



## POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

### Communicable Diseases and Immunisations

#### CONTENTS

<b>1. Overview .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Rational and scope .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Attachments and references .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Definitions .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. Immunisations.....</b>	<b>4</b>
5.1 Immunised students.....	4
5.2 Non-immunised students .....	4
<b>6. Procedures .....</b>	<b>5</b>
6.1 Cases requiring immediate reporting.....	5
6.2 Parental responsibilities .....	5
6.3 College responsibilities .....	5
6.3.1 Immediate response scenario .....	6
6.3.2 Urgent response scenario .....	6
6.3.3 Prompt response scenario.....	7
6.4 College responsibilities – data collection .....	7



## 1. OVERVIEW

Rehoboth Christian College considers the prevention and control of transmittable and communicable infectious micro-organisms (e.g. viruses, bacteria) to be a fundamental activity for child care within its facilities. While it is difficult to prevent the transmission of some micro-organisms (e.g. airborne respiratory viruses), it is possible to significantly reduce the incidents of transmission by:

- immunisation against communicable diseases;
- reducing exposure to communicable diseases by:
  - i. excluding the infectious person or susceptible contact, or;
  - ii. disinfecting skin or environmental surfaces that may be contaminated by micro-organisms.

The College has will implemented procedures and practices that promote good health outcomes for all students and staff by:

- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and all available management options when dealing with communicable diseases;
- assisting parents to access necessary health care for their children while they attend College or College-based activities;
- ensuring that health care standards are met and that identified health risks are minimised.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to exclude from the College any student(s) suffering with routinely diagnosed cases of infectious diseases.

## 2. RATIONAL AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to assist staff and parents of the College in identifying infectious and communicable diseases within the College community, and to provide procedures and best practices for reducing incidents of communicable diseases. By adhering to the measures outlined in this policy, the College will be able to reduce the transmission of such diseases amongst students, staff, and parents.

This policy applies to staff, students, and parents of the College community, and is to be communicated to parents at least one a year via the Parent Handbook and College newsletters, as well as being made available on the College website.



### 3. ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- College Information Handbooks
- Department of Health WA Notifiable Communicable Diseases ([Link](#))
- Department of Health WA Communicable Diseases Guidelines ([Link](#))
- National Immunisation Program Schedule ([Link](#))

### 4. DEFINITIONS

**Communicable disease** refers to any infection or disease that can be transmitted from one person to another. Examples of such diseases include Varicella-zoster (Chicken Pox, Shingles), Conjunctivitis, Diarrhoea, Hepatitis, Impetigo (school sores), Measles, Mumps, Pediculosis (head lice), Meningococcal and Streptococcal infections, Pertussis (Whooping cough), Poliomyelitis, Ringworm, Rubella, Scabies, Trachoma and Tuberculosis etc. From time to time other notified infectious diseases will be covered by this policy.

Responses to outbreaks are classified according to the following three categories:

An **immediate** response is one which is actioned as soon as it has been brought to the Principal's attention and includes, but is not limited to, diseases/infections such as Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Diphtheria, Meningococcal disease, Tetanus or Whooping Cough.

An **urgent** response is one which is actioned within a few hours of it being brought to the Principal's attention and includes, but is not limited to, diseases/infections such as Varicella-zoster (Chickenpox, Shingles), Influenza, Salmonell.

A **prompt** response is one which is actioned in a timely manner and includes, but is not limited to, diseases/infections such as Hand, foot and mouth disease, Pediculosis (head lice), Gastroenteritis, Conjunctivitis, Impetigo (school sores).

It is recommended that staff and parents familiarise themselves with the Department of Health's Notifiable Communicable Diseases list (see s3). This list also provides information on which diseases the Department classifies as requiring **immediate** or **urgent** action.



## 5. IMMUNISATIONS

Immunisations contribute to creating a shield of protection on College campuses and in the community. Parents are encouraged to have their children immunised, and they are obliged to provide the College with details of all immunisations. Please refer to section 3 for details on how to access the National Immunisations Program Schedule.

A student who has not been immunised may still can be enrolled and attend the College. However, the enrolment form must indicate that the student has not been immunised.

