

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.

OVERALL GOALS – What are we going to do?

Our service 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 and
- Educating and informing our community with current and trusted information.

POLICY STATEMENT

Bourke and District Children’s Services is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment 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.

OVERALL STRATEGIES – How will it be done?

Practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 will include:

- Regularly and thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or with soap and water and having regular time for handwashing for all children and staff within learning programs and activities, especially before eating.

Encouraging children to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.

- Encouraging children to “learn through play” about face masks, hand hygiene and social distancing through imaginative play e.g. facemasks have been made for dolls and teddies
- Requiring all staff and management to complete online COVID-19 training module (<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>)
- Maintaining social distancing of adults including staff, parents and visitors where appropriate
- Using facemasks when social distancing cannot be achieved, or when they are recommended by health authorities during times of heightened risk
- Requiring all staff, children and visitors to record their temperatures on sign in to the Centres, and be excluded from the service if their temperature exceeds 38C for more than 30 minutes
- Following good respiratory hygiene, when coughing or sneezing; cover mouth and nose with bent elbow or tissue and dispose of the used tissue immediately and wash hands with soap and water or, if water is not available, use hand sanitiser.

- Excluding children or staff who are unwell and reasonably suspected to have a communicable disease from the service until they are asymptomatic and well.
- Excluding children or staff who have recently travelled to a Dept of Health COVID declared “hot spot” or visited a COVID 19 Case location as advised by the NSW Department of Health until they have been cleared by a doctor following a COVID test to return.
- Consider the need for non-essential activities that involve close personal contact – for example [excursions](#) and [incursions](#).
- Implement controls to reduce direct contact with others, such as:
 - barriers to create space at sign-in areas, seated areas etc.
 - modify shifts and rosters, or pick-up and drop-off times to reduce peak periods.
 - have staff collect children from outside the service.
 - support remote learning for families keeping their children at home for long periods.
 - restricting excursions and incursions during this heightened risk period and conducting risk assessments prior in consideration of:
 - the latest advice from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and those at high risk such as those with medical conditions.
 - 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 Health direct on 1800 022 222.
 - 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 and 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:
- National Coronavirus Help Line: 1800 020 080
- Public Health Unit: 1300 066 055 (NSW)
- <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>
- <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/coronavirus/advice-for-services-and-providers>

CLEANING AND HYGIENE

Bourke and District Childrens Services maintains a clean and hygienic environment. During any infectious disease outbreak, routine environmental cleaning is increased in frequency, particularly on high- touch surfaces such as door handles, tables, light switches and bathroom areas. Surfaces are cleaned using detergent and water (or wipes) to remove any visible soil, then disinfected to remove germs. Ensure to use a disinfectant that is effective against viruses including COVID-19 and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Wear gloves when cleaning and disinfecting.

Washing toys effectively is very important to reduce the spread of disease. Only washable toys and books are to be used. Toys are to be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day. Employ a "toys to wash" receptacle, and during the day, place into this any toys as they are mouthed or come into contact with bodily fluids for cleaning and disinfecting at the end of the session.

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, including approved deep cleaning services

Service of food and water

Our service follows strict food preparation and handling procedures, including properly cooking food and following good hand hygiene.

Our service will follow any direction from the local Public Health Unit in relation to changes in food preparation procedures or water quality.

Notifying the Regulatory Authority

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 State or Territory Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.

If a child or staff member at the service is diagnosed with COVID-19 this will be reported to the: Regulatory Authority and 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 face masks 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. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 as listed above. |
| Families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow practices to reduce the 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 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. <p>Immediately collect your child from the service if requested to do so by staff due to concerns for their health.</p> |

RESOURCES / USEFUL LINKS

- Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for COVID-19: www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/environmental-cleaning-and-disinfection-principles-for-covid-19.pdf
- Spotlight on Quality Issue 5–Unpacking reporting responsibilities: www.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–Corona virus disease (COVID-19) Outbreak: www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
- Fairwork Australia: www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/coronavirus-and-Australian-workplace-laws
- Australian Government Department of Health: www.health.gov.au
- Corona virus information for schools and early childhood centres, students and parents: www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-schools-and-early-childhood-centres
- National Coronavirus Helpline: 1800020080
- Public Health Unit :1300066055(NSW)
- The Regulatory Authority
- Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC): www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc

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 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 RELATED GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORKS

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National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities – Standard 6.1, 6.2

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 90,91,94

Policy Revision History

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Authorised By</i> | <i>Description of Amendments</i> | <i>Sections affected</i> |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Jan 2021 | P. Ritchie – GM | | |
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Review Date: Jan 2022