Illness and Exclusion Policy

Reviewed by the Approved Provider, March 2026. Next review: March 2027.

Purpose

This policy explains when a child who is unwell should stay home, how we care for a child who becomes unwell at the centre, and how long a child stays away after an infectious illness. It protects the child who is sick, the other children, and our educators.

Keeping unwell children at home

Please keep your child at home if they are not well enough to join in the normal day, including outdoor play and rest time. A child who needs one-to-one care all day cannot be cared for safely in a group, even if they do not have an infectious illness.

Fever

A child with a temperature of 38°C or above will be sent home. They can return once they have been free of fever for 24 hours without medicine to bring their temperature down. If your child has had paracetamol or ibuprofen before arriving, please tell the educator at drop-off.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

A child who vomits or has a loose bowel motion at the centre will be sent home. They can return once there has not been any vomiting or a loose bowel motion for 24 hours. This follows the minimum exclusion period for gastroenteritis set by the Victorian Department of Health.

Common infectious illnesses

We follow the Victorian Department of Health minimum exclusion periods. Some of the most common: chickenpox, until all blisters have dried, usually at least five days after the rash appears; conjunctivitis, until any discharge from the eyes has stopped; hand, foot and mouth disease, until all blisters have dried; impetigo, until treatment has started, with any sores on exposed skin covered. The full table is kept at the front entrance and the director can talk you through it.

Head lice

Children do not need to stay home because of head lice, as long as treatment has started before they come back the next day. If we notice head lice during the day, we will let you know at pick-up and ask that treatment starts that evening.

When a child becomes unwell at the centre

If your child becomes unwell, the educator will make them comfortable in a quiet space away from the group and phone you. Please collect your child within one hour. If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contacts on your enrolment form. In an emergency we call an ambulance first and then you.

Medication

Educators can only give medication that is in its original packaging, labelled with your child's name, and recorded on a medication form signed by you. Prescription medicines must be within date and prescribed for your child. The first dose of any new medicine must be given at home.

Immunisation

Under Victoria's No Jab No Play law, every child must have an up-to-date Immunisation History Statement before they start, and we ask for a new one each time your child is due for a vaccine. During an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable illness, children who are not fully immunised may be asked to stay home for their own protection.

Letting other families know

If a child at the centre has an infectious illness, we let families in that room know through the noticeboard on our website and by email, without naming the child. We notify the Department of Health when the law requires it.

Questions about this policy are welcome. Speak with the director at the centre, or call (03) 5550 0178.