



## Communicable Diseases Policy

### **Aims**

- A.** To promote and implement effective health and hygiene practices that minimise the spread of communicable diseases through the school community.
- B.** To minimise disruption to staff and students and maintain educational programs through preventing and reducing the spread of communicable diseases.

### **Scope and Application**

The following are considered communicable diseases for the purpose of this policy although this list is not exhaustive:

- A.** Respiratory infections ('colds' and 'flu', cause by a number of different viruses)
- B.** Gastroenteritis infections (caused by a number of different viruses)
- C.** Enteroviruses (e.g. hand, foot and mouth)
- D.** Chicken pox
- E.** Measles
- F.** Hepatitis
- G.** Impetigo (school sores)
- H.** Herpes (cold sores)
- I.** Glandular fever
- J.** Mumps
- K.** Whooping cough
- L.** Meningococcal C
- M.** Ringworms
- N.** Tuberculosis
- O.** Blood-borne diseases (e.g. Human Immune Deficiency Virus)
- P.** Head lice

This policy is available on the school website and is included in the staff induction.

This policy applies to:

- A. Employees
- B. Students
- C. Parents
- D. Community members
- E. Visitors to the school

## Definitions

- A. **Communicable diseases** – any infectious disease caused by pathogenic microorganisms (i.e. bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi) that is transmissible via direct or indirect contact with an infected person, or through contact with a disease vector (e.g. mosquito).
- B. **Hand hygiene** – general term referring to any action of hand cleansing, including handwashing with soap and water, or using hand sanitiser.
- C. **Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette** – terms used to describe infection prevention measures. Practices include covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, using tissues and disposing of them appropriately, and attending to hand hygiene immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing nose.
- D. **Notifiable communicable diseases** – a subset of communicable diseases that are notifiable to the Department of Health under the Public Health Act 2016.
- E. **Pandemic** – A pandemic occurs when a disease or virus becomes geographically widespread throughout the world and is declared a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organisation.

## Principles

- A. Precautions will be taken to minimise the spread of infection through the school community, through measures including: regular hand hygiene; regular cleaning of surfaces and facilities; hygienic food preparation, serving and storage; discouraging the sharing of food and eating/drinking utensils; and encouraging parents to keep sick children at home.
- B. Students will be informally educated about and reminded of precautions to minimise the spread of infection.
- C. Families and the school need to work together to minimise the spread of communicable diseases. The school relies on parents to inform them of any signs of communicable disease, any diagnosis obtained and any response (including exclusion advice) provided by the family doctor.
- D. Schools are not expected to provide expert advice or treat students, which is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities.

- E.** In the case of a notification or outbreak of a communicable disease within the school community, the school will communicate guidance to families based on information provided by the Department of Health.
- F.** If a student or staff member has a communicable disease, the Principal will take action in accordance with the advice provided by the Department of Health (Communicable Disease Guidelines).
- G.** In the case of a notifiable communicable disease, the Principal will report the matter to the local Public/Population Health Unit (Department of Health) and seek their advice before taking any further action; and act in accordance with advice provided by local Department of Health staff.
- H.** In the case of a declaration of a pandemic, the school will be guided by any emerging guidance provided by the Department of Health with regard to hygiene, operational and other requirements (e.g. social distancing) for schools.
- I.** The school collects information about student health care needs, including immunisation status, at enrolment to facilitate the school's response to communicable diseases.

## **Responsibilities**

### **A. Board**

1. Develop, update and review this policy in consultation with relevant parties.
2. Ensure this policy is being implemented.
3. Maintain a safe school environment.

### **B. Principal**

1. Oversee the implementation of hygiene practices at the school to minimise the spread of infection.
2. Consult Department of Health Communicable Disease Guidelines to determine the appropriate response in the case of a communicable disease within the school community.
3. Be aware of those diseases which are [notifiable](#), and report to, and seek advice from, the Public/Population Health Unit (Department of Health).
4. Inform the school community of the occurrence of a communicable disease within the school community.
5. When a student shows symptoms of a communicable disease at school, the Principal will:
  - i** assess the urgency of the situation and act accordingly.
  - ii** care for and isolate the student.
  - iii** contact a parent and describe the symptoms and what action is required of the parent.

