



COVID-19 Update

Sunday 15th March

We understand that community concern is growing in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and wanted to provide some information on how we are responding to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our families and team members.

Early Learning Group is implementing COVID-19 controls that are consistent with current policy issued by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Department of Education and Training (DET) on March 11, 2020.

Our early learning centres continue to operate as usual however we have implemented additional infection control measures as a precaution and to mitigate the risk of exposure and transmission. All centre-based team members have been provided with personal hand sanitiser to be worn on their aprons and we have placed additional sanitiser pumps throughout the premises. Hand sanitiser has been placed at entrances and we have requested all family members, team members and visitors to use this prior to entering the building. We have increased rotations of our regular daily cleaning regimes and instructed our cleaning contractors to implement an enhanced cleaning regime informed by DHHS and World Health Organisation (WHO) protocols for environmental management of infection prevention and control.

We have also introduced increased requirements for both children and team members who may present with one or more defined COVID-19 symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, cough, low grade fever) upon arrival at a centre or develop symptoms whilst at a centre. Any child who arrives at a centre with symptoms will be asked to leave and medical clearance shall be required before they return to care. If a child develops symptoms whilst in care they will immediately be isolated and accompanied by a team member wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and their guardian will be contacted and asked to collect the child. The child will not be allowed to return to care until satisfactory medical clearance is received. The same applies for our team members. These measures have been put in place for the safety of our community.

The COVID-19 outbreak has caused some challenges with our supply chain and whilst we have managed to maintain required stock levels of various grocery items we have had to substitute brands. In some centres we have found it difficult to obtain Huggies brand nappies and have therefore substituted with alternative brands as available. Where possible we have purchased additional supplies to ensure we have enough resources over the coming weeks. We continue to investigate alternative procurement sources and appreciate your understanding of the challenges we are all facing.

To date we have zero confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our centres and are doing our utmost to ensure it remains this way. Whilst our early learning centres remain open as usual we remind families that Child Care Subsidy (CCS) can be paid for up to 42 absence days per child, per financial year. In special circumstances, you may get CCS for more than 42 absence days. More information can be found on the [CCS website here](#). We encourage families to review their entitlements to Child Care Subsidy based on their individual circumstances.

To assist us develop a baseline understanding of our community we will soon send you a survey requesting information about your family's recent travel, event attendance and health status. Whilst the survey response is voluntary, we would appreciate your participation as it will assist us plan and ensure our precautionary measures are designed to be as effective as possible.

We thank everyone for their understanding and support during this uncertain period. Should you have any questions or concerns please reach out to your Director in the first instance as they will have the latest information relevant to you. We encourage you to visit the Commonwealth Department of Health information page for up to date and accurate information about COVID-19. This can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

Yours sincerely,

Jarrod & Samantha MacDonald