

COVID-19 Protection & Control Measures

This policy complements Happy Hubhub’s “Dealing with Illness and Infection” policy, with specific regard to the additional protection and control measures put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Purpose

- To document Happy Hubhub’s approach to the provision of a healthy environment in the time of global pandemic due to the coronavirus (COVID-19);
- To implement effective infection control procedures to protect all staff, coworkers, children and families from, and minimise the potential risk of, COVID-19.

Objective

To ensure that:

- Children are protected from COVID-19 infection and families are kept informed about their child’s wellbeing whilst at Happy Hubhub, and about protective measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Educators are protected from infection and understand the issues regarding COVID 19 and the preventative measures put in place, and are empowered to take action if they suspect a child (or adult) is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 and should not be in attendance.
- The Director supports families to co-operate in self-isolating and staying home if anyone in their family experiences any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Happy Hubhub complies with requirements for COVID-19 control as set out by the Victorian Department of Education & Training in conjunction with the Federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to everyone entering the Happy Hubhub premises in the time of pandemic: all children and families, educators and management, coworkers and clients of coworkers.

Policy Statement

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new form of coronavirus. Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild illness to pneumonia. Some people will recover easily, and others may get very sick very quickly.

People with coronavirus may experience symptoms such as:

- fever
- respiratory symptoms
- coughing
- sore throat
- shortness of breath.

Other symptoms can include runny nose, acute blocked nose (congestion), headache, muscle or joint pains, nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting, loss of sense of smell, altered sense of taste, loss of appetite and fatigue.

As outlined in our *Dealing with Illness & Infection* policy, Happy Hubhub enforces strict hygiene and infection control procedures to prevent or minimise the spread of contagious illnesses. With regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, Happy Hubhub is committed to:

- As far as practicable, providing a safe and healthy environment for all families, staff, coworkers and clients visiting Happy Hubhub in the time of the coronavirus pandemic;
- Providing up-to-date information for families, educators and coworkers regarding COVID-19 and associated protection and prevention measures;
- Complying with requirements for COVID-19 control as set out by the Victorian Department of Education & Training in conjunction with the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Procedures

Attendance & Vaccination

- As of 5 November 2021, Happy Hubhub is mandating that all adult visitors entering the premises, including students on work placement, coworking members and their guests, be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless a valid medical exemption applies.
- Visitors may be asked to produce proof of vaccination (e.g. digital vaccination certificate) to be sighted by a member of Happy Hubhub staff.
- Happy Hubhub's early education and care team are 100% fully vaccinated.
- People are excluded from entering Happy Hubhub if they are in the high-risk category for coronavirus (COVID-19), including:
 - Unvaccinated adults (unless medically exempt)
 - Those who are awaiting the results of a coronavirus test, or who have been advised to self-isolate or quarantine by the Department of Health or other government authority
 - Those with fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath) symptoms.
- Unwell staff, children and coworkers are actively encouraged to stay home.
- Visitors are instructed to use the provided hand sanitiser at reception upon entry.
- All childcare staff and attending children will undergo daily contactless temperature checks; if a higher than normal temperature is recorded, the ear thermometer will be used for an accurate back-up reading.
- Visitors must sign in using the QR code with their smartphone for contact-tracing purposes (or the back-up sign-in book).
- Only one person (parent/carer or authorised person) is recommended to be present at drop-off and pick-up of their child.
- Drop-off and pick-up of children may at times be limited to outdoors only, depending on current restrictions and guidance.
- At other times, parents are asked to not enter the childcare room **unless/until invited to do so** by an educator – this helps to avoid congestion in the childcare.
- Other CovidSafe measures (e.g. coworking closure, room density limits, mask wearing) are subject to change in accordance with Victoria's guidelines and restrictions. Happy Hubhub will communicate such changes as they occur.
- Refusal to cooperate with CovidSafe measures may result in exclusion from Happy Hubhub.

Cleaning, Ventilation & Social Distancing

- Happy Hubhub will maintain full adherence to the NHMRC childcare cleaning guidelines, in addition:
 - Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily (e.g. gate knob, doorbell,

- doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets, sinks).
- Wash and launder play items and toys including washable plush toys as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely.
- Windows are open during the day to promote airflow where possible.
- Hand sanitisers (or soap and water), hand towels and tissues are available in all learning and office spaces.
- Coworkers are encouraged to wipe down their desk with supplied diluted sanitiser and paper towels, or disinfectant wipes, before and after their work session.
- Outside of the childcare, group sizes are limited to enable four square metres of space for each person in the room.
 - Kitchen/meals:** 4 people;
 - Kitchen coworking:** 4 people;
 - Garage room:** 8 people;
 - Boardroom:** 3 people;
 - Downstairs office:** 3 people;
 - Small meeting room:** 1 person;
 - Upstairs large office:** 4 people;
 - Upstairs small offices:** @ 2 people;
 - Admin office:** 1 person.
- Social distancing (minimum 1.5 m) is to be observed between staff and coworkers in the coworking and office spaces; and wherever possible in the childcare.

