

COVID Safe plan

Guidance on how to prepare your COVID Safe plan is available [here](#).

Our COVID Safe Plan

Business name:	Sparkways Australia Children's Services	
Site location:	Sparkways ECEC Services	
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[This COVID Safe Plan is a live document and may be subject to changes in line with Victoria Government Guidelines.](#)

Guidance	Action to mitigate the introduction and spread of COVID-19
Health & Hygiene	
Adherence to the Victorian Government's Mandated Vaccination as an important measure to ensure our Early Learning Childcare and Kindergarten centres remain safe and are not a source of community transmission.	<p><i>The Victorian Chief Health Officer has advised that vaccination is required for everyone working in ECEC to protect children, employees and our communities from the spread of COVID-19. Mandatory vaccination requirements apply under the COVID-19 mandatory vaccination directions issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer (vaccination directions).</i></p> <p><i>This is an important measure to ensure our ECEC and early childhood centres remain safe and are not sources of community transmission.</i></p> <p><i>In this instance, the Chief Health Officer has issued health directions that require operators of ECEC to take all reasonable steps to ensure that all persons working in ECEC services are triple vaccinated unless they have a medical exemption. Workers who are exempt from this requirement will need to provide evidence of a medical contraindication to vaccination from an authorised medical practitioner.</i></p> <p><i>Sparkways has enacted measures to ensure compliance with this Health Directive. Any staff not compliant will be identified and advised that they are not able to attend any Sparkways Early Learning Service until they are confirmed to be compliant with this directive. All applicable new employees of Sparkways are to be engaged under this requirement. Measures are also in place to ensure all visitors, volunteers, students or contractors performing work or assisting within Sparkways Early Learning & Care and Kindergarten Services are compliant with applicable vaccination requirements, with admittance withdrawn or declined in the event of non-compliance.</i></p> <p><i>The Victorian Chief Health Officer has issued directions for required vaccinations for education workers.</i></p> <p><i>For ECEC, an education worker is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>ECEC-employed staff (for example, teachers, educators, ancillary support staff including reception)</i> <i>contractors working in close proximity to children or staff, whether or not engaged by the ECEC (for example, trades and maintenance people, cleaners but excluding delivery drivers)</i> <i>staff of the Department of Education and Training (for example, Authorised Officers, Early Childhood Improvement Branch staff)</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff of any other entity (for example, allied health, NDIS providers, school readiness funding providers, Kindergarten Inclusion Support, Preschool Field Officer etc) • volunteers working in close proximity to children or staff (for example, parent helpers, Committee of Management members) • students on placements. <p>Note: The examples provided in the brackets above are for explanatory purposes and do not represent an exhaustive list.</p> <p>Responsibilities of ECEC providers with workers on-site at an ECEC service</p> <p>Informing, sighting and record-keeping responsibilities</p> <p>An ECEC provider with the above in-scope workers on-site at an ECEC service, must collect, record and hold the following vaccination information of a worker scheduled to be on-site at an ECEC service on or after 29 November 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that all persons working in ECEC services being triple vaccinated unless they have a medical exemption. • Workers who are exempt from this requirement will need to provide evidence of a medical contraindication to vaccination from an authorised medical practitioner (in the form of an Australia Immunisation Register immunisation medical exemption form).
<p>Provide and promote hand sanitiser stations for use on entering building and other locations in the worksite and ensure adequate supplies of hand soap and paper towels are available for staff.</p>	<p>As per SPARKWAYS Early Learning & Care Enhanced Hygiene Procedures and Practices for Services & Families;</p> <p>Before children and families arrive ensure you have your hygiene equipment ready to go. Soap dispensers must be full and hand sanitiser set up at entry/drop off point.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser must be available at every service. Children will be supported to wash their hands upon arrival by the educator.</p> <p>Sanitising stations are to remain in place and encouraged to be utilised on arrival to your service. This applies to families, educators and general visitors.</p>
<p>Ensure face masks are available</p>	<p>Face masks are not compulsory, but should be available for use when required.</p> <p>Face masks should be used when supporting a child or other staff member who develops symptoms whilst at the service</p> <p>Face masks should also be used by the unwell child (if able to be tolerated) or staff member</p>
<p>Where possible: enhance airflow by opening windows, adjusting air conditioning, utilising an air purifier, and operating an indoor/outdoor program.</p>	<p>As per Sparkways Early Learning & Care Enhanced Hygiene Procedures and Practices for Services;</p> <p>Ventilation has been identified as an important strategy in reducing the risk of the transmission of viruses. Services should move to, if not already in place, operating an indoor/outdoor program for the full day/session. If supervision is an issue then services should plan to spend more time outdoors.</p> <p>Out in the sunshine and fresh air, there is more space, and it is far better for child and educator health and wellbeing to be immersed in nature and out in the fresh air. You can discuss social distancing with children by talking about their own space bubbles or teaching social skills programs such as space invaders (regularly used by PSFO's or allied health professionals).</p>
<p>Twice weekly Rapid Antigen Testing is strongly encouraged – for staff and children</p>	<p>Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs)</p> <p>The Victorian Government is providing services RATs for Educators, service staff and children to voluntarily self-test twice each week for until the end of week 4 (20 May) in Term 2.</p>

