

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) MANAGEMENT POLICY

Voluntary – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy defines a clear set of guidelines and procedures for St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten to:

- minimise the risk of exposure of COVID-19 to staff, children and their families, and visitors to the Service;
- implement appropriate physical distancing and good hygiene practices that will help reduce potential transmission of the virus amongst the St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten community;
- manage any child or staff member who has a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19; and
- ensure that staff, parents and guardians and visitors to the Service adhere to advice from the Australian and Victorian Governments regarding appropriate protective measures to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

This policy also ensures that St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten meets its obligations to have a COVIDSafe Plan in place in accordance with Victorian Government requirements for workplaces.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten is committed to:

- providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff and any other persons attending the Service;
- responding to the needs of any child or adult who presents with COVID-19 symptoms while attending the Service;
- complying with current guidelines set by the Australian Government and the Victorian Department of Health and Department of Education and Training;
- providing up-to-date information and resources for families and staff regarding protection of all members of the St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten community from the risks associated with COVID-19; and
- maintaining a duty of care to children and users of the Service.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider; Nominated Supervisor; persons in day-to-day charge; staff; students on placement; volunteers; parents/guardians; children; and any others attending the programs and activities of St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that was originally identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019. On 11 March 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a 'pandemic' - a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. This was primarily due to the speed and scale of transmission of the virus in countries around the world, including Australia.

COVID-19 is transmitted from someone who is infected with the virus to others in close contact through contaminated droplets spread by coughing or sneezing or by contact with contaminated hands or surfaces. According to Australian Department of Health, the time of exposure to the virus and when symptoms first occur is anywhere from 2-14 days. Studies suggest that COVID-19 may persist on

surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions such as the type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment.

Symptoms can range from a mild illness, similar to a cold or flu, to pneumonia. People with COVID-19 may experience:

- fever
- flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue
- shortness of breath

The [Australian Government](#) is constantly updating the status of COVID-19 in Australia in order to provide the latest health recommendations, travel restrictions and resources and information to help people make informed decisions.

As this information is changing rapidly, our Service is constantly monitoring health alerts and implementing measures suggested by key health experts to minimise the transmission of COVID-19.

Our Service has a range of comprehensive policies in place to guide best practice in relation to health and safety, implementing good hygiene practices and dealing with infectious diseases. Our duty of care and responsibilities to children, parents, families and all staff to provide a safe environment is of utmost importance.

The evolving nature of COVID-19 and the unprecedented steps required to protect our community as recommended by the Australian Government have resulted in the development of a specific policy to assist our Service to manage this pandemic.

Our Service will minimise our staff and children's exposure to COVID-19 by adhering to all recommended guidelines from the Australian Government Department of Health and the Victorian Government in order to slow the spread of the virus. We will implement practices that help to reduce the transmission of the virus including through establishing effective hygiene practices (over and above those under our existing policies and procedures) and physical distancing measures.

We will provide up-to-date information and advice on the impacts of COVID-19 on our Service to parents, families and staff that is sourced from the Australian and Victorian Governments as it becomes available. Recommendations and health measures mandated by government will be strictly adhered to at all times.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019*

4. DEFINITIONS

Approved Provider: An individual or organisation that has completed an application and been approved by the Regulatory Authority as fit and proper (in accordance with Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the National Law) to operate one or more education and care services.

Attendance register: A written record containing the details of all persons who have attended the service premises for a duration of 15 minutes or longer. Details required to be recorded include date and time of visit, name, address and contact details.

COVID-19: COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. (Source: World Health Organisation)

COVID-19 symptoms: Symptoms associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) including fever, chills or sweats, coughing, a sore throat, fatigue and/or shortness of breath, runny nose, loss or change in sense of smell or taste. Some people may also experience headache, muscle soreness, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.

