

Infectious Diseases Procedure

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1 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to improve student, staff and community health by:

- reducing the spread of infectious diseases.
- providing information to all Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) school and site staff, and parents/ guardians/carers about actions they should take where a student is suspected or diagnosed with an infectious disease.

2 Overview

If there is a suspected or confirmed case of infectious disease at a DECYP school or site, or at a school-approved activity, the site manager or staff member in charge must:

- Contact the Tasmanian Department of Health (DoH), Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738, to receive advice.
- Follow the advice provided by the DoH Public Health hotline, regarding issues including exclusion from educational sites, confidentiality and communication with parents/guardians/carers, students and the community.
- Notify the relevant Learning Services - Director, Operations, if an infectious disease case is confirmed.

Education and care services (e.g. child care services) are required to have their own policies relating to infectious diseases, as per the [Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Regulation 168\)](#).

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Site Manager:

The Site Manager is to:

- Contact the DoH, Public Health hotline on 1800 671 738.
- Provide any information required by the Public Health.
- Follow the directions of Public Health.
- Notify the relevant Learning Services – Director, Operations, as soon as practical if an infectious disease case is confirmed.
- Complete the [DECYP Incident Reporting Form](#).
- If the case is suspected or confirmed during a school-approved activity, the staff member in charge is to follow the above steps and notify the educational site manager (e.g. Principal or Program Leader) as soon as practical.

3.2 Parents/guardians/carers are to:

- Notify the Site Manager as soon as possible, if:
 - They have reasonable grounds for believing that their child may have an infectious disease.

- They have reasonable grounds for believing that their child has been in contact with person diagnosed with an infectious disease.
- Their child has been diagnosed with an infectious disease.
- Comply with the directions given by the Site Manager, Public Health, and/or Learning Services.

3.3 The Learning Services - Director, Operations is to:

- Consult with schools and Site Managers, as required.
- Consult with the Public Health, as appropriate.
- Escalate information to the DECYP Executive, as appropriate.

4 Process

- If there is a suspected case of infectious disease at a school, school approved activity, or site for educational provision:
 - The Site Manager or staff member in charge is to contact the Tasmanian Department of Health, Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738.
 - The Site Manager or staff member in charge is to provide Public Health with any required or requested information about the suspected or confirmed case, and any other relevant information.
 - Public Health will provide information on the course of action to be taken, including required diagnosis, periods of exclusion from school, and contact tracing (where relevant).
 - The Site Manager or staff member in charge is to provide the parent/guardian/carer of the student, or the student, with any information or direction provided by Public Health about the suspected or confirmed case.
 - If the site manager is not present (for example, the student is on a school-approved activity such as a camp or sporting event), the staff member in charge is to follow the process above and notify the site manager as soon as practical.
 - Staff are not to circulate or publish information about a suspected case before the case is confirmed. This includes in school newsletters, on social media, or by sending letters to parents and the school community.
 - The confidentiality and privacy of the student is to be considered under the relevant professional codes of conduct.
 - If a case is confirmed, Public Health will advise if the school/centre/community should be notified. Schools should consider the best communication method for doing so and may consult with the School Health Nurse where appropriate. The following wording may be used: We would like to make our community aware that there has been a confirmed case of <insert name of condition here>. We are following Public Health advice on this matter. Please contact your doctor or the Public Health hotline on 1800 671 738 if you are concerned or have the following symptoms <insert symptoms here>.
 - If the case is confirmed, the site manager or staff member in charge is to notify the Learning Services – Director, Operations as soon as practical.
 - The Director, Operations will consult with Public Health as required. They will also escalate information to the DECYP Executive, as appropriate (for example, in the event of a cluster or outbreak of infectious diseases).

5 Related policies

- [Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines](#)
- [Learner Health Care and Safety Policy](#)
- [Security and Emergency Management Policy](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Policy \(Staff Only\)](#)

6 Related procedures

- [Duty of Care for Students on Departmental Education Sites Procedure \(Staff Only\)](#)
- [Security and Emergency Management Procedures](#)

7 Supporting information/tools

- [DECYP Incident Reporting Form.](#)
- [Department for Education, Children and Young People - Infectious Diseases – Managing Symptoms \(Staff Only\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Intranet Page \(Staff Only\)](#)
- [Department of Health: Infectious Diseases guides and fact sheets](#)
- [Infectious Diseases and your child – DECYP](#)
- [Public Health Alerts](#)
- [Tasmanian Department of Health – Public Health](#)

8 Definitions

Educational/learning setting/site

A site for provision of educational activities, including schools, colleges, Child and Family Learning Centres, trade training centres, sites for student re-engagement programs or flexible provision of education.

Infectious Disease

Infectious diseases are diseases that can spread from person to person. They are also called 'communicable' diseases. They can be caused by a specific infectious agent or its toxic products through transmission from an infected person, animal or other sources such as food or contaminated water.

Notifiable Diseases

Notifiable diseases are those with a significance for public health. An example is coronavirus (COVID-19). By law, notifiable diseases must be reported to the Director of Public Health.

School Approved Activity

An activity that is approved by and/or involves the school, that may occur on site or off site, during school hours or outside of school hours. Examples of school approved activities include excursions, camps, and other school group trips.

Site Manager

A site manager is in charge of the site for educational provision. Examples of a site manager include a Principal, Child and Family Learning Centre Leader or Program Leader (eg Tier 4 flexible education provision program). This may also be the delegate of the Principal or Program Leader if the usual site manager is offsite for any reason.

Staff member in charge

A staff member that is in charge of a site in the absence of the usual site manager, or a staff member that is in charge of a school-approved activity in the absence of the school site manager. An example of this includes the staff member in charge of an excursion (teacher in charge) or school group travel (travel leader).

9 Legislation

- [Education Act 2016](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Regulation 168\)](#)
- [Public Health Act 1997 \(Tasmania\)](#)

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