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	<p>Office staff who are required to visit services are also strongly encouraged to undertake RATs to ensure they do not place any services at risk. Families are required to report positive RAT results to the service, for notification onto DET.</p>
<p>Any staff member or child who becomes unwell while at an early childhood service goes home and is tested for Covid-19. In case the illness is Covid-19, there are some sensible steps services should take while a child waits to be picked up by a parent or carer as a precaution.</p>	<p>Children must not attend if they are unwell –</p> <p>1. Families must NOT bring their child if unwell, even with the mildest of symptoms, they must stay at home.</p> <p>If a child becomes unwell during the day, they should be collected from early childhood education and care (ECEC) as soon as possible.</p> <p>2. If a child has any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) outlined below, however mild, they should get tested and they must remain at home until they receive their results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fever • chills or sweats • cough • sore throat • shortness of breath • runny nose • loss of sense of smell or taste. <p>In certain circumstances headache, muscle soreness, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea may also be considered symptoms.</p> <p>For further advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • call the 24-hour COVID-19 Hotline 1800 675 398 • call a general practitioner • visit Getting tested for further information on where to get tested. <p>3. Once a child has had a confirmed negative COVID-19 test and their symptoms have resolved, they can return to ECEC. A medical certificate is not required, however may be helpful in following circumstances:</p> <p>Younger children (pre-school up to Grade 2) may have prolonged post viral symptoms such as a runny nose or cough and may return to ECEC following a negative COVID-19 test even if they are not completely free of symptoms. Where symptoms persist, a medical certificate to confirm the child is otherwise well or has recovered from their acute illness is required. Written medical clearance for COVID-19 is not required.</p> <p>Children with persistent symptoms due to underlying conditions such as hay fever or asthma whose symptoms are clearly typical of their condition as detailed on their medical plans, can continue to attend ECEC. They should be tested for COVID-19 if they develop symptoms that are different to or worse than their usual symptoms. They should consider getting a medical certificate from their GP to attend ECEC/school if they have persistent symptoms that may overlap with symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough or runny nose. Written medical clearance for COVID-19 is not required.</p> <p>For information on the minimum periods students and children need to stay at home for other conditions, refer to the DH school exclusion table.</p> <p>If a child has tested positive for COVID-19, they must isolate/quarantine for 7 days and not attend the service during this period. They must inform the service that they have tested positive to COVID 19 and of their isolation period.</p> <p>A negative test result is not required for them to return to the service following completion of 7 days of isolation. You should follow the Checklist for COVID cases.</p> <p>Managing an unwell child or staff member on ECEC premises</p>