Education contact: The Victorian Government defines an education contact as someone:

- who is not a household contact, and
- who has had 15 minutes of face to face contact with, or spent 2 hours in the same indoor space at the Service with, someone who is infectious with COVID-19.

Household or household-like contact: The Victorian Government defines a household contact as people who have spent more than four hours with someone who has COVID-19 inside a house, accommodation or care facility.

Infectious Period: from 48 hours prior to symptom onset, or specimen collection date for asymptomatic cases until end of quarantine period

National Law: Refers to the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*, the national law regulating education and care services for children.

Nominated Supervisor: A person who has been nominated by the Approved Provider of the service under Part 3 of the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and who has consented to that nomination in writing can be the Nominated Supervisor. All services must have a Nominated Supervisor with responsibility for the service in accordance with the National Regulations. The Approved Provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the Nominated Supervisor is a fit and proper person (in accordance with Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the National Law), with suitable skills, qualifications and experience. The Regulatory Authority must be notified if the Nominated Supervisor for the service changes, or is no longer employed at the service.

Person in day-to-day charge: A person is in day-to-day charge if (a) the person is placed in day-to-day charge by the approved provider or a nominated supervisor of the education and care service after meeting the definition for a service supervisor certificate, and (b) the person consents to the placement in writing.

Rapid Antigen Test (RAT): RATs can be used at home or to check if you may have COVID-19. RATs are available from some supermarkets, pharmacies, select testing sites.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 Procedures relating to exclusion and self-isolation

All staff, volunteers, visitors, children and their family members attending the Service premises are responsible for:

- Complying with guidance issued by the Australian and Victorian Governments regarding COVID-19 quarantine and self-isolation requirements and procedures;
- Not entering the Service premises if any of the following apply:
 - They have had a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, have not completed 7 days quarantine in line with Victorian Government requirements;
 - They are displaying COVID-19 symptoms;
 - They are a Household contact (or household-like contact) and have not completed 7 days quarantine in line with Victorian Government requirements; and
 - They are an education contact and are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Immediately advising the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or a staff member who is a person in day-to-day charge (as appropriate) if they or a member of their household receives a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19; and
- Complying with any isolation period in relation to coronavirus implemented by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor including periods which exceed government requirements.

The Approved Provider and/or Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- If appropriate, requesting any staff member to self-isolate if they are an education contact and are experiencing symptoms; and
- If required, applying for waivers from ratio and qualification requirements where staff are required to self-isolate.

The Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and other educators are responsible for:

- Arranging to be tested for COVID-19 if displaying COVID-19 symptoms or in accordance with Victorian Government requirements;
- Complying with any direction issued by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor to self-isolate following suspected contact with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 in accordance with Victorian Government requirements for isolation.

While not mandatory, the Victorian Government strongly recommends voluntary twice-weekly surveillance RAT testing for staff working in early childhood education centres for at least the first 4 weeks of Term 1 2022.

All parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Keeping their child out of the Service if:
 - The child has had a confirmed diagnosis for COVID-19 and has not completed at least 7 days quarantine;
 - Any member of the child's household has had a confirmed diagnosis for COVID-19 and the child has not completed 7 days quarantine in line with Victorian Government requirements
 - The child is an education contact and is displaying COVID-19 symptoms (the education contact will need to provide evidence of a RAT or PCR result to return to the Service),
 - The child is displaying COVID-19 symptoms;
- Ensuring that any child who is displaying COVID-19 symptoms is tested; and
- Immediately notifying the kindergarten staff if their child or a member of their child's household has received a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 either through a RAT or PCR test.