In the childcare space, Educators will:

- Engage in progressive environmental cleaning throughout the day to ensure that risks of transmission are reduced for high-touch services.
- 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. For table activities, set up activities only at each end of the table.
- Set up more individual activities throughout the room.
- Consider using informal opportunities to engage with the children/read books/do storytelling with one or two children at a time throughout the day, rather than having group times where everyone is sitting on the mat.
- For younger children, rotate toys more often and increase the frequency of cleaning toys. Sharing of toys that have been placed in mouths is avoided.
- Look at the spacing of cots and highchairs, keeping them well apart.
- Actively discourage the sharing of food and drink bottles.
- Consider having fewer children at each table during meal times, using more tables to allow more space between children, or staggering the timings of snacks and lunch so

fewer children are eating at the same time.

- Operate an indoor/outdoor program for the full day to provide more ventilation via the open door to outside, and to allow for more space for the children and the setup of more activities for children to engage in.

Hygiene

- Alcohol-based hand sanitiser is available at reception, and sanitiser or liquid soap and running water are available throughout the building.
- Staff and children are encouraged to regularly perform hand hygiene, including on arrival to the service and before and after meals.
- Staff direct and supervise hand washing at a minimum of before and after eating food and going to the toilet, either through washing hands with soap and water, or use of hand sanitiser according to need.
- Where soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitiser is provided in every occupied room and staff and children are actively encouraged to use it. Staff and children unable to use hand sanitiser should be encouraged to wash their hands more regularly.
- Staff and children are encouraged to keep as much distance as possible and developmentally appropriate between each other when eating, noting that some children will require assistance with feeding (see routine care).
- Ensure the highest hygiene practices amongst food handlers as per NHMRC guidance [Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services](#).

Routine Care & First Aid

- Standard precautions are advised when coming into contact with someone for the purpose of providing routine care and/or assistance (for example, the use of gloves for nappy changing, toileting, feeding). Also see NHMRC guidance [Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services](#)
- Staff must always wash hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitiser before and after performing routine care or first aid.
- Standard precautions should be adopted when providing first aid, e.g. gloves when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances.
- Educators may choose to wear additional PPE (e.g. face mask) for routine care and first aid; however, it is not required to provide standard first aid on children or staff who appear to be well. Hand hygiene, cough etiquette and environmental cleaning are more important for reducing risk.

Management of Illness

- Any staff member, child or parent/carer may be refused entry to Happy Hubbub, or asked to leave, if they are observed to be experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), such as fever, cough or sore throat.
- Note: In the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, a mild temperature of 37.5 degrees and above constitutes grounds for exclusion/collection of a child.
- If any children develop compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) whilst in care they will be isolated in an appropriate space with suitable supervision and collected by a parent/carer as soon as possible.
- In this situation, where staff or children are experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), important actions to take include hand hygiene, physical distance and where possible putting on a face mask.
- Face masks should not be used in situations where an individual is unable to safely or practically tolerate a mask (e.g. a child with complex medical needs, including existing respiratory needs, and younger children).
- Urgent medical attention should be sought where indicated.
- All children with a health care plan should ensure this is up-to-date and that it provides additional advice, where required, on monitoring and identification of the unwell child in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- Follow cleaning guidance according to the situation of the case. If a child spreads droplets (e.g. by sneezing, coughing or vomiting), clean surfaces immediately with disinfectant wipes.

Notification

In the event that a child or staff member at Happy Hubbub has a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) or is in close contact with a confirmed case:

- The Director will seek immediate advice from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on 1300 651 160;
- The Director will also make a report to the Victorian Regulatory Authority as required by the National Law and Regulations governing all early childhood education and care services. For reporting requirements: visit [NQF Notifications Required](#) or call 1300 307 415 (toll-free).
- The Director will close the service and advise families if advised to do so by the authorities (DHHS).

Legislative Provisions

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010:

Section 167 (1)(2) and (3) Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012:

R.4 Definitions -infectious disease; r.88 Infectious Diseases; r.103 Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair; r.106 Laundry and hygiene facilities; R.168 (2) Policies and procedure to be kept in relation to the following: (b) – incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures complying with regulation 88 (c) dealing with infectious diseases; r.174 Time to notify certain circumstance to Regulatory Authority;

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care:

Element 2.1.2 Health practices and procedures: Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

Sources

Victorian Department of Education & Training:

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/Pages/coronavirus-advice-early-childhood.aspx?utm_source=email+marketing+Mailigen&utm_campaign=Direct+Send+-+Emergency&utm_medium=email

Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS): https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert?gclid=CjwKCAjw7e_0BRB7EiwAIHgoKcqTsL6xIoM-fKofrt95KscYJY6M4zvFtmJtpsGysWNC7jmSuUDWRoCRnMQAvD_BwE

Authorisation & Review

In order to ensure the continued effectiveness of this policy during the pandemic, the Director will keep the policy up to date with current legislation and best practice. The Directors will seek ongoing, real-time feedback from educators and families.