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	<p><i>Designate an appropriate space for children and staff who develop symptoms to be isolated.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms must be isolated and/or return home immediately and get tested, following the advice contained.</i> • <i>Children should be supervised appropriately while they await collection by a parent or carer as soon as possible. Educators should wear a mask and sanitiser</i> • <i>The symptomatic individual and attending staff member must be provided with a surgical face mask. Face masks should not be used in situations where an individual is unable to safely or practically tolerate a mask (for example, a child with complex medical needs including existing respiratory needs, or a child under two years). Staff unable to wear a face mask should avoid the direct supervision or care of unwell children where possible.</i> • <i>Staff may consider additional PPE (eye protection, disposable fluid repellent gown and gloves) when care is to be prolonged or a child has additional health needs, in order to reduce risk to the staff member. Services should ensure adequate PPE is provided for this purpose, and appropriate signage and guidance available to support correct use. The Department of Health has a range of Infection prevention control resources available.</i> • <i>If a staff member is unsure whether a child is unwell, it is advisable in the first instance to contact the parent/carer to discuss any concerns about the health status of the child and, taking a precautionary approach, request the parent/carer to collect their child if concerns remain. A trained staff member could take the temperature of the child, where appropriate, to support decision making, ensuring hand hygiene is performed before and after.</i> • <i>Health care plans, where relevant, should be updated to provide additional advice on monitoring and identification of the unwell child in the context of coronavirus (COVID-19).</i> • <i>Urgent medical attention should be sought where indicated. Staff should call an ambulance as they usually would if the child needs urgent medical attention or the staff member is concerned.</i> <p><i>These guidelines may change according to State government advice and services will be updated accordingly.</i></p>
<p>Provide training to staff on the correct use and disposal of face coverings and PPE, and on good hygiene practices and slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).</p>	<p><i>COVID Safe Training on-line provided by DH has been provided and will continue to be made available to all staff:</i></p> <p>https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training</p>

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<p>Replace high-touch communal items with alternatives.</p>	<p><i>Educators will continue to maintain familiar routines to help the children to feel secure. We will be talking to children about emotions to assist them to verbalise any stress they may be feeling.</i></p> <p><i>Keep routines and educational programs as consistent as possible to provide a sense of security and stability for children. These routines will still need to be flexible so perhaps consider progressive morning tea and lunch breaks where possible, to reduce the number of children together at the same time.</i></p> <p><i>As much as possible avoid group times with large numbers of children. Consider using smaller, spontaneous and informal opportunities to engage with the children; music and movement experiences or reading books/story telling with one or two children at a time throughout the day. Again, outdoors is a great place for these learning experiences.</i></p> <p><i>Consider options to sensory experiences such as playdough as these can carry lots of germs with little hands touching repeatedly. Consider water or sand play outside. Avoid using food products for program experiences as this may cause distress to those families finding it difficult to source food at this time. If using materials such as playdough, provide individual portions to each child that can be stored in separate containers/bags for each child to avoid cross contamination.</i></p> <p><i>For younger children, particularly consider the rotation of toys more often and increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of toys. Sharing of toys that have been placed in mouths should be monitored and avoided.</i></p>
Cleaning	
<p>Increase environmental cleaning (including between changes of staff), ensure high touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected regularly (at least twice daily).</p>	<p><i>Staff must clean high traffic areas and surfaces periodically or when a child has mouthed a toy or sneezed or coughed on a surface or resource.</i></p> <p><i>Our educators are highly skilled at maintaining a safe and hygienic play-based learning environment. To ensure this we are conducting regular cleaning of door handles and surfaces, toy washing will be undertaken regularly.</i></p> <p><i>Children will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly throughout the session. The educational program will provide children with opportunities to learn about good hygiene practices such as sneezing into their elbow, discussion about personal space bubbles and hygienic use of tissues.</i></p>
<p>Ensure adequate supplies of cleaning products, including detergent and disinfectant.</p>	<p><i>Hand sanitiser to be available at every service (60% alcohol). All Sparkways services are stocked with detergent and disinfectant as a minimum requirement. Teams are able to replenish these supplies as needed through our preferred supplier. If teams cannot access these products as required they are asked to contact their Area Manager for support.</i></p>

