

Infectious Diseases Policy (Student)

This policy follows the authority provided in the Government Department of Health and Human Services (Vic) Guidelines and has been developed with review by an external medical authority.

The Hazard – Infectious Diseases

There are many infectious diseases that can affect children and young people, some common and others rare, including:

- Chickenpox (varicella);
- Gastroenteritis;
- German measles (rubella);
- Haemophilus influenzae infections;
- Hepatitis A;
- Measles (rubeola);
- Meningococcal;
- Poliomyelitis;
- Typhoid and paratyphoid fever; and
- Whooping cough (pertussis).

More information about these diseases can be found on the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website.

Penola Catholic College's Policy

Penola Catholic College is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all our students.

It is our policy that:

- we implement clear guidelines for the management of infectious diseases
- we provide education, support and resources for staff, parents/guardians, students and the wider College community on dealing with infectious diseases
- teaching staff are trained to recognise symptoms of common infectious diseases and how to deal appropriately with students who become ill at school
- we inform the Department of Health and Human Services of the occurrence of any notifiable conditions

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Parents/guardians are required to:

- inform the College of any excludable infectious disease their child is diagnosed with. The complete list of infectious diseases with the exclusion status of the disease can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website
- inform the College if their child has been in contact with a person infected with diphtheria, measles (if the child is unimmunised) and whooping cough (if the child is under seven years old)
- give an immunisation status certificate in respect of each vaccine-preventable disease to the College

- follow medical advice with respect to exclusion from and return to school of their child
- comply with College staff directions for time out of school for the student's condition.

Immunisation Policy

All staff should be fully immunised and know their immunisation status, to protect them against the outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases. Staff vaccination is covered in our Immunisation (Staff) policy in our Occupational Health & Safety Program.

Immunisation status certificates must be provided upon enrolment and will be stored in student medical records which are kept up-to-date in accordance with our Medical Records (Student) policy.

Students who have not received any immunisations must still provide a certificate. Certificates will assist in the event of a disease outbreak, where unimmunised children can be quickly identified and excluded from school until the risk of infection has passed. Records of the information in each immunisation status certificate must be kept for the duration that the student attends the College.

It is recommended that staff and students are immunised according to the Immunisation Schedule Victoria.

Prospective students will not be excluded from attending school if they have not been immunised.

Infection Control Policy

Where the Principal believes on reasonable grounds that a student is suffering from a vaccine-preventable disease, they will notify the Department of Health and Human Services as well as the parents/guardians of the child, in order to receive instructions on the collection or exclusion of the child.

In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease at the College, any student diagnosed with the infectious disease should not attend school in order to prevent the spread of the condition among staff and other students.

Specific management and communication arrangements will be made in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services or another authorised representative of the Chief Health Officer.

When directed by the Department of Health and Human Services or another authorised representative of the Chief Health Officer, the Principal will ensure students at the College who are not immunised against vaccine-preventable diseases, do not attend the College until the Department advises that attendance can be resumed.

Incident Procedures

In the event a student becomes unwell at the College with an infectious disease, immediate medical treatment should be provided following the procedures outlined in our First Aid policy. The student should then be transferred to the care of their parent/guardian.

Contact Details for the Communicable Diseases Section of the Department of Health and Human Services

1. Phone 1300 651 160

2. Email infectious.diseases@dhhs.vic.gov.au
 - Post to Reply Paid 65937, Melbourne VIC 8060; or
 - Online (<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/notify-condition-now>)

Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- advise the Principal if they know or reasonably suspect that a student may have an infectious disease
- implement infection control practices to minimise the risk of exposure to infectious diseases for themselves and students
- be aware of infectious diseases which they have been vaccinated against and keep their immunisation records up-to-date. For more information refer to our Immunisation (Staff) policy
- maintain privacy and confidentiality of student information and documentation on suspected/confirmed infectious diseases.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- staff training and supervision
- maintenance of staff and student medical records
- effective incident notification procedures
- effective communication procedures with students' parents/guardians
- initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Discipline for Breach of Policy

Where a staff member breaches this policy Penola Catholic College may take disciplinary action.

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