Diseases and Infestation Policy
(Regs. 88; 168)

Background
Preschools and schools provide an opportunity for the spread of infectious diseases and infestations and so must take steps to prevent transmission through the preschool and school community and on to the wider community. Whilst it is acknowledged that it is not possible to prevent all infectious diseases and infestations, preschools and school have a responsibility and legal obligation to take action to help prevent the spread. When an outbreak of head lice or other transmittable infestation occurs, our service will follow procedures as for infectious diseases. It is not required that this is reported to the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia, but similar actions need to be taken.

Policy
St Joseph’s Preschool follows the guidelines for prevention of infectious diseases as outlined in the document ‘Staying Healthy in Child Care’. Children suffering from infectious diseases will be excluded from Preschool for the length of time specified or on the written advice from the child’s medical practitioner.

Implementation
St Joseph’s Preschool will act to prevent the spread of infectious diseases/infestations by:
- Ensuring current information about infectious diseases is held at the service.
- Providing information to families regarding infectious diseases and exclusion from the preschool as part of the family information pack.
- Providing appropriate hand washing facilities.
- Encouraging effective hand washing techniques.
- Providing appropriate first aid supplies (as outlined in the Administration of First Aid Policy).
- Excluding children from the Preschool who are suffering from an infectious disease (as per the guidelines in ‘Staying Healthy in Child Care’).
- Notifying families when an infectious disease has occurred at the service.
- Providing information about immunisation.

Responsibility
The Preschool staff will be responsible for ensuring that the services practices and procedures minimise the spread of infection/infestation by:
- regularly cleaning equipment.
- ensuring that there is no sharing of drinking/eating utensils.
- (in the case of head lice) removing soft furnishings (bean bags, cushions etc), washing the ‘dress ups’ and restricting access to them until the immediate risk passes.

In the event that a child is suspected of being infested with head lice:
- Parents will be notified as soon as possible (at least by the end of the day) and provided with information about treatment options.
- Information is available in “Staying Healthy in Child Care’, ‘You’ve Got What?’, and pamphlets available from the Department of Health and Ageing on “Headlice treatment & protection”.
- The parents need to be informed that the child will only be readmitted to care after approved and appropriate treatment has been administered.
- Isolation of children with head lice is not considered necessary. Educators will engage the group in activities that minimise head to head contact.
- Other families will be advised when there is an infestation of head lice within the service (eg notes in bags or poster on the door).
- Ensuring the service holds information on specific diseases and exclusion periods and this information is available to educators and families; and that the Staying
Healthy in Child Care’ document and posters are accessible to educators at all times.

- Ensuring the service’s documents are all current and available.
- Ensuring that any updates to the documents are made available to all educators in a timely fashion.
- Ensuring that information regarding the service’s policy on exclusion of children with infectious diseases is made available to families in the family information pack, along with the recommendation that families keep children who are unwell at home.
- In the event that an educator suspects that a child at Preschool is suffering from an infectious disease:
  - The child will be withdrawn from the main group and taken to a separate area, where the educator will further assess and observe the child’s current health condition whilst making the child comfortable.
  - The educator will refer to Staying Healthy in Child Care for details on symptoms the child is presenting with (but will not officially make a diagnosis, but can however present the symptoms to the family and indicate that other children with similar symptoms have been diagnosed with a similar condition).
  - An educator will contact the family or, if unsuccessful, the emergency contacts in order of priority and advise the emergency contact of the child’s condition and request that the emergency contact make immediate arrangements to collect the child from Preschool. In an event where the child does not have to be collected immediately, precautions as described in Staying Healthy in Child Care will be implemented.

  ➢ In the event that a child with an infectious disease has been in attendance at Preschool, the lead educator will:
    - ensure that the families of children in attendance that day, or any other previous day the child has attended and may have been infectious, are notified as soon as practicable. Confidentiality will be maintained and only the name and nature of the infectious disease will be disclosed (see Confidentiality Policy)
    - ensure that information regarding the infectious disease is available to families
    - ensure information regarding the occurrence and nature of the infectious disease is prominently displayed.
    - ensure that documentation regarding the infectious disease and the actions taken by the service comply with Regulations.

Philip Schultz  
Principal

Anne Burke  
School Board Chairperson

Dated: June 2015