Physical distancing	
Working from Home Options	<p><i>All administration and management support staff are continuing a hybrid working model between home and their relevant Sparkways site/s to reduce contact.</i></p> <p><i>All on-site work, at an office or service, is to be conducted in a Covid-safe way.</i></p>
Establish a system that limits staff members working across multiple settings/work sites.	<p><i>Staff are encouraged to limit working across services/sites where possible. When working across services/sites, it is imperative that staff operate in a Covid-safe way.</i></p>
Establish a system to screen employees and visitors before accessing the workplace. Employers cannot require employees to work when unwell.	<p><i>Staff should not attend the service if unwell or with any signs or symptoms of being unwell.</i></p> <p><i>If a child presents with any signs and symptoms of being unwell they will be excluded from attending the service. This includes but is not exclusive to:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>a) A temperature higher than 38°</i></p> <p><i>An educator can make the decision with the responsible person to refuse care for the day based on their assessment. Families must not give their child/ren any fever reducing medication prior to drop off (paracetamol or ibuprofen). Unwell children will be refused access and the parent will be asked to take the child home. If children develop signs or symptoms of illness throughout the session, the child will be isolated from the group and the parent will be contacted to collect their child immediately.</i></p> <p><i>The child will only be accepted upon a subsequent day if:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>a) Their temperature has dropped to 37.5 degrees or lower for at least 24 hours;</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>b) Children with persistent symptoms due to underlying conditions such as hay fever or asthma whose symptoms are clearly typical of their condition can continue to attend ECEC/school. For younger children, the service may request a medical certificate from the child's GP to attend ECEC/school if they have persistent symptoms that may overlap with symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough or runny nose.</i></p> <p><i>External and contactless drop offs and pick-ups remain in place where safe and practical to do so.</i></p> <p><i>Each service has undertaken a risk assessment to determine the best point of access for drop offs and pick-ups. The service will provide parents with instructions on where this will take place and the procedure for this.</i></p> <p><i>Services that identify that external drop offs and pick ups are not safe and/or practical (e.g. due to limited options for shelter in cold and inclement weather) will make alternative arrangements (in consultation with Area Managers), such as using foyer areas. Where indoor drop-offs and pick-ups occur, services will ensure Covid safe practices are followed, including ventilation, social distancing, encouraging sanitisation and mask wearing, limiting numbers inside at any given time e.g. by slightly staggering times, and encouraging drop-offs and pick-ups to occur as quickly as possible.</i></p>

Limiting the number of visitors to services – Incl. hosting events

Individual services (in consultation with Area Managers) should evaluate what is most appropriate for their service and their circumstances when adults are attending their service for tours, orientation of new families and events. Holding events outside where it is well-ventilated is the best mitigation strategy for COVID 19.

Parents/carers are not required to be vaccinated for their children to attend service, and the Kindergarten Funding Guide requires services to be inclusive of children attending and enrolling in service. Services are encouraged to continue external drop-off and pick up and contactless sign in/out, wherever possible and safe.

Parents/carers may enter the room to provide support to their child to settle-in at the services' discretion, in order to support the wellbeing and best-interests of the child. Covid safe practices must be followed whilst this occurs.

Visitors including parents/carers to ECEC grounds should practice social distancing, respiratory etiquette and good hand hygiene. Volunteers, including parents are required to be vaccinated to spend time in the service around children.

Interview and meetings are to be conducted in small groups or 1:1 outside or by zoom or phone. Preferably, only 1 parent/carer is to accompany a child in order to reduce the number of adults within the service. Adults should social distance from others, wear a mask if distancing cannot be maintained, and sanitise. Tables, chairs and other furniture and equipment should be wiped down after use.

To support the health and safety of staff and children visitors are encouraged to be vaccinated, however staff are not required to check vaccination status of visitors other than those who are helping and working around children.

Specific Advice for Hosting Events:

Services are required to conduct a risk assessment, in consultation with their Area Manager (or Operations Manager for ELAC services) to plan an event.

In accordance with DET Guidelines, events are to be held using Covid Safe practices, including:

- Held outdoors
- External Entry and Exit where possible
- Time limited
- Hand sanitiser and masks made available
- Limiting mixing of groups (e.g. one kinder group at a time)
- Minimise numbers (e.g. one adult attendee)
- Families to bring their own food for themselves – no sharing
- Activities at the event should only be those that can be conducted in a Covid safe way
- Any visitors assisting with the event – e.g. parent helpers – are required to be triple vaccinated

If the above requirements cannot be met – or mitigation strategies cannot be applied (e.g. large room, with open windows and air purifier if the event cannot be held outside) – the event should not proceed.

