

Title	Management of Infectious Diseases in Schools Policy
Description of policy	This policy outlines responsibilities and exclusion periods to assist Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) schools to manage infectious diseases contracted by students. It applies to all CECG schools. Medical issues that do not involve infectious diseases are dealt with in line with the CECG Medical Welfare of Students policy.
Required because?	There are legal requirements to exclude students and notify health authorities of certain diseases.
Description of changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed COVID19 from the list of diseases with an exclusion period, in line with ACT and NSW Government determinations.
Applies to	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisation-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific: Schools
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff only <input type="checkbox"/> Students only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and students
Status	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision of existing document <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision of existing document

Related documents	Medical Welfare of Students Policy
Intranet Category	Child Protection and Student Welfare
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Responsible officer/team	Senior Officer: Disability, Wellbeing & Inclusion

MANAGEMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN SCHOOLS POLICY

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1. Summary

- 1.1 This policy outlines responsibilities and exclusion periods to assist Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) schools to manage infectious diseases contracted by students. It applies to all CECG schools. Medical issues that do not involve infectious diseases are dealt with in line with the CECG Medical Welfare of Students policy.

2. Management of Infectious Diseases In Schools Policy

- 2.1 The National Health and Medical Research Council suggests the three most effective methods to reduce the occurrence of infectious disease and the risk of contagion are:
- Immunisation
 - Exclusion of sick students, staff and visitors, and
 - Effective hygiene practices (eg handwashing).
- 2.2 This policy sets out how CECG implements these methods, including the list of infectious diseases with exclusion periods set by law (Appendices 1 and 3). These lists also indicate which infectious diseases require the school to notify the relevant government health department.
- 2.3 Parents or guardians must present Immunisation Certificates to the school as part of a student's enrolment. Parents or guardians must also notify a school if immunisation status changes and schools must record any changes in the student's file. Schools may require children who have not been immunised to remain at home during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, at the discretion of the school Principal.
- 2.4 Parents must notify the school if their child contracts an infectious disease. The school will contact the State or Territory Health Department regarding certain notifiable disease (indicated on the list of infectious diseases), using the templates provided at Appendix 2 and Appendix 4.
- 2.5 Schools must notify parents of immune deficient students of cases of chickenpox and measles.
- 2.6 Schools should ensure the school community is fully informed of the procedures to be followed relating to infectious diseases. An example letter is provided at Appendix 5 to assist schools to notify parents and carers.
- 2.7 Schools must follow procedures set down in First Aid policies regarding Blood Born Viruses.

3. Exclusion Periods

- 3.1 Students suffering infectious diseases listed in Appendix 1 (ACT) or Appendix 3 (NSW) below must be excluded from school for a period of time. The Principal must notify the State or Territory health department of certain infectious diseases.
- 3.2 Parents and carers of a child with condition on the list, or a child who has been in contact with a person with a condition on the list, should notify the school as soon as possible.

4. Additional Control Measures

- 4.1 During times of widespread infectious outbreak, CECG may implement additional procedures to manage infectious diseases in schools.

- 4.2 In such cases, the CECG Emergency Response Team will develop and communicate all requirements in line with relevant policies and procedures.

5. Definitions

- 5.1 **Immunisation:** The process of administering to a person a substance registered as a vaccine in the part of the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods maintained under section 9A of the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 of the Commonwealth relating to registered goods.
- 5.2 **Exclusion Period:** The time for which a child is required not to attend school if they contract certain illnesses. (Refer to Appendices 1 and 3)

6. Related Documents and Legislation

- 6.1 Related CECG Documents:
- [Medical Welfare of Students Policy](#)
- 6.2 Legislation and Standards:
- [Public Health Regulations 2000 \(ACT\)](#)
 - [NSW Public Health Act 2010](#)

7. Contact

- 7.1 For support or further questions relating to this policy, contact the School and Family Services Area.

Appendix 1: ACT List of Diseases with Exclusion Periods

Exclusion periods are aligned with the ACT Education Directorate list of Infectious Diseases and Exclusion Periods¹ and public health recommendations.

The school Principal must notify the ACT Chief Health Officer if a student contracts any disease marked with a hash symbol (#). Notifications should be made by telephone as soon as possible:

Telephone: 6205 2155

The telephone advice should be followed up in writing on the template provided at Appendix 2 by;

Fax: (02) 6205 0711, or Email: cdc@act.gov.au.

