



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) POLICY

Best Practice – Quality Area 2

Precious Kids Childcare trading as “Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd

Quality Area 2.1.2 Health practices and procedures.

Children (Education and Care Services) National Regulations NSW

National Law Section 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

Regulation 77 Health, hygiene and safe food practices
Regulation 85 Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
Regulation 86 Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma, and illness
Regulation 77 Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
Regulation 88 Infectious diseases
Regulation 90 Medical Conditions policy
Regulation 93 Administration of medication
Regulation 162 Health information to be kept in enrolment records

This policy must be read in conjunction with our other Service policies:

- *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*
- *Fees Policy*
- *Hand Washing Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*

PURPOSE

To ensure all employees and families implement appropriate risk management procedures to prevent the spread of coronavirus or reduce the potential for the illness to spread. We will implement practices that help to reduce the transmission of the virus including the exclusion of any person (child, educator, staff, parent, visitor or volunteer) that is suspected or has tested positive to having COVID-19. Our Service will implement effective hygiene practices as per our existing policies and procedures.

Kids Haven will provide up-to-date information and advice to parents, families and educators sourced from the Australian Government, Department of Health and state Ministry of Health about COVID-19 as it becomes available. Recommendations and health measures mandated by the Health Department will be strictly adhered to at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Kids Haven Childcare believes that the safety of the centre is of paramount importance. In order to provide this, the centre must abide by a COVID SAFE plan to guide best practices in relation to health and safety, dealing with infectious diseases and maintaining a child-safe environment.

Kids Haven Childcare will monitor advice on COVIDSafe Settings as well as the information for early childhood education and care (ECEC) services:

Our duty of care and responsibilities to children, parents, families and all staff to provide a safe environment is of utmost importance. :

- Practicing good levels of hygiene in our premises and when at our clients' sites, complying fully with any specific local arrangements;
- Making our staff fully aware of the need to self-isolate if they experience symptoms or where they are at a high risk of infection due to travel or close proximity to anyone testing positive;
- Further site risk assessment measures specific to CV-19;
- Avoiding any non-essential meetings or gatherings for the time being;
- Keep records and act quickly if workers become unwell;
- Educate centre staff, guardians and other interacting parties;
- Follow and implement latest government directions.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Kids Haven Childcare.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

Kids Haven is committed to minimise the spread of the COVID-19 virus by implementing recommendations provided by the Australian Government- Department of Health. Our Service implements procedures as stated in the *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (Fifth Edition)* developed by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council as part of our day-to-day operation of the Service.

We are guided by explicit decisions regarding exclusion periods and notification of any infectious disease by the Australian Government- Department of Health and local Public Health Units in our jurisdiction under the Public Health Act. COVID-19 is a notifiable condition in all states and territories of Australia. In the event of any child, educator, staff member or visitor attending our Service who is suspected or confirmed to have the infection, the Approved Provider will contact their Public Health Unit.

Kids Haven Childcare will supply disposable tissues and have bins available with plastic liners available in several locations for disposing of used items.

3. EXCLUSION/ SELF-ISOLATION/ SELF QUARANTINE – KIDS HAVEN CHILDCARE

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, families and visitors will comply with the following:

Hazard Identifies	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk Rating	Elimination/Control Measures	Responsible Person
Child at a service displays symptom of Covid-19 or appears unwell	Extreme	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child displays cold or flu-like symptoms, is unwell, or has a temperature (over 37.5) at the service, staff will immediately contact the family to come and collect the child. • The child will be isolated from others (e.g. in office or alternate safe place) whilst maintaining adequate supervision and staff ratio requirements. If urgent medical attention is required, call triple zero (000). • Staff to consider the use of a dedicated "isolation space" at each service where the child can remain 1.5 metres away from others whilst maintaining supervision until collected. It is preferable that this is in a well-ventilated space. Depending on the nature of the service, this could be a designated section in the foyer (tape can be used on the floor to identify location), the Nominated Supervisors' office, or a designated 	All Staff