Any visitor or volunteers performing work in ECEC (including parent helpers when again possible, SRF, allied health, NDIS, PSFO, KIS and other operators such as incursion providers, language teachers, maintenance, building, and cleaning contractors) must be triple vaccinated unless they have a medical exemption to attend site. Volunteers/Workers who are exempt from this requirement will need to

	<p><i>provide evidence of a medical contraindication to vaccination from an authorised medical practitioner.</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p><i>For more information on collection of vaccination information from visitors and volunteers working on ECEC sites refer to COVID-19 worker vaccination requirements</i></p> <p><i>Limit the number of visitors to ECEC services, focusing on essential operations to support the individual wellbeing and inclusion of a child to directly participate in a program. Workers who provide essential support for inclusion of an eligible child to attend and participate in ECEC services may attend onsite. This includes NDIS and Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) additional assistants and Koorie Preschool Assistants who directly support children to attend and participate in the onsite program.</i></p> <p><i>Limit the number of staff in common areas. Professional development and staff meetings should be conducted online (for large groups) or in small groups, with staff physically distanced in well ventilated areas. Whenever possible, meetings should be conducted outside (unless essential face-to-face training for first aid, anaphylaxis or infection control.</i></p> <p><i>Many ECEC students have had their learning journey disrupted by COVID-19. Providing work placements helps them fulfil their aspirations to join the profession and supports the availability of skilled staff in the future to work in your service.</i></p> <p><i>Students undertaking placements must meet vaccination requirements and follow COVID Safe Settings.</i></p>
<p>Configure communal work areas so employees are spaced at least 1.5m apart.</p>	<p><i>Avoid interactions between adults in enclosed spaces. Limit the number of staff in common areas. Staff are encouraged to ensure appropriate numbers of staff/adults at any given time in a team room provide for safe distancing. This applies to staff rooms and office spaces. Staff should stagger their breaks and take them outside whenever possible.</i></p> <p><i>Indoor activities for parents/carers and other visitors are discouraged. Staff and authorised visitors should ensure where possible, they social distance when inside.</i></p>
<p>Use floor markings to provide minimum physical distancing guides between workstations or areas that are likely to create a congregation of staff.</p>	<p><i>Completed as needed.</i></p>
<p>Modify the alignment of workstations so that employees do not face one another.</p>	<p><i>Workstations have been configured to account for appropriate social distancing.</i></p> <p><i>Leadership staff have been provided with IT equipment to allow the flexibility of working from a range of different sites as required.</i></p>
<p>Minimise the build-up of employees waiting to enter and exit the workplace.</p>	<p><i>The majority of Sparkways Children’s Services have low numbers of educators who in most cases arrive and depart the workplace individually.</i></p> <p><i>Sparkways services that have higher numbers of staff work staggered shifts.</i></p>

<p>Provide training to staff on physical distancing expectations while working and socialising (e.g. during lunchbreaks).</p>	<p><i>Enhanced Hygiene Practices have been sent to all staff along with the recommendations from DH and DET</i></p>
<p>Review delivery protocols to limit contact between delivery drivers and staff.</p>	<p><i>Deliveries to Sparkways services is done with sign-in/registration and all recommended COVID-19 risk minimisation is adhered to.</i></p>
<p>Review and update work rosters and timetables where possible to ensure temporal as well as physical distancing.</p>	<p><i>Staff rostering is monitored weekly by Area Managers, CD's and NS.</i></p>
<p>Where relevant, ensure clear and visible signage in areas that are open to the general public to encourage safe distancing</p>	<p><i>Completed as required.</i></p>

