Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services will follow health practices that manage illnesses and support children and adults to remain well.

Strategies

Immunisation

Immunisation protects children from certain infectious diseases. We encourage children and staff to be fully immunised for their protection (as advised by their medical practitioner) against infectious diseases, including diphtheria, whooping cough, chicken pox, polio, tetanus, measles, meningococcal C, mumps, rubella, influenza, and Hep A + Hep B. Annual influenza immunisations are also encouraged for staff (Ref BVSC Staff Immunisation policy).

Families will provide:
- The Administrative Officer with evidence that their child has been immunised when enrolling. An immunisation register is kept for each child.
- The administrative Officer with information about immunisations updates for their child.
- Information to the Administrative Officer immediately if their child has a contagious disease.

The Authorised Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure
- Any child without immunisation is excluded from the education and care service during any outbreaks of a vaccine preventable disease. The exclusion period is determined by the Department of Health, and fees are payable during exclusion periods.
- Information is provided to families, Staff, Educators and others about immunisation and illness exclusion.

Outbreak of communicable diseases

The Nominated Supervisor will
- Notify the Approved Provider of the outbreak of the communicable disease
- As soon as practicable, advise the child’s family or authorised emergency contact person and arrange for the child to be collected from the service
- Confirm with family whether the disease is suspected or diagnosed. If suspected, request that the family has the diagnosis confirmed by a health professional and then let the service know.
• Advise families, Staff, Educators and others about an outbreak of a communicable disease, and how to recognise and respond to signs and symptoms of any contagious disease

• Provide copies of detailed information about the disease, signs, symptoms, disease prevention and exclusion periods for all families, staff and others in the education and care service. This will be displayed on noticeboards and sign-in sheets.

• Review the responses planned and taken by Educational Leaders and others to manage the outbreak of the infectious disease.

The Educational Leader will:

• Provide advice to the family about exclusion periods based on Parent Handbook guidelines. If necessary, refer to “Staying Healthy in Child Care” for additional details (located in the main office)

• Advise the Educational Leader in each room, the Nominated Supervisor and the Administrative Officer about the outbreak of the disease and check when the child last attended the service

• Lead the teams affected to plan suitable environmental, hygiene and program responses to manage and minimise the outbreak of infectious disease or illness

• Document the outbreak and actions taken in the room journal.

All Educators and Staff will:

• Monitor children, staff and others who are attending the service for any signs/ symptoms of the illness or disease

• Review and amend children’s experiences within rooms to maximise hygiene practices and prevent the spread of infection

• Review and amend environmental, hygiene and program practices to minimise the spread of infection.

• The Administrative Officer will:

• make phone contact with all families who have children who are not immunised to advise of the exclusion period for their child.

Notifiable Diseases

An outbreak of some communicable diseases require the education and care service to notify the Public Health Officer. These include Diphtheria, Measles, Mumps, Poliomyelitis, Rubella, Whooping Cough.

In the event of a confirmed case of a notifiable disease the Nominated Supervisor will:

• Make contact with the local area health authority to advise of the outbreak of the notifiable disease and provide details of the child/ family as requested.

• Contact Public Health Officer: 02 4824 1840 or 02 6080 8900 (AH)

• Advise the Approved Provider of the outbreak, and implement service continuity strategies
Managing illnesses

If a child is unwell, s/he should not come to the service. This helps to reduce a child’s exposure to cross infection when their immunity is low and protects other children and adults from illnesses.

Children who are unwell are also often in need of a quiet space, an adult’s sole attention or additional rest/ sleep. These are difficult to provide for a sick child without impacting on the rest the children in the group.

Families will keep a child at home if the child:

- has a heavy cold
- has a temperature, and/or is lethargic
- has vomited or had diarrhoea (24 hours after ceasing)
- is on antibiotics (for the first 24 hours)
- has conjunctivitis (until medically treated and discharge has ceased)
- is on new medication (for the first 24 hours). This enables a child to be monitored closely for any adverse reactions to the new medication.

