

POLICY

INFECTIOUS DISEASES – EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHOOL

Responsibility of: Student Services
Effective Date: November 2011
Next Review Date: November 2013
Target Audience: Staff/Parents/Community

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1. POLICY

Schools must follow the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) *“Time Out” Poster* on minimum periods of exclusion from school, pre-school and childcare facilities for children or staff with, or exposed to, infectious diseases (based on National Health and Medical Research Guidelines – December 2005).

The minimum periods suggested in the CDC *“Time Out” Poster* may be altered if a written letter is provided by a medical practitioner stating the child/staff are able to return to school.

It is recommended that parents/staff report these conditions to the school to ensure proper care of students/staff and to detect situations where there is potential for transmission. Confidentiality or privacy of medical information about an infected person should be observed at all times and in all situations.

In relation to contact or collision sports, Sports Medicine Australia, *Infectious Disease Policy* addresses the issue of infectious diseases and provides recommendations for people involved in contact or collision sports and may be a useful guide for Principals.

2. BUSINESS NEED

Schools have a duty of care to protect students and staff, and reduce the likelihood of the spread of infection through the school and wider community.

In consultation with the Department of Health and the Centre for Disease Control, DET adopts the CDC *“Time Out” Poster* on minimum periods of exclusion from school, pre-school and childcare facilities for children or staff with, or exposed to, infectious diseases (based on National Health and Medical Research Guidelines – December 2005).

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all government schools in the Northern Territory.

4. DEFINITIONS

Exclusion period - a specified period of time that a student or staff member must remain away from school.

Infectious Diseases - those diseases which are caused by an infectious agent, including those which can be transmitted by human-to-human contact, such as the conditions listed on the CDC “*Time Out*” Poster.

Parent - includes the person who has the actual custody of a child, the person with whom a child currently resides or a person caring for the child at any given time and this may include biological parent(s), grandparents, uncles/aunties and other extended family.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (if applicable)

Principals are responsible for:

- ensuring school staff are aware of this policy

Parents and **Staff** are responsible for:

- following the specified period of time outlined in the CDC “*Time Out*” Poster that children/staff must remain away from school if diagnosed with an infectious disease
- supply of a medical certificate to cover the time the student/staff will be absent from school

Student Services is responsible for:

- communication of the policy to school communities
- conducting professional learning in association with relevant allied health associations/professionals for schools that require assistance
- reviewing the policy when due

6. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Centre for Disease Control (CDC) “*Time Out*” Poster minimum periods of exclusion from school, pre-school and childcare facilities for children or staff with, or exposed to, infectious diseases (based on National Health and Medical Research Guidelines – December 2005).
http://www.health.nt.gov.au/library/scripts/objectifyMedia.aspx?file=pdf/26/91.pdf&siteID=1&str_title=Timeout

National Health and Medical Research Council, *Staying Healthy in Child Care* provides information on preventing infectious diseases and fact sheets for childhood diseases for parents, child care centers and preschools.
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch43>

Sports Medicine Australia, *Infectious Disease Policy* provides recommendations for people involved in contact or collision sports.
<http://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/infdisease.pdf>

Sports Medicine Australia, *Blood Rules OK* Booklet and Pamphlet has been written to help people understand blood-borne viruses and other infectious diseases, how they are transmitted and what actions can be taken to prevent their spread through participation in sport.
<http://sma.org.au/resources/policies/infectious-diseases/>