- iv complete an incident report form.
  - 6. Ensure parents are clear about their responsibilities with regard to informing the school if their child has a communicable disease.
- C. Administration Staff**
- 1. Maintain an information file on communicable diseases.
  - 2. Maintain records of communicable disease reports and communication.
- D. Teachers and staff**
- 1. Report observed symptoms, which they think may indicate a communicable disease, to the Principal.
  - 2. Remind students of precautions that may be taken to avoid the spread of germs – hygiene practices.
  - 3. Ensure hygiene practices are followed including hand hygiene and cleaning of surfaces.
- E. Parents**
- 1. Ensure their child is kept away from school if they have a communicable disease and seek medical advice on the exclusion period and conditions for returning to school.
  - 2. Inform the school if their child has a communicable disease.
  - 3. Provide the school with any known health information needed.
  - 4. Provide the school with emergency contact numbers on their enrolment form.
- F. Students**
- 1. Inform their parent or teacher if they feel sick or notice any symptoms such as rashes or sores.
  - 2. Follow hygiene practices as directed to avoid the spread of germs.

## **Related Legislation**

- A. Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 (WA)
- B. Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996 (WA)
- C. Public Health Act 2016 (WA)
- D. Public Health Regulations 2017 (WA)
- E. Emergency Management Act 2005
- F. Emergency Management Regulations, 2006
- G. School Education Act 1999
- H. School Education Regulations 2000
- I. Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2012

- J.** Industrial Relations Act 1979
- K.** State Records Act 2000 (WA)
- L.** Biosecurity Act 2015
- M.** Standards Australia AS/NZS ISO 3100;2009 Risk Management Principles and Guidelines
- N.** Standards Australia AS 3745:2010 Planning for emergencies in facilities
- O.** Standards Australia HB 292:2006 A practitioner's guide to business continuity management

## **Related Kerry Street Documentation**

- A.** Procedures and Forms including:
  - 1. Communicable Diseases Procedure
  - 2. Head Lice Procedure
  - 3. Notification of Non-Vaccination Form
  - 4. Pandemic Management Plan
  - 5. Pandemic Hygiene Protocols
  - 6. Pandemic Cleaning Protocols
  - 7. KSCS Pandemic Cleaning Checklist
  - 8. KSCS Pandemic Protocol Sign
  - 9. Response to Closure Checklist
- B.** Policies including:
  - 1. Duty of Care Policy
  - 2. Child Safety and Well-Being Policy
  - 3. Illness and First Aid Policy
  - 4. Attendance and Truancy Policy
  - 5. Communication Policy
  - 6. Enrolment Policy
  - 7. Emergency Response Procedures Policy
  - 8. Critical Incident Policy
  - 9. Risk Management Policy
  - 10. Records Management Policy
  - 11. Privacy Policy
  - 12. Teacher Relief Policy

## Further Information

- A. [Communicable Disease Guidelines](#)
- B. [Population/Public Health Unit](#)

## Contact Person

Any enquiries relating to this policy should be directed to the School Principal or Board Chair.

## Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Authorisation and Review

- A. This policy was read, discussed, modified and endorsed by the staff on 1 December 2004.
- B. Authorised by the Kerry Street Community School Council on February 2005.
- C. Reviewed on 13 January 2006 by meeting of Staff and Council.
- D. Review 13 September 2013.
- E. Removed reference to conscientious objection to immunisation 10 September 2016.
- F. Reviewed May 2020.
- G. To be reviewed S1 2023

## Revision History

Date	Revision	Detail
20/05/2020	v.2	Significant update, including alignment with AISWA guidance and reference to pandemics. Amalgamation of the Head Lice policy as a procedure.