### 5.1 Immunised students

Parents are requested to provide a record of their child's immunisation history when completed an application for enrolment for their child as follows:

- a) For students up to and including 14 years of age, a printed statement is required which is available:
  - i. **Online:** [www.acir.gov.au](http://www.acir.gov.au)
  - ii. **Phone:** Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) – 1800 653 809
  - iii. **Email:** [acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au)
  - iv. By visiting your local Medicare branch
  
- b) If your child is 14 or over, please issue a copy of his/her immunisation records. If these are not available, please call ACIR on 1800 653 809 and they will assist you in obtaining records.
  
- c) International students are not able to access their records via the means detailed above. The College therefore requires that parents/guardians send a copy of their current immunisation records by email (preferred) or by post.

**The same rule applies to staff who have been immunised.**

### 5.2 Non-immunised students

Where a student has not been immunised, the parent may provide an explanation in writing that:

- a) the child cannot be immunised; or
  
- b) the parent has a personal, philosophical, religious, or medical belief that immunisations should not occur.



In any case of an infectious disease, contacting the Department of Health will give the information needed regarding incubation periods and other responsibilities the College would have.

**The same rule applies to staff who have not been immunised.**

## 6. PROCEDURES

In all cases of a communicable disease outbreak, parents of non-immunised students are to be contacted immediately.

### 6.1 Cases requiring immediate reporting

The health, safety and welfare of students and staff are of paramount concern when dealing with communicable and infectious diseases.

Cases of suspected meningococcal disease, measles, or hepatitis A among students or staff will immediately be reported to the local Health unit:

South Metropolitan Health Services 08 9431 0200

### 6.2 Parental responsibilities

Parents are responsible for informing the College if they suspect that their child has an infectious disease. If this is confirmed by a health professional, they are required to keep their child at home avoiding contact with his or her fellow students for the prescribed period of time.

Should an outbreak of a communicable disease occur at the College, parents are to understand that students who have not been immunised against that disease should not attend school or have contact with fellow students while the infection risk remains.

### 6.3 College responsibilities

In order to achieve a rapid response to infectious diseases, the College will keep readily-available records of all student immunisations, where these have been provided by parents. Should an outbreak of a communicable disease occur at the College, the Principal may have to exclude students who have not been immunised for the duration of the infection risk.



At the beginning of each year, the College will publish immunisation advice to parents regarding the College's record requirements. This information will be made available in the Parent Handbook.

Where a teacher suspects, or where a parent indicates that a student has or may have a medical condition that could be infectious, the Principal will refer to the following scenarios to form an appropriate response:

### **6.3.1 Immediate response scenario**

The Principal will:

- a) seclude the child and ask contact parents to collect their child;
- b) contact the Department of Health;
- c) inform parents who have children who are not immunised or are otherwise susceptible by SMS;
- d) inform parents who are known to be pregnant and families who are otherwise susceptible by SMS;
- e) inform class by SMS;
- f) inform all parents in school by letter/email.

### **6.3.2 Urgent response scenario**

The Principal will:

- a) seclude the child and ask contact parents to collect their child;
- b) inform parents who are known to be pregnant and families who are otherwise susceptible by SMS;
- c) inform all other families by letter/email.



### 6.3.3 Prompt response scenario

The Principal will:

- a) seclude the child and ask contact parents to collect their child;
- b) At his/her discretion, inform families via newsletter/email if necessary.

In the case of students with a pre-existing medical condition, the Principal in collaboration with parents and, if necessary, health professionals will undertake planning to ensure that appropriate preventative and health management practices are identified so that agreed health care procedures can be put in place to maintain good health.

### 6.4 College responsibilities – data collection

The purpose of this procedure is to provide the College with accurate data on students' immunisation status so that in the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease staff can quickly identify and contact parents of at-risk students. In order for the College to maintain accurate information on the immunisation status of students, the following procedures are to be followed:

- a) A Family Information Update form is to be circulated to families with enrolled students annually;
- b) Where parents have indicated that a child has been immunised, administrative staff are to check that a copy of the student's immunisation record has been provided:
  - i. If provided, then student records are to be immediately updated in database
  - ii. If not provided, then family is to be contacted to provide a copy
  - iii. If incomplete, then family is to be contact to provide complete record
  - iv. Parents are to be followed up at intervals of 3 weeks until complete record has been provided.
- c) Where parents have indicated that a student has not been immunised, administrative staff are to immediately update that student's record in the database with the appropriate database category.