***Bexley Jack and Jill Preschool Inc.***

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY

**EXCLUSIONS FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND ACUTELY ILL**

**CHILDREN AND STAFF POLICY**

**POLICY:** The centre will minimize the spread of potential infectious diseases between children, other children and children’s centre staff, by conforming to National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) requirements for exclusion of children with infectious diseases and other legislative requirements.

**BACKGROUND:** Exclusion of infectious children significantly reduces the risk of the spread of diseases to other healthy children and staff. Exclusion periods are recommended by the NHMRC, based on the time a child is infectious to others. Contacts of persons with certain infectious diseases may at the discretion of the local Public Health Unit, be excluded for their own safety. There are circumstances where a child is too ill to attend preschool and needs to stay home for treatment and recovery. There are a number of diseases that are notifiable under the Public Health Act 2010 to the local Public Health Unit.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION:**

* Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
* Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010

**LINKS TO NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD**

* QA2: Children’s Health and Safety
* 2.1 Each child’s health is promoted
* 2.1.3 Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
* 2.1.4 Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and the manage illness and injuries, in accordance with recognised guidelines

**KEY RESOURCES:**

* Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2011)
* Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
* EYLF – Belonging Being Becoming (2009)
* Health and Safety in Children’s Services Model Policies and Practices – 2nd Edition revised (2003)
* Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care - 5th Edition (2012)
* NSW Ministry of Health: www.health.nsw.gov.au/
* National Health and Medical Research Council: www.nhmrc.gov.au/
* Immunisation Handbook – 10th Edition (2015) Australian Government – Department of Health – National Health and Medical Research Council
* Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (3) (2011)

**PRACTICES:**

To minimize the spread of infectious diseases between children and other healthy children, children’s centre staff and visitors, the preschool will;

* **On enrolment, parents will receive a copy of the Health Policy** detailing Exclusion Policy followed at the Centre.
* **The preschool does not have the facilities to care for sick children.** If a child is ill, parents will be contacted and expected to collect their child as soon as possible. If parents are unavailable the child’s Emergency Contact Person will be asked to collect and care for the child.
* **Exclude from care and notify the local Public Health Unit** and provide details of any known or suspected persons (children or staff) with any vaccine preventable diseases such as;
  + Diphtheria
  + Measles
  + Mumps
  + Rubella
  + Pertussis (whooping cough)
  + Chicken Pox
* **Exclude children, staff, volunteers or visitors** who have infectious diseases other than listed above in accordance with the NHMRC Recommended Minimum Periods of Exclusion (see Appendix). Also seek advice from your local Public Health Unit in cases of infectious disease, or if a child or staff member has a serious illness such as meningitis, food poisoning, gastroenteritis, streptococcal infection, tuberculosis, hepatitis A.
* Exclude staff from handling duties who have pustular infections (such as boils) of the skin that cannot be covered or who are ill from gastroenteritis or hepatitis A.
* **Exclude children and staff who:**
  + Are acutely ill and may need to see a doctor
  + Are too ill to participate in normal preschool activities
  + Require extra supervision to the detriment of the care and safety of the child or other children
  + Who are ill from gastroenteritis or Hepatitis A
  + Have symptoms or signs of a possible infectious illness (see Assessing Serious or Potential Infectious Diseases)
  + Vomited – NO vomiting for 24 hours before coming to preschool
  + Diarrhoea - NO diarrhea for 24 hours before coming to preschool
  + Temperature - (anything over 38 C). Must be clear for at least 24 hours.
  + Conjunctivitis - (sticky discharging , blood-shot eyes or swollen eyes) The child must have 24 hours treatment before being readmitted, and there must be no discharge
  + Infectious Diseases – e.g. chicken pox, hepatitis A, measles, mumps, German measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, (Refer to exclusion table).
  + Contagious Skin Conditions - Impetigo, Ringworm, Scabies
* **Request from the Public Health Unit a clearance** to attend for children and staff who have diphtheria, hepatitis A, polio, tuberculosis, and typhoid or paratyphoid infection.
* **Advise families that when a child has commenced treatment with a medication**, the child should not attend care for at least 24 hours to ensure the child is recovering and is not having side effects from the medication.
* **If a child or staff member has been unable to attend the centre because of an infectious illness,** when the child or staff member has fully recovered ask the family or staff member to obtain a Medical Certificate from their doctor which states that the child or staff member is not infectious and is able to attend care or return to work.
* **Where possible keep up to date information in relevant community languages** regarding infectious diseases and exclusion policy and ensure this information is easily accessible to culturally and linguistically diverse families.
* **Be aware that conflicts and difficulties may arise** when negotiating with families, and interpreting medical certificates, due to;
  + Families finding exclusion requirements difficult because of pressures to meet working and other personal commitments
  + Families may present doctor’s certificate of fitness of a child to attend that the staff considers inconsistent with the situation at the time.
* **Refer difficult or unresolved situations** to the local Public Health Unit, or discuss with the child’s doctor (with parental permission), before accepting the child into care. Difficult situations in relation to infectious diseases should be referred to the Public Health Unit.

**LINKS TO OTHER CENTRE POLICIES**

* Infectious Diseases Policy
* Immunisation Policy
* Health Policy Overview

**Policy reviewed October 2013, May 2017**