



# Dealing with Contagious Conditions in School Policy

## PURPOSE

This Dealing with Contagious Conditions in School Policy refers to our system of how we respond in cases where a child is suspected of having a contagious condition and how to respond in cases when unvaccinated children may have contact with another child with a vaccine preventable condition.

## SCOPE

This Policy is designed to provide the Principal and teaching staff with clear direction on how to deal with contagious conditions in school.

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE DETAILS

The medical conditions prescribed as contagious conditions are:

- Chickenpox (varicella)
- Diphtheria
- Enterovirus 71
- Gastroenteritis
- German measles (rubella)
- Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)
- Hepatitis A
- Influenza
- Measles
- Meningococcal disease
- Poliomyelitis
- Typhoid and Paratyphoid
- Tuberculosis
- Whooping cough (pertussis)

The medical conditions prescribed as vaccine preventable contagious conditions are:

- Measles.

Although several of the “prescribed contagious conditions” are preventable by vaccine, only measles is a “prescribed vaccine preventable condition” under the Regulations. Information about the above, including the prescribed period for exclusion from school for a child who has been diagnosed with a contagious condition, or for an ‘at risk’ unvaccinated child is available at:

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publichealthact/documents/31893.pdf>

A teacher/carer who suspects a child may have one of the above contagious conditions must tell their Principal.

The school Principal has the responsibility to minimise the spread of prescribed contagious conditions within the school by taking the following steps:

1. Advise the child’s parents/carers if they suspect a child attending school may have a prescribed condition and ask them to keep the child home for the prescribed period.
2. If a child with a suspected prescribed contagious condition continues to attend school, the Principal should consult the local Public Health Unit. If the unit confirms the child has a prescribed contagious condition, the Principal can direct the parent/carer to keep the child home. The Principal should provide the parent/carer with written information on the prescribed contagious condition and the prescribed period for that condition.

3. The Principal can re-admit a child to school if:
  - The child has a medical certificate stating the child does not have the condition; or
  - The prescribed period for the condition has ended; or
  - The child is advised to return by the Public Health Unit.
4. If the child has a vaccine preventable condition (measles) then the Principal should consult the Public Health Unit on advice about removing any unvaccinated children from the school. The location of Public Health Units can be found at:  
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/healthyschools/contactus.asp>
5. The Principal can request vaccine information about the child with a contagious condition that is vaccine preventable from the Public Health Unit if parents are unable to supply this information.
6. If an unvaccinated child is at risk of contracting a contagious condition due to contact with an infected child, the Principal (in consultation with the Public Health Unit) may direct the parent/carer to remove the unvaccinated child from school until the outbreak is declared over by the Public Health Unit. The Principal should provide the parent/carer of unvaccinated children with written information on the prescribed contagious condition and the prescribed period for that condition.

The School Principal should be aware that during the outbreak of a prescribed contagious condition:

- The Health Minister may by written notice given to the person in charge of a school order the closure of the school for a period of not more than 1 month if the Minister is satisfied:
  1. There is an outbreak of a contagious condition; and
  2. Other methods of controlling the outbreak will not be reasonably effective without the temporary closure of the school or service.