Move to increased ventilation and outdoor programming	
<p>Increase outdoor air ventilation and use of outdoor spaces as an important strategy in reducing the risk of aerosol transmission by increasing circulation of outdoor air.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • services are encouraged to engage an indoor/outdoor program (shifting to as much outdoor programming as possible) • increase fresh air flow into indoor spaces by ensuring that doors that open from the room into the service outdoor play area are open at all times, along with windows • support staff to take breaks and eat lunch outside • ensure any air conditioners and heaters are well maintained • Monitor the VicEmergency App for risk warnings and advice on thunderstorm asthma, smoke and other events reducing outside air quality. • Action to protect children during periods of poor outside air quality (such as smoke, thunderstorm asthma events) takes priority. • Take steps to close windows and doors, set air conditioners to re-circulate air, and enhance other COVID safe behaviours and controls, where possible. • Where possible, use air purifiers in rooms where windows must be closed.
Record keeping	
<p>Establish a process to record the attendance of customers, clients, visitors and workplace inspectors, delivery drivers.</p>	<p>All Educators sign-in as per usual practice.</p> <p>As long as safe and practical to do, drop of and pick ups are to be conducted externally and where possible contactless e.g. Digitally or with Educators signing on behalf of parents/carers.</p> <p>As identified above, Services that identify that external drop offs and pick ups are not safe and/or practical (e.g. due to limited options for shelter in cold and inclement weather) will make alternative arrangements (in consultation with Area Managers), such as using foyer areas. Where indoor drop-offs and pick-ups occurs, services will ensure Covid safe practices are followed, including ventilation, social distancing, encouraging sanitisation and mask wearing, limiting numbers inside at any given time e.g. by slightly staggering times, and encouraging drop-offs and pick-ups to occur as quickly as possible, to avoid families congregating for extended periods of time.</p> <p>Visitors completing or assisting with work at a site/service (including parents/carers) must comply with physical distancing, hand hygiene and vaccination requirements.</p>
<p>Provide guidance to staff on the effective use of the workplace OHS reporting system (where available).</p>	<p>OH&S Manager has provided all staff with access to reporting OH&S issues through Employment Hero – HRIS system.</p> <p>The JIRA system is also used to log maintenance requests.</p>

Preparing your response to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case	
<p>Prepare or update your business continuity plan to consider the impacts of an outbreak and potential closure of the workplace.</p>	<p><i>Sparkways will support any service outbreak with all central supports including compliance, OHS, management and HR to ensure business continuity can occur safely and in a timely manner. Services have been provided with the required actions to assist them should a positive case of COVID-19 impact their service.</i></p>
<p>Prepare to assist DH with notifications re: positive cases</p>	<p><i>Confirmed cases, or their parent/guardian, are required to notify ECEC facilities of their positive COVID-19 result (PCR or rapid antigen test).</i></p> <p><i>The ECEC provider or nominated supervisor is required to submit a Covid Serious Incident form, to the Sparkways Compliance Desk, so a notification can be made through the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS) that a child or staff member (including student or volunteer) has been onsite during their infectious period (48 hours prior to symptom onset, or specimen collection date for asymptomatic cases).</i></p> <p><i>The ECEC service must record all positive persons on site. Refer to ECEC Positive Cases Spreadsheet.</i></p> <p><i>ECECs must notify the ECEC community through a daily email (where applicable) when a child or staff member has (or multiple children or staff members have) returned a positive COVID-19 test result and had attended the service. The notification should include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>date(s) of attendance</i> • <i>affected age group room / program room.</i> <p><i>The notification can be provided to only the affected age group room / program room or to the whole service. See DET template.</i></p> <p><i>If LDC services need immediate advice, they can call the DET on 1300 307 415. Sessional kindergarten services can call the EC COVID-19 Advice Line on 1800 338 663.</i></p> <p><i>The Department of Health (DH) require workplaces, including education settings, to notify DH using an online form when 5 cases have attended the premises within 7 days. On completion, the online form will be directed to DH and relevant Local Public Health Unit to support outbreak management. DH will identify and manage emerging outbreaks of concern.</i></p> <p><i>Form is available (for use by Compliance Desk) at COVID-19 outbreak notification form Coronavirus Victoria</i></p> <p><i>Council should also be advised where applicable.</i></p> <p><i>Education contact = people who are exposed to a COVID case in their ECEC service or school.</i></p> <p><i>Infectious period: 48 hours prior to symptom onset, or specimen collection date for asymptomatic cases.</i></p>
<p>Prepare to undertake cleaning and disinfection at your business premises. Assess whether the workplace or parts of the workplace must be closed.</p>	<p><i>Following advice from the Department of Health deep cleaning is not required as part of exposure management. Services are to implement routine cleaning.</i></p> <p><i>See below on process on managing a positive case in a service.</i></p>

