Trusted sources of information include:

- Australian Government Department of Health: 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
- Corona Health Information Line: 1800 020 080
- Public Health Unit: 1300 066 055 (NSW)
- Early Childhood Education Directorate, NSW Department of Education: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/school-safety/novel-coronavirus.html>

Notifying the Regulatory Authority

In NSW our Regulatory Authority is the Early Childhood Education Directorate, NSW Department of Education)

- 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 Early Childhood Education Directorate within 24 hours.
- If a child or staff member at the service is diagnosed with COVID-19 this will be reported to the:
 - Early Childhood Education Directorate, NSW Department of Education
 - 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 service will remain diligent in reporting responsibilities and any directions provided to the service by the Ministry of Health.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility for
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 hand sanitiser and gloves. ● 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.
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 service 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.
Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. ● Immediately collect your child from the service if requested to do so by staff due to concerns for their health.

Related Guidelines, Standards, & Frameworks

- 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

Resources & Useful Links

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

Spotlight on Quality Issue 5 – Unpacking reporting responsibilities: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/whats-happening-in-the-early-childhood-education-sector/news-and-events/spotlight-on-quality/issue-5-unpacking-reporting-responsibilities>

World Health Organisation – Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Outbreak: www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

Fairwork Australia: www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/websiteneews/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws

Australian Government Department of Health: 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-forschools-and-early-childhood-centres

Corona Health Information Line: 1800 020 080

Public Health Unit: 1300 066 055 (NSW)

The Regulatory Authority: Early Childhood Education Directorate, NSW Department of Education: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/school-safety/novel-coronavirus.html>

Australian Health Protection Principle Committee (AHPPC): <https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc>

Based on sample policy provided by CELA:

<https://www.cela.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/cela-dealing-with-COVID19.pdf>