

A child becomes unwell at the centre	Parent/guardian informs centre their child is unwell and will be absent
<p>If a child presents with one or more signs/symptoms of illness (as per appendix one of this procedure) AND the centre Director (or their approved delegate) has a reasonable suspicion the child is unwell AND cannot fully participate in the centre program, they have the discretion to direct parents/guardians (or emergency contacts) to collect the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolate the child in a safe, comfortable, and supervised location. Monitor and comfort the child. If the child has a known medical condition, refer to and follow the child's Medical Management Plan. Telephone the parent/guardian and direct them to pick up their child as soon as possible. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, telephone the child's emergency contact/s. Record illness signs and actions taken via Child Incident Record. If required, call Triple 0 (000). An educator may accompany a child in an ambulance if regulatory educator to child ratios can be maintained at the centre. Provide parent/guardian (or emergency contact) with completed Child Incident Record to read and sign. If requested, provide a copy to the parent/ guardian and/or ambulance officer. 	<p>Parent/Guardians must inform the centre, as soon as possible, if their child is unwell and won't be attending. They must also inform the centre if their child is diagnosed with an infectious illness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent/guardian informs centre their child is unwell and will be absent from the centre. Check if the parent/guardian is/has taken the child to see a doctor. Advise parent/guardian that if a doctor diagnoses the child with an infectious illness, they must inform the centre.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform parent/guardian that their child cannot return to the centre until they meet the following criteria: The child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is well and able to fully participate in the centre program AND has completed any required exclusion, self-isolation or quarantine period* (if applicable) OR is no longer displaying signs or experiencing symptoms of an illness OR a Medical Clearance* from a Doctor is provided to the centre.
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If the parent/guardian advises the centre that the child has an infectious illness (diagnosed by a doctor), the centre must immediately inform all families and staff using a range of communication methods	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure child and family confidentiality is maintained at all times. Display 'Child with an infectious illness at centre' poster for the required duration (infectious period) in prominent locations i.e. front gate and near sign in/out or iCheck-in. Inform all current families by sending an email via Kidsoft. Inform all current families and staff via a Storypark post. Inform all current staff via email using the centre C&K email address. Complete Infectious Illness Register. 	<p>Include a PDF attachment and hyperlink to relevant Queensland Health Factsheet.</p>



**Exclusion periods - Implement exclusion periods as per [Time Out Poster](#). In addition, a child with a fever is excluded from the centre, for 24hrs after the fever has stopped without the administration of fever reducing medication. A child's normal temperature may vary depending on their age and time of the day. A child with a consistent temperature above 38° C has a fever.*

**Medical Clearance – May be requested at the discretion of the centre Director (or approved delegate).*

An outbreak* of an infectious illness occurs at centre

- Notify Early Childhood Education Manager (branch centres) or Committee (affiliate centres) and the local [Public Health Unit](#).
- Follow Public Health Unit direction. This may include distributing additional family/staff communication provided by the Public Health Unit and/or implementing additional hygiene measures.
- Continue to keep families and staff informed.
- Advise families of additional measures being implemented to minimise the spread of illness. Maintain [Infectious Illness Register](#).
- Contact [local Early Childhood Office](#) to determine if a regulatory notification is required. If required, complete notification as per [Child, Centre Incident Reporting Procedure/Child, Centre Incident Reporting Procedure \(Affiliate\)](#).
- Promptly undertake a centre [Hygiene Audit](#) and address any identified gaps in practice.
- Within 7 days of outbreak onset, complete an *Incident Review*.

*Infectious Illness Outbreak

- 1 or more cases of a [vaccine preventable illness](#).
- 2 or more cases of [Gastroenteritis \(vomiting and/or vomiting\)](#) occurring within 1-3 days.
- For all other illnesses, contact Public Health to determine if the number of cases indicates an outbreak is occurring.

Parent/Guardian responsibilities

- Follow health and hygiene posters displayed throughout centre.
- Upon and throughout enrolment, provide evidence of child's immunisation status.
- Do not bring child/ren to the centre when unwell.
- Do not administer any fever reducing medication (e.g. Paracetamol or Ibuprofen) to child prior to arrival at the centre.
- Inform centre when child is unwell and will be absent.
- Inform the centre immediately if the child is diagnosed with an infectious illness.
- When requested, collect child as soon as possible if they become ill at the centre.
- When requested, provide a medical clearance for the child to return to the centre.

Centre Director/Teacher/Educator responsibilities

- Inform parents/guardians of this procedure upon and periodically throughout a child's enrolment.
- Notify parents and staff of any infectious illness outbreaks using a range of communication methods.
- Consistently implement and refer to [Staying Healthy and preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(5th Ed\)](#) recommendations.

Possible exclusion conflicts and challenges

- Centres will not be influenced by doctor's letters stating that a child can return to a centre unless the child's condition fulfils C&K criteria for returning to the centre. (*National Health and Medical Research Council 2013*)
- Challenges may arise when negotiating with families and interpreting medical clearance certificates, where:
 - Families find exclusion difficult due to work and/or personal commitments.
 - A medical clearance certificate is considered inconsistent with a current situation.
- If a challenge is unable to be resolved at the centre level, seek the guidance of the Early Childhood Education Manager/Committee and/or [Public Health Unit](#).

Acknowledgements and references

- National Health and Medical Research Council (2013). *Staying healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services. Fifth edition*. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-preventing-infectious-diseases-early-childhood-education-and-care-services>
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2013). *Information for families. Exclusion Periods explained*. <https://nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/clinical%20guidelines/ch55b-exclusion-period-info-sheet.pdf>.
- Queensland Health (2019) *Fever in Children*. <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/fact-sheet-fever-in-children/>

Appendix One – Possible signs/symptoms of illness

- Fever (i.e. consistent temperature above 38°)
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Lethargy; not interested in playing and interacting with others; does not want to participate in the program; wants to sleep and/or be cuddled
- Respiratory signs/symptoms such as blocked/runny nose* (any colour), sneezing or coughing
- Sore throat
- Noisy, rapid and/or shallow breathing; long pauses between breaths; an infant may make grunting sounds or the ribs/breastbone may be sucked in with each breath
- Reduced or no appetite
- Poor urine output
- A change of skin colour e.g. pale, mottled or cold hands and feet.
- Rash
- Experiencing pain
- Lumps or swelling
- Headache
- Neck stiffness
- Red, watery eyes*

Keep in mind, a single sign or symptom may or may not indicate a child is ill. The centre Director (or approved delegate) are required to use their professional judgement and knowledge of a child to determine if they have reasonable suspicion a child is unwell; if a child must be collected by their parent/guardian and excluded from the centre. The centre Director (or approved delegate) will consider:

- The child's overall presentation – Is the child presenting with other signs or symptoms of illness?
- The child's demeanor – Is the child behaving and participating in their program as they usually do?
- Information about the child provided by parents/guardians
- Does the child have a previously known medical condition?
- Are there other children at the centre presenting with similar signs or symptoms?

** May or may not be an indicator of illness. A child may have the common cold (or other respiratory illness) OR an allergy OR may be reacting to a sudden change in temperature or very dry air.*