			<p>space within a room (i.e. book corner). Room ratios are required to be maintained at all times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child displays symptoms, an educator is to remain supervising the child until collection by parents and MUST wear all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including gloves and a mask, and where possible remain 1.5 metres away from the child (this may not be possible at all times to care effectively for the child). Care must be taken to ensure that there is no other contact with other children whilst wearing PPE. The designated isolation space needs to be cleaned immediately with detergent and disinfectant (or 2 in 1 solution) whilst wearing gloves once the child has left the service. • An Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record is completed and signed by parents on collection of the child. • Encourage the family to seek medical advice. • Bedding belonging to an unwell child must be washed immediately after the child leaves. • Maintain contact with family as to the health and welfare of the child. • Parents are encouraged to keep their child at home until they are fully recovered. Children can return to the service as long as they are well and completely symptom-free. Should there be any concern about continuing symptoms on return, KIDS HAVEN staff may request a medical certificate. 	
Staff member at service displays symptoms of COVID-19 or appears unwell	Extreme	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a staff member displays cold or flu-like symptoms, is unwell, or has a temperature (over 37.5°C) at the service they will immediately be sent home. • The staff member will be instructed to seek medical advice. • If staff are requested by their manager to exit the service due to displaying cold or flu-like symptoms or other concerns for their health, they are required to adhere to this reasonable direction immediately. • Any staff offering assistance to an unwell colleague will be required to wear PPE, including gloves and a mask. • A WHS 3.2 Hazard, Incident and Illness report should be completed. • Nominated Supervisors/Centre Directors will maintain contact with the staff member as to the status of their health. • Staff are required to remain at home until they are fully recovered. If symptoms persist staff may be asked to access a COVID-19 testing centre. • Staff can return to the service as long as they are well and completely symptom-free. Should there be any concern about symptoms on return, the Nominated Supervisor may request a medical clearance. 	All staff
Exclusion from service	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any staff, child, or visitor who has been identified in contact (either primary or secondary) with a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 by DH. In cases of multiple positive cases within a household, the quarantine period is for 14 days from when the last diagnosed person isolating at the premises is given clearance from DH. • Definitions of primary and secondary contacts can be found here. • Any child who lives in a household of a positive case, even if asymptomatic, will require a COVID-19 test at day 11 or 14 (dependant on advice from DH) and proof of negative test before returning to the service. In the case of multiple 	All Staff and families

			<p>positives within the household, repeat tests may be advised by DH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services will now be advised from DH if a child at their service has been identified by DH as a close contact (primary or secondary) of a confirmed COVID-19 case. The child should not attend the service until advised by DH. A clearance letter from DH will need to be provided as proof that the child can re-enter the service. Services may be asked by DH to confirm that the child identified as a close contact is not attending their service during this time. If they are attending, they must be sent home. The service is not required to close unless directed to do so by DH. Any staff, child, or visitor who has participated in COVID-19 testing cannot attend an KIDS HAVEN (whether they are symptomatic or asymptomatic) until results can prove that they have a negative result. Please note: this may change based on updated advice from DH and DET. Any staff, child, or visitor displaying cold or flu-like symptoms who refuses to undertake COVID-19 testing. An employee may be directed by an employer to be tested for COVID-19. Return to the service will only be granted when no longer symptomatic and a medical statement/clearance has been obtained and provided to KIDS HAVEN. Any child who attends an alternative care or education service where there has been a confirmed positive case, the child is excluded from the service until confirmation from DH that they are not a primary or secondary contact. Parents/carers of children with complex medical needs and/or compromised immune systems should be encouraged to seek advice from their Medical Practitioner to support decisions about whether on-site education and care is suitable. Staff should note that this medical advice may change throughout the course of COVID-19. Health care plans may be required to be updated to provide additional advice on monitoring and identification of symptoms in the content of coronavirus (e.g. children with respiratory conditions). 	
Positive Case of COVID-19 at Service (child or staff member)	Extreme	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The case must be confirmed by the state or territory health authority, employee, parent, or community member before action is taken and when directed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any parent, visitor, or community member who has been in the service for greater than 15 minutes and tests positive within 24-48 hours is determined to be a positive case at the service. All parents, staff, and site visitors currently attending (defined as a person who has attended the service in the last 14 days) must be informed immediately. If a staff member has been confirmed as positive a WHS 3.2 Hazard, Incident and Illness report should be completed. If the positive case is an employee, independent contractor or employee of an independent contractor who has attended the workplace in the infectious period (14 days prior to receiving confirmed diagnosis and until the party has received clearance from DH), the director will notify Worksafe on 13 23 60. DET instructions re: Closure of service given to Compliance Manager (DH will also make recommendations and conduct a 'trace investigation' via their, 'tracing team' - This includes ascertaining the people/community possibility of transmission). Families notified of intended return date (based on DH 	Compliance Manager and all staff

