COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (STUDENT) POLICY

Engaged in schools or other forms of education, we put our heart and soul into serving the human person for the same of the Kingdom.
(In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat Page 9)

Rationale

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

- Chickenpox and shingles* (and other Varicella-Zoster virus infections)
- Diphtheria*
- Gastroenteritis
- Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) infection (invasive)*
- Hepatitis A*
- Hepatitis B*
- Influenza
- Measles*
- Meningococcal infection (invasive)*
- Mumps*
- Pneumococcal infection (invasive)*
- Poliovirus infection*
- Rubella (German measles)*
- Tetanus*
- Whooping cough (Pertussis)*

More information about these diseases can be found on the Department of Health website.

Diseases marked with a * are considered to be vaccine preventable notifiable infectious diseases as designated by the Department of Health.

Newman College's Policy
Newman College is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all our students.

Context

Newman College is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all of our students.
It is our policy that:

- We implement clear guidelines for the management of communicable diseases;
- We provide education, support and resources for workers, parents/carers, students and the wider College community on dealing with communicable diseases; and
- We inform the relevant public health unit of the occurrence of any notifiable diseases.

Parent/Carers Responsibility

Parents/carers are required to inform the College of any communicable illness or disease their child is diagnosed with and not allow them to attend school while infectious.

Immunisation Policy

Newman College encourages all staff and students to be vaccinated to protect them against the outbreak of vaccine preventable communicable diseases.

Immunisation records are requested upon enrolment and stored in student medical records which are maintained in accordance with our Medical Records (Student) Policy. Prospective students will not be excluded from attending the College if they have not been immunised.

Staff flu vaccination is covered in the College Immunisation (Staff) policy in our Work Health & Safety Program.

The College requirements relating to student immunisation is covered in our Immunisation (Students) policy.

Infection Control Policy

If there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, it may be necessary to restrict attendance of non-immune students, or implement restrictions to protect these students, to prevent further spread of disease.

Exclusion of student not immunised against a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease

The Western Australian Chief Health Officer (Chief Health Officer) may also direct the Principal to not permit a particular child to attend school or participate in an educational program of the school if the child has not been immunised against a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease. The College must comply with this direction. The Principal must also notify the parent/guardian of the child (or the student themself if the student has turned 18) specifying the vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease that the child has not been immunised against and the period of time during which the child must not attend school or participate in the educational program, as directed by the Chief Health Officer.

Reporting of student who has contracted a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease

The Principal may also be required to report an enrolled child who has, or is reasonable believed to have, contracted a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease, if directed to do so by the Chief Health Officer. The report must specify the relevant vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease. The Principal must use the ‘approved form’ provided by the Chief Health Officer to provide the report.

Exclusion of student with an infectious or contagious disease

In addition, where the Principal based on advice from the Chief Health Officer or a registered medical practitioner, or based on their own reasonable belief, considers that a student’s medical condition, given its infectious or contagious nature, poses a harm to others at the school, then the Principal may require that the student not attend the school or not participate in an educational programme of the College while the student is suffering from that medical condition. The Principal must make this direction in writing to the student’s parent/guardian or to a student directly if they have turned 18.

Closure of school to limit or prevent the spread of a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease

Where directed by the Chief Health Officer, the Principal will close the whole or part of the College to limit or prevent the spread of a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.

Incident Procedures

If a student becomes unwell with a communicable disease at the College, immediate medical treatment should be provided following the procedures outlined in our First Aid policy. Students should then be transferred to the care of their parent/guardians.

The Principal may consider whether the student is suffering from a medical condition which is infectious, contagious or otherwise harmful to the health of students and staff at the school or when participating in an education program, and require the student to not attend school or not participate in a school activity.

Notification of Communicable Diseases

The College must notify the Department of Health of certain communicable diseases including:

- Diphtheria
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella (German measles)
- Tetanus
- Whooping cough (Pertussis)

A full list of notifiable communicable diseases together with the notification procedures can be found on the Department of Health website.

The College may also be required to provide Chief Health Officer with information about a child's or children's immunisation status, when directed to do so. See our Immunisation (Students) policy.

Critical Incident

The occurrence of a communicable disease incident under this policy may meet the definition of a "critical and emergency incident" as defined by the Standards for Non-Government Schools determined under section 159 of the School Education Act 1999 (WA) (Standards). The Standards define critical and emergency incidents as:

- death, or life-threatening injury, of a student or staff member at College, or following an incident that occurred at the College, or through a related College-based activity or circumstance
- circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of one or more students or staff
- receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or other person, whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past
- issuing a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for a breach of the staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour

- any incident requiring College closure, lockdown, or reduction of number of students or staff attending.

A circumstance posing a “critical risk” for the purposes of this definition is one which would, if action had not been taken or the risk otherwise averted, have resulted in death, life-threatening illness or life-threatening injury to one or more students and/or staff.

Our Critical and Emergency Incidents Notification Policy must be followed if a “critical and emergency incident” occurs at the College. This includes notifying the Minister for Education through the Department of Education Services.

Communication

In the case of a communicable disease being detected, notification should be given to staff and parents at the first opportunity.