5.2 Procedures relating to the delivery and collection of children

The Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and other educators are responsible for:

- Signing in each child upon their arrival at the Service, and signing out each child upon them being collected by their parent or guardian;
- Ensuring that each child washes their hands prior to them entering the education rooms; and
- Ensuring that each child sits on the marked spots on the floor upon entering the education rooms to begin the day.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Limiting the number of persons accompanying the delivery or collection of children to as few as possible;
- Ensuring that they remain outside the education rooms at all times unless with permission from the nominated supervisor, person in day-to-day charge or another educator;
- Limiting the amount of time that they remain on the Service premises to as short as possible;
- Avoiding congregating with other parents or guardians on or outside the Service premises by practicing appropriate physical distancing measures (i.e. ensuring that they remain 1.5 metres apart from other families); and
- Complying with any other directions provided by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor regarding procedures put in place to ensure safe delivery and collection of children.

5.3 Procedures relating to suspected cases of COVID-19 at the Service

The Approved Provider and/or Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Following up on the status of any child who has been sent home from the Service and ascertaining whether any further action is required to be taken. This action could include:
 - Additional cleaning and sanitising of the premises;
 - Notifying families of children attending the service of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 on the Service premises; and/or
 - Deciding whether to temporarily close the Service until the safety of staff, children and visitors can be assured.

The Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and other educators are responsible for:

- Checking the temperature of any child who is displaying COVID-19 symptoms during their attendance at the Service;
- If the child's temperature is 37.5 degrees Celsius or above, immediately contacting the child's parent or guardian and requesting that the child is collected within 30 minutes;
- Exercising discretion in deciding whether to contact the parent or guardian of any child who is displaying COVID-19 symptoms but does not have an elevated temperature, in order to discuss any concerns about the health status of the child and requesting that the child is collected if the concerns remain;
- If the child's parent or guardian cannot be reached, contacting a nominated emergency contact and requesting that they come to collect the child within 30 minutes;
- Isolating the child in an appropriate space with suitable supervision until they are collected by their parent or guardian;
- Attempting to lower the child's temperature by:

- Removing excessive clothing (shoes, socks, jumpers);
- Encouraging the child to take small sips of water;
- Moving the child to a quiet area where they can rest whilst being supervised;
- Wearing a mask and disposable gloves when caring for a child who has COVID-19 symptoms;
- Keeping accurate records of the child's temperature, time taken, time parent/s or guardians were contacted, the staff member's name and time of collection;
- Recording all relevant details in an *Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Record*;
- Complying with the relevant requirements and procedures contained in the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*;
- Notifying the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or persons in day-to-day charge (as appropriate) if they develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the service; and
- Ensuring that they self-isolate in an appropriate area of the service until they leave the premises.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Collecting their child within 30 minutes (or as soon as reasonably practicable) if requested by a member of staff;
- Signing the *Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Record* upon collecting their child; and
- Ensuring that their contact details and emergency contact details are current and updating them if required.

5.4 Procedures relating to implementing effective personal hygiene measures

All staff, volunteers, visitors, children and their family members attending the Service premises are responsible for:

- Washing their hands with soap and water or using the hand sanitiser provided upon arrival to the Service;
- Using disposable tissues to wipe noses, eyes or mouths and disposing them in the bin provided immediately after use;
- Washing hands following the use of tissues;
- Washing hands thoroughly using soap and water before and after using the toilet;
- Thoroughly drying hands after washing them, using paper towel; and
- Exercising appropriate cough and sneeze etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes with a hand or elbow.

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Where required, issuing written directions to staff regarding changes to work practices during times where the service is operating under Victorian Government restrictions.

The Approved Provider and/or Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are informed and provided with a copy of any written directions issued by the Approved Provider regarding changes to work practices during times where the service is operating under Victorian Government restrictions.
- Ensuring that all staff complete the online [COVID-19 Infection Control Training](#) made available by the Australian Department of Health;
- Ensuring that cleaning staff, including contracted cleaning staff, implement the procedures outlined in the '[Information for employers](#)' and [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Principles for COVID-19](#) Information Sheets including:
 - Wearing gloves and using alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves;

- Wearing surgical masks and eye protection if a person with the virus or in isolation has been in the area being cleaned or there are spills of body fluids which could be infected with the virus; and
- Disinfecting surfaces with an anti-viral disinfectant after cleaning with detergent and water;
- Ensuring that tissues are readily accessible around the Service and that bins are provided for easy disposal; and
- Placing posters and signs promoting good hand and respiratory hygiene practices in appropriate locations around the Service premises.

The Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and other educators are responsible for:

- Following any written directions issued by the Approved Provider relating to changed work practices during times where the service is operating under Victorian Government restrictions.
- Regularly washing hands throughout the day [using the principles and techniques recommended by the World Health Organisation](#);
- Encouraging more-frequent hand-washing by children;
- Supervising children when they are washing their hands in order to ensure proper techniques are used;
- Informing children about the virus in an age-appropriate manner and emphasising preventative measures such as handwashing, use of tissues, cough and sneeze techniques and limiting touching other children's faces;
- Modelling and reminding children of appropriate cough and sneeze etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue, hand or elbow;
- Actively monitoring children's emotional well-being and communicating any concerns with parents and families;
- Adhering to effective food preparation and food handling procedures;
- Washing their hands with soap and water or using hand sanitiser, before and after wearing gloves;
- Wiping down and sanitising any surface that needs it due to sneeze, cough, etc;
- Cleaning and disinfecting thermometers at the end of temperature screening each day;
- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces like door knobs, bathrooms (e.g. taps, toilets), tables and chairs; and
- Completing the online [COVID-19 Infection Control Training](#) made available by the Australian Department of Health.

5.5 Procedures relating to implementing effective physical distancing measures

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Where required, issuing written directions to staff regarding changes to work practices during times where the service is operating under Victorian Government restrictions.

The Approved Provider and/or Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are informed and provided with a copy of any written directions issued by the Approved Provider regarding changes to work practices during times where the service is operating under Victorian Government restrictions.

The Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and other educators are responsible for:

- Following any written directions issued by the Approved Provider relating to changed work practices during times where the service is operating under Victorian Government restrictions.
- Promoting outdoor play to provide children with additional personal space, where possible;

- Increasing ventilation within the Service where practical (e.g. opening windows);
- Ensuring children are separated by an appropriate distance when seated on the floor or at tables (e.g. through removing some chairs or marking out seating positions on the floor);
- Redesigning activities to ensure that they are undertaken with physical distancing principles in mind. This may include:
 - Splitting children into groups where each group undertakes alternate activities in different parts of the Service premises;
 - Changing activities to minimise use of shared resources and equipment.
- Staggering snack and meal times to ensure that children are not all eating at once and ensuring that appropriate physical distancing is maintained during these periods;
- Avoiding situations when children are required to queue where possible, e.g. waiting their turn to use the bathroom for handwashing or toileting, waiting their turn to use a piece of equipment etc
- Where possible, providing children with resources rather than letting children select from communal resources;
- Limiting the number of staff in the upstairs and downstairs offices, and kitchen at any one time; and
- Ensuring that staff practice effective physical distancing at all times, including during staff meetings.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Where possible, arranging for discussions with Service staff to be conducted via telephone or video call, rather than face-to-face; and
- Practicing appropriate physical distancing measures at all times while on or in the vicinity of the Service premises, including by ensuring that they remain 1.5 metres apart from other families.

5.6 Procedures relating to the recording of details of persons who have attended the service premises in order to assist contact tracing where required

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Ensuring that an attendance record is maintained at the service in accordance with this policy;
- Providing details from the attendance record to the Department of Health as requested in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19; and
- Coordinating any assistance required by the Department of Health to aid contact tracing processes in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

The Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and other educators are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all the required details of all staff, volunteers, children, contractors and other persons attending the service premises for 15 minutes or longer are recorded in the attendance register; and
- Ensuring that attendance register is stored confidentially and securely.