If a child becomes unwell while attending an education and care service Educators will:

- Monitor and document all signs and symptoms of illness displayed by the child and the actions taken by educators
- Report all signs and symptoms to the Educational Leader or the Responsible Person in the education and care service prior to contacting the family. This enables additional support strategies to be put in place to manage the individual child’s illness and the remaining group of children.
- Contact the child’s family or authorised emergency contact person and advise them of the child’s condition as soon as practicable
- Ask the family or authorised emergency contact person collect the child and where appropriate suggest that the person collecting the child seek additional medical advice
- Where appropriate, isolate the child in the office area with an adult to monitor the child’s condition until someone arrives to collect the child
- Provide a copy of the illness record to the person collecting the child

Educators may ask a family to collect their child from the service if the child:

- Has a temperature that rises above 38°C
- Is pale, shaky and lethargic
- Has a heavy cold and is unable to follow good hygiene practices, or is unable to participate in the program
- Has conjunctivitis
- Has vomited or has diarrhoea
- Has a rash or other infection that requires medical attention or diagnosis
In these circumstances educators are following sound health and hygiene practices and acting in the best interests of all children and families using the education and care service. If families are asked to collect their child, educators may also advise families to seek medical attention.

**Administering medication**

Medication sheets are kept with the sign in/sign out sheets in each education and care service.

If a child is receiving a course of prescribed medication while in the education and care service the family or their Authorised representative will:

- complete a Medication sheet with the child's name, the name of the medication to be given, the doctor's instructions including dosage, time and date last administered and time to be given next.
- sign the medication sheet to give educators permission to administer the medication to the child
- advise the educators caring for their child that s/he requires medication. Children of school age will be required to allow Educators to administer, supervise, check and record the authorised medication.
- place the medication in the locked kitchen/cupboard/fridge and out of reach of children.

Educators will only administer prescription medication if the medication:

- is in the original container
- is not out of date
- has the child's name on it (not a parent's or sibling's name)
- dosage and times match the doctor's instructions on the label

Educators will only administer non-prescription medication if:

- The family has provided a doctor's letter, post-operative care instructions or prescription from a doctor for the medication. This includes Bonjela, Panadol, Neurofen, cough mixtures and decongestants, vitamins. The chemist can provide an administration label with the child’s name, dosage, date.

Or

- In the case of a child under 5 years with a fever over 38°C and pain the educator may administer a single dose of children’s paracetamol in the age appropriate amount listed on the bottle. This can only occur with parental permission in writing and by telephone.
- Paracetamol will not replace the child being collected from the education and care service within 1 hour and medical advice being sought. (Refer to advice for control of fevers, Children’s Hospital Westmead)

The educator authorised to administer medication to the child will

- ensure that the time, dosage, and correct medication is given as per doctor’s instructions
- have the medication and dosage checked by a second educator who signs the record
- sign that the medication has been correctly checked and administered to the right child.

**Note:** Medications will not be administered to any child in her/his bottle or formula.
Exception to administration of medication

Where a child has a first aid emergency that requires the administration of medication including an Epi-Pen or Asthma inhaler, the Authorised educator or staff member will follow the First Aid and Medical Emergency Policy, and the Medical Management Policy guidelines. The educator will contact the family as soon as practicable to advise them of the circumstances surrounding the First Aid response.

Evaluation

Illnesses and communicable diseases are managed effectively in the service and children or adults follow exclusion guidelines.

Legislative requirements

- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011
- NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000

References

- Bega Valley Shire Council, procedure 5.05.1 Work Health and Safety Management System Framework. Online: www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au
- Bega Valley Shire Council Children’s Services, Healthy, Child Safe Environments and Infection Control, Operational Draft, June 2012.
- Bega Valley Shire Council Children’s Services, First Aid and Medical Emergency Policy, Operational Draft, June 2012
- Bega Valley Shire Council Children’s Services, Medical Conditions Policy, Operational Draft, June 2012.
- Community Child Care Co-operative, Sample Policy, First Aid
- National Health and Medical Research Centre, Staying healthy in child care (4th Ed).