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
amoebiasis (entamoeba histolytica)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
*Campylobacteriosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
chicken pox (varicella and herpes zoster)	Exclude until the last blister has scabbed over. The child should not continue to be excluded only because of some remaining scabs.	Not excluded. Any child with an immune deficiency (eg with leukaemia, or because of receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection. Urgent medical advice should be sought, and varicella-zoster immunoglobulin (ZIG) administered if necessary.
conjunctivitis (acute infectious)	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases.	Not excluded.
*cryptosporidiosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded
*#diphtheria	Exclude until— (a) at least 2 negative throat swabs have been taken (the first not less than 24 hours after antibiotic treatment ceases and the second not less than 48 hours later); and	Exclude family and household contacts until approval to return has been given by the chief health officer.

¹ https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/845267/20160322-InfectiousDiseasesProcedures.pdf

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
	(b) a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	
#Gastrointestinal illness (notify Public Health Officer if two or more students/staff are affected in a two-day period)	Exclude until a vomiting and diarrhoea ceases or until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
giardiasis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
*# <i>haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (hib) infection	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded.
hand, foot and mouth disease	Exclude if— (a) child is unwell; or (b) the child is drooling, and not all blisters have dried or an exposed weeping blister is not covered with a dressing.	Not excluded.
*hepatitis A	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded.
#Hepatitis B	Exclude only if recommended by doctor	Not excluded
herpes (cold sores)	Exclude young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices while the lesion is	Not excluded.

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
	weeping. Lesion to be covered by a dressing in all cases, if possible.	
impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has begun and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded.
influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.
*leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the chief health officer.	Not excluded.
*#measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appears.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Immunised contacts not excluded. (b) Exclude non-immunised contacts until 14 days after the first day of appearance of the rash in the index case. (c) Non-immunised contacts immunised with measles vaccine within 72 hours after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being immunised. (d) Non-immunised contacts who are given normal human immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 7 days after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being given NHIG.
meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.
*meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has begun.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Not excluded if receiving rifampicin or other antibiotic treatment recommended by the chief health officer. (b) Otherwise, excluded until 10 days after last contact with the index case.
*#mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms, or until parotid swelling	Not excluded.

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
	goes down (whichever is sooner).	
*#poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days after onset of symptoms and until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded.
ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma	Exclude until effective treatment has begun.	Not excluded.
rotavirus	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
*#rubella (German measles)	Exclude for 4 days after the appearance of the rash.	Not excluded. Female staff of child-bearing age should ensure that their immune status against rubella is adequate.
salmonellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
shigellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has recovered or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.	Not excluded.
#Tetanus	Exclude until the person has recovered.	Not excluded
*tuberculosis	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the chief health officer.	Not excluded.

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
*#typhoid and paratyphoid fever	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	(a) Not excluded unless the chief health officer notifies the person in charge of the school. (b) If the chief health officer gives notice, exclusion is subject to the conditions in the notice.
*whooping cough (pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from start of cough, or for at least 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the chief health officer.	Exclude non-immunised household, home-based care and close childcare contacts under 7 years old for 14 days after the last exposure to infection, or until 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the chief health officer (whichever is sooner).
worms (intestinal)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
* These conditions must be notified by medical practitioners to the Chief Health Officer # These conditions must be notified by the school principal or principal carer to the Chief Health Officer.		

Appendix 2 – Template to Notify ACT Health Department

Notification of Vaccine Preventable Diseases by Schools Notifications should be made to the Office for Schools and by telephone as soon as possible to:

ACT Health Directorate Communicable Disease Control Section

Telephone: 6205 2155

Fax: 6205 0711

Email: cdc@act.gov.au

Disease being notified:

School Name:

Name of person making notification:

Telephone number:

Child's Name:

Date of Birth:

Gender:

Class:

Residential Address:

Immunisation Status (if known):

Parent name:

Parent/Carer's contact telephone numbers:

Any other relevant information requested by the Public Health Officer to assist in the investigation and control of the disease:

Appendix 3 – NSW List of Diseases with an Exclusion Period

Exclusion periods are aligned with the NSW Department of Health Control Guidelines² and Stopping the Spread of Childhood Diseases Fact Sheet³.

The school Principal must notify the NSW Department of Health if a student contracts any disease marked with a hash symbol (#). Notifications should be made using the online notification form and sent to the local Public Health Unit listed in the form:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Documents/vpd-notification-form.pdf>

Principals are also encouraged to notify the Public Health Unit by phone on 1300 066 055 or at the number listed in the online form.