5.7 Procedures in the event that someone with COVID-19 has attended the service during their infectious period

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Contacting the Department of Health to seek advice via 1300 561160;

- Submitting a notification through the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS) as soon as they become aware that a child, parent, contractor, or worker has been onsite during their COVID-19 infectious period;
- Notifying the National Quality Assessment and Regulation Division at the Victorian Department of Education and Training if the Service is closing or will partially close for any period of time;
- Supporting service staff to undertake initial testing;
- Notifying the ECEC community (either whole service or affected age/group room) through an email when a child or staff member has (or multiple children or staff members) have returned a positive COVID-19 test result and had attended the service. The notification should include:
 - Date(s) of attendance
 - Affected age group room/program room
- Notifying individuals that they are an education contact of a positive case ends a notification to the identified staff and parents/carers of children using the appropriate [‘Risk of COVID-19’](#) letter template to possible exposed persons;
- Notify Department of Health when 5 or more cases over a 7-day period using the online form at [COVID-19 outbreak notification form](#).
- Ensuring that symptomatic education contacts provide evidence of their negative RAT or PCR test to the Service prior to returning onsite;
- If the Service is required to close, communicating circumstances of the closure of the service to all staff, volunteers and families as soon as reasonably practicable;
- Arranging for suitable cleaning and disinfection of the service premises prior to reopening;
- Maintaining appropriate contact with staff, volunteers and families to provide updates on the reopening of the Service and other relevant matters; and
- Notifying the Department of Health and WorkSafe that the Service is reopening (if the Service closes).

The Nominated Supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge and other educators are responsible for:

- Notifying the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or persons in day-to-day charge (as appropriate) if they have attended the service premises during their infectious period; and
- Ensuring that they self-isolate for 7 days.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Immediately notifying the service if their child has received a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 either through a RAT or PCR test; and
- Ensuring the child or person isolates for 7 days.

5.8 Procedures to ensure worker vaccination requirements

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Collect, record and hold the vaccination information of a worker scheduled to be on-site at the kinder;
- Where a worker does not meet the COVID-19 vaccination requirements and does not have evidence of an approved medical exemption, ensuring the worker cannot be on-site at the service.

6. EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider of St Paul’s Anglican Kindergarten will:

- Regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness;
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy;

- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and advice/directions provided by government;
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the Service's policy review cycle, or as required; and
- Notify staff and parents/guardians as soon as possible regarding any changes to this policy or its procedures.

7. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

Australian Government Coronavirus (COVID-19) webpage - <https://www.australia.gov.au/>

Australian Government Department of Health - [Health Topics Coronavirus COVID-19](#)

Australian Government Department of Health Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for travellers - <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>

Australian Government Fair Work Ombudsman *Coronavirus and Australian workplace laws* (updated regularly) - <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws>

Early Learning Association of Australia *Coronavirus (COVID-19) FAQs* - <https://elaa.org.au/resources/coronavirus-updates-2/>

Fair Work Ombudsman Coronavirus and Australian workplace laws (2020) - <https://coronavirus.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws>

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2017)

Guide to the National Quality Standard (2020)

National Health and Medical Research Council (2012) *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.

The Australian Parenting website Raising Children - <https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/a-z-health-reference/coronavirus-and-children-in-australia>

Revised National Quality Standard (2018).

Victorian Government Department of Education and Training (2022), *COVIDSafe ECEC Settings Guide*, <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/departments/covid-19/ecec/ecec-covid-safe-settings-guidance.docx>

Victorian Government Department of Education and Training (2022), *Managing a case of COVID-19 in early childhood and education and care services* - <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/managing-case-coronavirus-covid-19>.

Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services *Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) page* - <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

WorkSafe Victoria (2008) *First aid in the workplace compliance code* - <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>

World Health Organisation *Key Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools March 2020* - https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52_4

Service policies

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*

- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*
- *Food Safety Policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

AUTHORISATION

The policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten on 15 February 2022.

REVIEW DATE: **FEBRUARY 2023**