



## **Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control Policy and Procedure**

### **Purpose**

Mid North Christian College has established this policy in relation to infectious diseases to ensure that all children and young people at our College learn and grow in a healthy environment. All schools have an important role to play in supporting the prevention and control of transmission of infectious diseases through:

- abiding by legislated requirements for school exclusion and immunisation status recording
- supporting the personal hygiene routines of students, for example, provision of hand hygiene facilities
- ensuring procedures are in place to safely manage the handling of spills of blood and other body fluids or substances.

This policy will help all Mid North Christian College staff to understand, manage, and minimise preventative infectious diseases.

### **Background**

Mid North Christian College aims to create a healthy environment that takes reasonable steps to prevent the spread of infectious disease and notify relevant authorities and families if there happens to be an occurrence of an infectious diseases within our College.

### **Preventative Strategies and Actions**

#### **Standard Precautions**

Staff and students must treat all blood and other body fluids or substances as being potentially infectious and practice standard precautions whenever dealing with them.

Standard precautions include:

- hand hygiene, for more information
- the use of personal protective equipment (for example, gloves and masks)
- safe handling and disposal of 'sharps'
- respiratory hygiene (i.e. 'cover your cough' and disposing of tissues in a bin).

#### **Education on hand hygiene and provision of soap**

Hand hygiene is considered one of the most important infection control measures for reducing the spread of infection. Mid North Christian College will incorporate hand hygiene education into the curriculum and daily school activities to maximise opportunities for students to develop and maintain personal hygiene practices. Staff will be encouraged to complete Hand Hygiene Australia free online training modules for hand hygiene and infection control.

Mid North Christian College will provide appropriate hand hygiene consumables to support the personal hygiene routines of students. Consumables include:

- soap, preferably in liquid form via a dispenser (for example, wall mounted)
- a method for hand drying (for example, paper towel or hand dryer)
- alcohol-based hand rub (where deemed appropriate).

Although washing hands with soap and warm water is the preferred method of hand hygiene, alcohol-based hand sanitisers are a useful substitute to hand washing and can be provided in classrooms or where running water is not available. Non-alcohol-based hand sanitisers are not recommended.

### **Management of blood and other body fluid or substance exposures**

The College will have appropriate personal protective equipment (for example, gloves and masks) available for staff to use when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances. Staff members and students should be familiar with and practice recommended standard precaution practices.

### **Workplace Health and Safety**

Appropriate personal protective equipment, such as single-use disposable gloves, will be provided for staff to use when dealing with blood or other body fluids or substances.

Mid North Christian College will encourage staff to be appropriately vaccinated against preventable infectious diseases as per the Australian Immunisation Handbook recommendations for people working with children.

## **Control of Infectious Diseases Strategies and Actions**

### **Send unwell students home as soon as possible**

Ensure that unwell children do not attend the College. Isolate children who become unwell during the day and send the unwell child home as soon as possible.

### **Exclusion**

The spread of certain infectious diseases can be reduced by excluding an infectious person from contact with others who are at risk of catching the infection. The need for exclusion depends on:

- the ease with which the infection can be spread
- the ability of the infected person to follow hygiene precautions
- whether or not the person has some immunity to the infection (either from vaccination or past infection)
- to a lesser extent, the severity of the disease.

For advice on recommended exclusion periods, go to the SA Health Exclusion from childcare, preschools, education and work webpage.

### **College community communication and additional advice**

It is not generally necessary to communicate with the broader College community about an infectious disease, unless there is an outbreak or the College has been directed to pursue specific action by health authorities. Doing so can cause unnecessary anxiety in the College community.

For advice on alerting parents, or displaying signage, in relation to case(s) of a notifiable infectious disease in the College, AISSA will be contacted.

In more general cases, where communication has been deemed necessary, the College should give consideration as to what should be communicated to the College community.

It should:

- maintain student confidentiality
- be fact based
- be written in a way not to cause alarm
- inform parents and guardians that a College community member/s has been diagnosed with an infectious disease
- name the condition
- suggest that they seek medical advice regarding their child's health if they have concerns.

The SA Health Public Health Services can offer support and advice on public health issues. For enquires contact general enquiries on:

- Phone: (08) 8226 7100
- Email: [public.health@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:public.health@health.sa.gov.au)

## Definitions

**Exclusion periods** are based on the time that a person with a specific disease or condition might be infectious to others.

**Non-exclusion** means there is not a significant risk of transmitting infection to others. A person who is not excluded may still need to remain at home because he or she does not feel well.

A **contact** is any person who has been close enough to an infected person to be at risk of having acquired the infection from that person.

**Hand hygiene** is a general term referring to any action of hand cleansing. It includes hand washing with soap and water and using antimicrobial hand rubs (for example, an alcohol-based hand rub). For more detailed information about hand hygiene, see: Personal Hygiene in Related policies

**Infectious diseases** are diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another.

Respiratory hygiene is a term used to describe infection prevention measures. Practices include:

- covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- using tissues and disposing of them appropriately
- attending to hand hygiene immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing nose.

**Standard precautions** are the minimum infection prevention and control practices that must be used at all times for all people in all situations. The use of standard precautions aims to minimise and, where possible, eliminate the risk of transmission of infection.

## END OF POLICY & PROCEDURES

### Authorisations

**Policy Reviewer:** Principal Rachel Richardson and Student Services – Tina Moreton

**Approval by:** CLT

**Board Approval required:** No

**New or Revised Policy:** New

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**Next Review date:** End of 2025

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