<p>Prepare for how you will manage a suspected or confirmed case in an employee during work hours.</p>	<p><i>In the first instant, if you are concerned about a COVID – 19 contact/diagnosis/outbreak, or become aware of a case directly from parents or staff, Nominated Supervisors/Responsible Persons are instructed to contact your Area Manager and/or the Compliance desk to enact the processes documented below.</i></p> <p><i>Child Safety, Compliance and Quality Manager</i></p> <p><i>Ph: 0458 500 155 (M-F 8.30am-5.30pm)</i></p> <p><i>Email: compliancesupportdesk@Sparkways.org.au</i></p> <p><i>Notifications received outside of business hours will be processed as soon as practicable by service staff and management.</i></p> <p><i>The service becomes aware of a child’s case of COVID-19 directly from their family or becomes aware of an educator/staff member/contractor/visitor’s COVID-19 case that have attended the service 48 hours prior to testing positive or becoming symptomatic.</i></p> <p>All positive cases must isolate for 7 days</p> <p><i>The service must then notify their Area Manager and the Sparkways Compliance Support Desk on 0458 500 155.</i></p> <p><i>If LDC services need immediate advice, they can call the DET on 1300 307 415. Sessional kindergarten services can call the EC COVID-19 Advice Line on 1800 338 663.</i></p> <p><i>The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in charge of the service completes the Covid-19 ECEC Positive Cases Spreadsheet and notifies the ECEC Community / all families, educators, contractors or visitors to the service potentially exposed to the positive case/deemed to be Education Contacts, that there has been a confirmed case of Covid-19 that has attended the service.</i></p> <p><i>Area Managers to advise their respective council of positive cases within centres’.</i></p> <p><i>The service emails compliancesupportdesk@Sparkways.org.au a completed Covid Serious Incident Form for each individual positive case of Covid-19.</i></p> <p><i>The Sparkways Compliance Support Desk submits a notification through the NQAIT’s portal to notify the QARD.</i></p> <p><i>Should a service have 5 confirmed cases of Covid-19 within a 7-day period, the Compliance support desk is required to complete the following online form which notifies the Department of Health. Outbreak notifications may trigger the provision of written guidance from the Department of Health or relevant Local Public Health Unit with active outbreak management only occurring in certain circumstances.</i></p> <p><i>DoH will contact the Area Manager and /or Nominated Supervisor and advise on next steps and provide a new spreadsheet for tracking any new positive Covid-19 cases and any other directions for the scope of cleaning and if required this will be coordinated by Andrea Don, OHS, Facilities & Procurement Manager.</i></p> <p>In the case of an outbreak, service/site to continue operating unless advised to close by the DoH or by Sparkways Management</p> <p><i>Any closures or reduced service provision for more than a period of 3 days must be approved by the DET.</i></p> <p><i>Any person who has spent time with a positive case (during their infectious period) on site at an ECEC service will be referred to as an ‘education contact’. This is the only contact category that an ECEC service is required to identify and communicate with when there has been a positive case on site.</i></p>
<p>Prepare to notify workforce and site visitors of a confirmed or suspected case.</p>	<p><i>Sparkways Management in liaison with the service is required to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Notify the ECEC Community / individuals that they are an education contact of a positive case, and the recommendation to obtain a RAT or PCR test if they are symptomatic and isolate until they receive a negative result.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Asymptomatic staff and parents/carers of children who are identified as an education contact are to monitor for symptoms and get tested and isolate should they develop.</i> ○ <i>Staff who are ECEC contacts are encouraged to undertake daily RATs for 5 days</i> ○ <i>High touch cleaning should be ongoing. There is no need to do a deep clean as part of exposure management.</i>
<p>If a service has been closed due to an outbreak - Confirm that your workplace can safely re-open and workers can return to work.</p>	<p><i>In considering when to re-open following a closure due to an outbreak, all necessary cleaning must have been arranged and Education Contacts identified and contacted.</i></p> <p><i>Following confirmation by DET and DoH (and Council where applicable), Sparkways will advise families the service is reopening, using a specified communication template.</i></p> <p><i>The decision to re-open will depend on whether the service can continue to meet their regulatory obligations under the National Law.</i></p> <p><i>The Department of Health or Local Public Health Unit retains the ability to require a service to remain closed given the individual circumstances and transmission patterns.</i></p> <p><i>Services will need to adhere to COVID-safe plans upon reopening.</i></p> <p>:</p>

For Centre Directors/Responsible Persons and Nominated Supervisors.

I acknowledge I understand my responsibilities and have implemented this COVID Safe plan in the workplace.

I have also ensured all staff working in this service have read and understood this COVID Safe Plan and that it is embedded into everyday practice.

Signed; _____

Name; _____

Date; _____