



Melrose Rural Care Infectious Diseases Policy

From our philosophy: **"We aim to provide high quality care and education through a partnership between parents, children, community, staff and the Department of Education and Children's Services."**

With the belief that:

- ❖ Children develop individually through stages, in their own learning style varying through cultural and family values and perception of these may vary.
- ❖ Healthy self esteem is the basis of positive physical, intellectual and social growth.
- ❖ We believe children need to express themselves in a safe environment.
- ❖ Children learn most effectively through hands on experience, through play.
- ❖ We value involvement of families and community and we encourage open communication.
- ❖ Our planning and evaluation is inclusive to children with additional needs.
- ❖ Our aims of planning and daily activities reflect our philosophy and are made available to families.

Statement: At MELC, we promote a safe and healthy environment. One of the best ways of promoting this is to work co-operatively with families to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.

Infections are common in children, however we all need to be aware of ways to minimise the spread of disease in our community. We all have responsibilities!

This policy outlines:

- ⊙ Parent and staff responsibilities
- ⊙ Basic information on when to keep your child at home
- ⊙ Periods of exclusion for infectious diseases

Parent responsibilities

If your child is not well and will not be attending the centre, please ring and let the staff know. If it is an infectious disease such as Chicken Pox, Measles etc. We can then alert other parents to be on the look out so precautions can be taken to prevent spreading the disease. Refer to the basic information sheet for guidelines for keeping your child at home.

Staff responsibilities

Children who arrive at the centre and are obviously unwell will need to be sent home immediately. Unfortunately, if a child becomes unwell during a session, we do not have a suitable area to care for him/her, and/or spare staff members to assist them on a full time basis. Parents/caregivers will be contacted straight away to come and collect the child. (If a parent is unable to be contacted, the alternative contact person named on the enrolment form will be called)

Things we encourage

- All families to immunise their children and keep their record card up to date. This will help to prevent serious diseases (e.g. Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Measles, Mumps, Polio)
- Hand washing before preparing or eating food, after wiping noses and after using the toilet.
- Staff to wear gloves when handling all body fluid, such as blood, faeces and vomit
- All children to be toilet trained. We realise accidents will happen but if possible children need to be independent in the toilet.
- The children to use the cups provided and after use put them, into the container provided to be washed- this will assist the prevention of spreading germs.

When to keep your child at home

Sometimes it is difficult to know when to keep your child at home from preschool.

It is really important for the health of both the other children and staff that you keep your child at home when he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- Is unusually tired, pale, and irritable or lacks an appetite and is generally unwell to be around others.
- Has 3 or more watery stools in a 24 hour period. (Gastroenteritis)
- Has an ear infection.
- Thick pus draining from the eyes (Conjunctivitis)
- A body rash or a temperature of 38% or higher.
- A sore throat, persistent cough or sneeze, swollen neck glands, constant runny nose, or mucus is thick and not clear.
- Has vomited 2 or 3 times within the previous 24 hours.

We understand that it is difficult for working parents to take time off to care for their sick child, but infections spread rapidly. Try to make 'just in case plans' (e.g. a neighbour, friend or relative), in the likely event that your child becomes ill.

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Director
Rural Care

Referenced: DECS - Staying healthy in childcare

Periods of Exclusion for Infectious Diseases

Bronchitis

Stay at home until appropriate medical treatment is given and the child is feeling well.

Chicken Pox

Stay at home until all lesions have crusted, there are no moist sores and the child is fully recovered.

Conjunctivitis

Stay at home until there is no discharge from eyes

Croup

Stay at home until fully recovered.

German Measles (Rubella)

Stay at home for 7 days after rash first appears and the child is fully recovered. Please confirm with a doctor because of the potential severity of illness to pregnant women.

Head Lice

Hair must be treated to eradicate both lice and nits. When infestation is suspected, parents will be notified, so that treatment may start as soon as possible, thus preventing further infection to others. Information and availability on treatment methods will be supplied if required.

Impetigo (School sores)

Stay at home until sore/s clears.

Influenza

Stay at home until child feels well.

Measles

Stay at home for 7 days after rash appears or until given a clear bill of health by a doctor.

Mumps

Stay at home for a least 9 days or until all swelling has subsided, which ever is sooner.

Ring Worm

Stay at home until appropriate treatment has commenced, confirmation of this is to be by a medical certificate.

Rotavirus (Diarrhoea)

Stay at home until diarrhoea symptoms have disappeared and the child feels well again.

Whooping Cough

Stay at home for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment. Non immunised households or close contacts should be excluded for 14 days or until they have been on antibiotic treatment for at least 5 days.