			<p>recommendations).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centres must comply and follow the advice of the relevant health department in relation to reopening the service and any further measures required. A well-established industrial cleaning company must complete cleaning in line with the state or territory health authority instruction. Any staff, child, parent (or member of immediate household) who has tested positive, will not be able to return to the service until able to confirm a negative test result and the person has received clearance from DH. This needs to be provided to the Nominated supervisor prior to the return date. 	
Staff or child awaiting COVID-19 test results	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff or children who have been tested for COVID-19 (whether symptomatic or asymptomatic) will be excluded from the service until a negative result is provided. Please note: this may change based on updated advice from DH and DET. On notification of a staff member or child who has been tested for COVID-19, Nominated Supervisor/Centre Directors will contact the Approved Provider immediately. For anyone receiving a positive result, please see above "Positive Case of COVID-19 at a service (staff or child)". Staff are to be cognisant of ensuring confidentiality concerning both colleague and children's testing requirements and results. 	All staff and parents/guardians
Virus Transmission	Extreme	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominated Supervisors are to alert the Approved Provider if there is an increase in staff sick leave or children's absences due to cold or flu-like symptoms. Regulatory requirements for adult to child ratios remain unchanged (including during lunch breaks/relief). Staff are to ensure that correct ratios are present and that supervision is not compromised. Limit the cross-over of rooms in shared environments, for example, bathrooms, lunch areas, playgrounds, and common centre areas, to limit the risk of cross-infection within the centre. Fresh air and adequate ventilation are encouraged in the indoor environment, with open windows preferred to the use of air-conditioning where building design and weather permits. Do not run air conditioners on recirculate and ensure that heaters and air conditioners are well maintained. 	
Virus Transmission	Extreme	High	<p>Staff Workplace Precautions</p> <p>Face masks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are required to wear face masks when providing first aid or taking temperatures if a child or colleague is unwell. Staff are recommended to wear face masks in indoor and outdoor spaces when a 1.5 metre physical distance from others cannot be maintained. <u>Please note medical exemptions for face coverings may apply. Please speak to your Centre Director/ Nominated Supervisor prior to your arrival if these circumstances apply.</u> Staff are to declare that they are free of symptoms before the start of each shift. Staff are to complete the modified staff sign-in/out register and confirm these details. Staff who travel on public transport must bring their work clothes and shoes in their bag to change into when they 	All staff

			<p>arrive at the centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff must wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds upon arrival and departure from the centre. • Staff should shower before arriving at the centre and when they return home each day. • Staff will be sent home if the Centre Director/Nominated Supervisor suspects that they may be unwell. • Families who work as frontline health workers or in other emergency services are requested to wear a change of clothes when collecting their child after completing their shift. • Families will apply alcohol-based hand sanitiser on arrival at the centre and prior to using the iPad sign-in/out screen. If this is not available, they should wash their hands with soap and water. • Staff must ensure the interactions with any families are limited to less than 15 minutes. This will help reduce the risk of any face to face transmission. 	
Arrival and departure procedures	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Their temperature is 37.5 °C or lower for at least 24 hours. ○ They are not displaying any of the following signs or symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has trouble breathing ▪ Becomes drowsy or unresponsive ▪ Unexplained or persistent cough ▪ Refuses to drink or is passing urine less often ▪ Complains of a stiff neck, persistent headache, or light hurting their eyes ▪ Suffers pain or is continuously crying ▪ Is causing the educator or parent to worry for any other reason. • Parents are encouraged to keep their child at home until they are fully recovered. Children can return to the service as long as they are well and completely symptom-free. Should there be any concern about continuing symptoms on return, KIDS HAVEN staff may request a medical certificate. • Educators performing temperature checks on adults are required to wear gloves and a face mask. A single-use face mask or cloth mask is recommended. Educators are to ensure that masks are worn correctly to maximise protection. Further information on masks can be obtained here. • Educators are to familiarise themselves with the DH guidance for taking masks on and off safely. • Families must ensure the interactions with any educators or centre staff are limited to less than 15 minutes. This will help reduce the risk of any face-to-face transmission. • It is encouraged that only one family member can attend the centre at a time unless a family is dropping off multiple children and requires additional assistance. 	All staff

