

In addition to the Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy, the following considerations and procedures are required to be implemented as directed by NSW Health authorities and/or the Regulatory Authority when an outbreak of coronavirus occurs.

What is a Coronavirus and COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses known to cause respiratory infections. These can range from the common cold to more serious diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). This new coronavirus originated in Hubei Province, China and the disease is named COVID-19.

How is this Coronavirus Spread?

Coronavirus is most likely to spread from person-to-person through:

- Direct close contact with a person while they are infectious or in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared.
- Close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes.
- 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 mouth or face.

How can we Help Prevent the Spread of Coronavirus?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene and keeping your distance from others when you are sick is the best defence against most viruses. As well as:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser if your hands are not visibly dirty.
 - before and after eating, and after going to the toilet
 - before entering and exiting the service, and prior to signing in on the iPads
 - after using the bathroom
 - after coughing or sneezing
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve or elbow.
- If unwell, avoid contact with others. Staff, children or visitors with fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath), even with mild symptoms should stay home.
- Staff or children that become ill while they are at the service, should be sent home as soon as possible. While awaiting collection by their carer, ideally, the symptomatic child should be cared for in an area that is separated from other children at the service.
- Exercise personal responsibility for social distancing measures (stay more than 1.5 metres from people) wherever possible.
- Avoiding touching one's eyes, nose and mouth.

Service Management and Operations

- Risk assess non-essential activities (such as excursions) that involve close personal contact.
- Modify shifts and rosters, or pick up and drop off process if required, to reduce risk of peak periods.
- Support remote learning arrangements while maintaining connections with families keeping their children at home for prolonged periods.
- Consider the setup of the room and the placement of the activities and limit the number of whole group activities. Children should be spaced out as much as possible.
- Minimise the use of group sensory experiences such as goop, offering individual quantities instead.
- For younger children particularly, consider the rotation of toys more often and increase the frequency of cleaning toys. As always, sharing of toys that have been placed in mouths should be monitored and avoided.
- Look at the spacing of cots and highchairs, keeping them well apart.
- Where possible, staff should separate themselves within existing office space and staffroom as much as possible.
- Seat less children at each meal table to allow more space between children. Implement progressive morning teas whenever possible.
- Depending on ratio, implement the indoor/outdoor program for the full day/ session. This naturally provides for more space for the children and the setup of more activities for children to engage in. Consider the placement of activities and the amount of activities in the outdoor space to encourage children to spread out more broadly.
- Contact the Regulatory Authority if sourcing hygiene control supplies become difficult locally.
- Any support agency visits such as Speech Therapists or TAFE student advisors shall be guided with Little Adventures infection control measures such as hand washing on arrival to the service.
- Signage advising Little Adventures COVID-19 control measures are displayed at the foyer entrance for reference, along with best practice hand washing posters throughout the service at wash basins.
- A detailed Risk Assessment has been completed and shall be updated as required by the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person as advice is received from recognised authorities.

National Coronavirus Helpline

Call this line if you are seeking information on coronavirus (COVID-19). The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week: Telephone 1800 020 080

In the Event of a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 at your Service

- Family or employee/student/visitor notifies Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Persons immediately.
- Family or employee/student/visitor self isolates as per NSW Health requirements.
- Any full or partial closure of the service (self initiated or directed by NSW Health) will be reported to the Regulatory Authority as soon as possible via NQAITS or by calling the information and enquiries team on 1800 619 113.

- In situations where staff members are required to self-isolate, we can apply to the Regulatory Authority for waivers for qualifications and/or ratios. Fees for waivers relating to COVID-19 will be waived or refunded and applications will be expedited to minimise disruptions to service provision. Waivers can be applied for through NQA ITS or by contacting the information and enquiries team on 1800 619 113.
- Report any risk or incident of infectious disease to:
 - NSW Regulatory Authority (NSW Department of Education)
 - Your local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055

The Department views a confirmed case of COVID-19 as a serious incident and as such requires notification as soon as practicable within 24 hours.

References

CELA – *Staffing Arrangements during COVID-19* 21/4/2020

CELA – *Physical Distancing Considerations* 28/4/2020

CELA – *Communicating with Parents* 19/3/2020

CELA – *Coronavirus information for parents and carers to support children* 5/5/2020

CELA – *Dealing with infectious Diseases COVID-19* 23/4/2020

CELA – *Wrangling runny noses in a COVID-19 environment* 25/6/2020

SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA – *Early Childhood education and care workers: Minimising the risk of exposure to COVID-19*
19/4/2020

health.gov.au *Factsheet: COVID-19 and children* 15/5/2020

COVID-19 Action Plan 23/6/2020

Department of Education, Skills and Employment: *Coronavirus (COVID-19): Information for child care providers and services* 12/3/2020

NSW Government *Helping Business get back to work: COVID-19 Safety Plan* 13/6/2020

LAEL Company Notice to Staff (Students and volunteers): COVID-19 16/3/2020

NSW Department of Education, Early Childhood Education: COVID-19 Update April 2022