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
Campylobacteriosis	Exclude until 24 hours after diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
chicken pox (varicella and herpes zoster)	Exclude until all blisters have dried—this is usually at least 5 days after the rash first appears.	Not excluded. Any child with an immune deficiency (eg with leukaemia, or because of receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection. Urgent medical advice should be sought, and varicella-zoster immunoglobulin (ZIG) administered if necessary.
conjunctivitis (acute infectious)	Exclude until discharge from eyes has stopped.	Not excluded.
cryptosporidiosis	Exclude until symptoms cease.	Not excluded.
diphtheria	Exclude until proven bacteriologically negative. Ideally by: (a) at least 2 negative throat swabs have been taken (the first not less than 24 hours after antibiotic treatment ceases and the second not less than 48 hours later); and	Exclude family and household contacts until approval to return has been given by the chief health officer.

² <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/controlguideline/Pages/default.aspx>

³ <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/childhood.aspx#imp>

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
	(b) a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	
#Gastrointestinal illness (notify Public Health Unit if two or more students/staff are affected in a two-day period)	Exclude until a vomiting and diarrhoea ceases or until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
giardiasis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded.
# <i>haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (hib) infection	Exclude until treatment is complete and a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded.
hand, foot and mouth disease	Exclude if— (a) child is unwell; or (b) until all blisters have dried.	Not excluded.
Head lice (pediculosis)	Not excluded if effective treatment begins before the next day of attendance. The child does not need to be sent home immediately if head lice are detected.	Not excluded
hepatitis A	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice, and a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded.
impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has begun and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded.
influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
*leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by specialist physician.	Not excluded.
#measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appears.	(a) Immunised contacts not excluded. (b) Exclude non-immunised contacts until 14 days after the first day of appearance of the rash in the index case.
#meningococcal infection	URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION. Follow exclusion advice from public health unit.	(a) Not excluded if receiving rifampicin or other antibiotic treatment recommended by the chief health officer. (b) Otherwise, excluded until 10 days after last contact with the index case.
#mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms.	Not excluded.
#poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days after onset of symptoms and until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded.
ringworm, scabies, trachoma	Exclude until the day after effective treatment has begun.	Not excluded.
rotavirus	Exclude until one day after symptoms cease.	Not excluded.
#rubella (German measles)	Exclude for 4 days after the appearance of the rash.	Not excluded. Female staff of child-bearing age should ensure that their immune status against rubella is adequate.
scarlet fever	exclude until the day after appropriate antibiotics have been started and the child feels better	Not Excluded
salmonellosis	Exclude until 48 hours after symptoms ceases.	Not excluded.
shigellosis	Exclude until 48 hours after symptoms ceases	Not excluded.

Condition	Exclusion of person with the condition	Exclusion of people in contact with the person with the condition
streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has recovered or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.	Not excluded.
#Tetanus	Exclude until the person has recovered	Not excluded
tuberculosis	Exclude until approval to return has been given by specialist medical advice.	Not excluded.
typhoid and paratyphoid fever	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a doctor recommending that the exclusion should cease.	(a) Not excluded unless the chief health officer notifies the person in charge of the school. (b) If the chief health officer gives notice, exclusion is subject to the conditions in the notice.
#whooping cough (pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from start of cough, or for at least 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the chief health officer.	Exclude non-immunised household, home-based care and close childcare contacts under 7 years old for 14 days after the last exposure to infection, or until 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the chief health officer (whichever is sooner).

Appendix 5 – Letter to notify Parents and Carers

Dear Parents/Carers

I am sending you a list of infectious diseases and the exclusion periods and other measures which should be followed if a child contracts or comes into contact with a person who has one of the listed diseases.

The *ACT Public Health Regulations 2000/NSW Public Health Act 2010*, assigns to parents a responsibility to exclude their child from school and to notify the school if there are reasonable grounds for believing that their child has an infectious disease, or been in contact with a person who has one of the diseases listed.

Under the *Regulations/Act* schools must also notify the Chief Health Officer if a child enrolled at the school has a vaccine preventable disease. This allows the Chief Health Officer to take any public health action necessary to prevent the further spread of the disease.

In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease at the school, or in the community, the Chief Health Officer may issue a health direction to the school to take any specified action to reduce the public health risk caused by the outbreak.

If you have any questions in relation to these requirements, please ring the *ACT Communicable Disease Control Section, Health Directorate on (02) 6205 2155/NSW Public Health Unit by phone on 1300 066 055*.