4. REQUIRED COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR ECEC STAFF

All staff are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 unless a medical exemption applies. Staff will be required to show evidence of their vaccination status or medical exemption to their employer.

5. REQUIRED COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR PARENTS/FAMILIES

If a family member is required to isolate or obtain a Covid-19 test due to being in close contact and you have children attending the service, we ask that the attending child obtain a negative Covid-19 test before returning to the service.

6. IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE HYGIENE MEASURES

The national campaign *Help Stop The Spread and Stay Healthy*, launched by the Australian Government has emphasised that effective handwashing is a vital strategy to help reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds whenever you cough, sneeze or blow your nose, prepare food or eat, touch your face or use the toilet is recommended.

Kids Haven will adhere to National Regulation requirements, and Government guidelines to ensure all educators, children, families and visitors to the Service implement best practice. Our Service will ensure:

- All employees, parents, children and visitors must wash their hands with soap and water or use the alcohol-based hand sanitiser provided upon arrival to the Service
- Hands must be thoroughly dried using disposal paper and disposed of in the bin provided o disposable tissues must be used to wipe noses, eyes or mouths and disposed of in the bin provided immediately after use
- Hands must be washed following the use of tissues
- Hands must be washed thoroughly using soap and water before and after using the toilet
- Cough and sneeze etiquette must be used- cover your cough and sneeze with your hand or elbow
- Educators and staff must adhere to our Handwashing Policy at all times
- Children are supervised when washing hands
- Educators and staff must adhere to effective food preparation and food handling procedures
- Educators will wash their hands or use alcohol-based sanitiser, before wearing gloves and wash their hands after wearing gloves
- Educators and staff must adhere to our Health and Safety Policy for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and equipment (such as toys, puzzles, outdoor toys, bedding, playdough etc) as per Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services recommendations
- Staff will maintain a cleaning register of all surfaces and equipment conducted o equipment, resources and surfaces including taps, door handles etc will be cleaned daily (or more frequently as required) using detergent and water followed by disinfectant.
- Cleaning contractors hygienically clean the Service to ensure risk of contamination is removed as per Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Principles for COVID-19

NOTE: According to the World Health Organisation, COVID-19 may survive on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. (March 14 2020).

7. SOCIAL DISTANCING IN CHILDCARE

Social distancing is important because COVID-19 is most likely spread from person-to-person through close contact with a person while they are infectious, close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes or from touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection and then touching your nose or mouth. (source: Australian Government Department of Health. Coronavirus disease)

To reduce the spread of germs:

- If your child is sick, do not send them to our Service o do not visit our Service if you or another family member is unwell to sanitise your hands at regular intervals throughout the day and when entering our Service to avoid physical contact with other people who may be sick- such as older people and people with existing health conditions
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces regularly (door handles, car seats, mobile phone, toys, dummies) o Hand washing facilities introduced into reception.
- Promote strictest hygiene measures when preparing food at home and at the Service.
- Where possible, outdoor play will be promoted within our Service to provide children with additional personal space.
- Large groups will be monitored to provide flexible learning to ensure groups are smaller in both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Ventilation within the Service will be increased.
- Contact parents of children who have chronic medical conditions or immunosuppression as they may be at an increased risk of disease and require additional support/care.
- KIDS HAVEN will cancel all group outings to public places pending DHHS notifications (excursions to local shops, schools, libraries, aged care facilities)

- KIDS HAVEN will cancel large group celebrations pending DHHS notifications (Easter, Grandparent's Day, special day celebrations)
- KIDS HAVEN will cancel all incursions until it is feasible and safe to re-introduce these backs into the service.

8. PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees are payable to the Service for all enrolled children including pupil free days, sick days and family holidays. Child Care Subsidy can only be paid where services are open and providing care. The only exclusion is for when a period of local emergency has been declared (e.g.: bushfire). If a child does not attend the Service as a precautionary measure, payment of fees is still required.

9. WHAT HAPPENS IF KIDS HAVEN IS FORCED TO CLOSE?

The decision to close KIDS HAVEN will be made, and advised, by relevant state and territory governments or the Regulatory Authority. This may be due to a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our Service community.

Should this occur, all families will be notified immediately via email or phone. The Approved Provider will notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of any closure via the NQA IT System As childcare cannot be offered if our Service is forced to close, fees cannot be charged as per Family Assistance Law. Attendance reports cannot be submitted into the Child Care Subsidy System. KIDS HAVEN may apply to Community Child Care Fund Special Circumstances Grant Opportunity.

10. STAFF ENTITLEMENTS IF SICK OR SUSPECTED TO HAVE COVID-19

Under workplace health and safety laws, our Service must ensure the health and safety of all employees.

Confirmed COVID-19

If an educator or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, they are unable to attend the workplace and cannot return unless they have a clearance from a General Practitioner of Public Health Unit. Full and part-time employees who cannot attend work due to illness can take paid sick leave.

Caring for a family member or emergency

If an employee cannot attend work due to caring for a family member due to COVID-19, they are entitled to take paid carer's leave. Casual employees are eligible to have 2 days unpaid carer's leave per occasion. See Fair Work Act for entitlements for casual, part time and full-time employees.

Self-isolation due to travel

As per Australian Government's new measures for COVID-19 effective 16 March 2020, any person returning from overseas must self-isolate for at least 14 days. The employee is not entitled to be paid (unless they use paid leave entitlements).

Self-isolation as a precaution

If an employee wants to stay home as a precaution of contracting COVID-19 they may negotiate to take unpaid leave, annual leave or long service leave with Management.

Employees who are stuck overseas or in quarantine

If an employee cannot return to Australia due to the COVID-19 virus, they must contact the Approved Provider immediately. Management will negotiate payment considering accrued sick leave, annual leave or unpaid leave.

Waivers

In the event of staff members requiring to self-isolate due to possible infection of COVID-19, the Approved Provider will apply to the Regulatory Authority for waivers for qualifications and/or ratios to minimise disruptions to our provision of care.

Caring for our community

We understand that the outbreak of COVID-19 and the constant amount of information received through the media may be very stressful to young children and parents. The anxiety about this disease may be overwhelming and cause fear and anxiety to some people, especially children.

KIDS HAVEN is committed to continue to provide quality education and care to all children and support families responsibly during this unprecedented challenge with the COVID-19 outbreak. Knowing how to look after yourself, and others is very important during this crisis. We will promote a safe and supportive environment by:

- Reassuring children they are safe
- Acknowledging and listening to children's questions
- Promoting and implementing hygiene routines for handwashing and cough and sneezing
- Keeping regular and familiar routines within our Service
- Ensuring children eat well throughout the day
- Engaging children in play, games and other physical activities
- Being alert to children's level of anxiety and provide quiet and relaxing activities
- Ensuring children are provided with rest and sleep when needed
- Providing information to families and support services as required

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Health Health Topics Health Topics Coronavirus COVID-19

Australian Government Fair Work Ombudsman Coronavirus and Australian workplace laws (updated 13 March 2020) <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/coronavirus-and-australianworkplace-laws>

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment Information for child care providers and services <https://docs-edu.govcms.gov.au/node/53362> 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.

Attachments

Nil

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Kids Haven Childcare on 1st December 2022.

REVIEW DATE: 01/01/2024