

Illness, Infectious and Communicable Diseases Policy

Sancta Sophia College

Given the close living environment, preventing the spread of infectious and communicable diseases from person to person is of critical importance at Sancta.

The purpose of this policy is to minimise the risk of transmission of infectious diseases within the Sancta community as far as reasonably practicable and to support persons who have contracted an infectious disease.

Sancta is committed to:

1. upholding its duty of care to provide and maintain a healthy and safe environment, free from discrimination for all residents, staff, visitors, and contractors.
2. taking appropriate steps to prevent or minimise the risk of infection posed by transmission from person to person.
3. promoting informed awareness through the sharing of relevant information.
4. promoting preventative measures such as vaccination and other precautions for dealing with infectious diseases.
5. supporting residents and staff who have an infectious disease, taking all reasonable steps to accommodate them and ensuring they are not subjected to unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

1. Shared responsibilities

Everyone within the College has the responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent the spread of disease in the College community.

Anyone diagnosed with an infectious or communicable disease (including, but not limited to, COVID-19) must inform the Vice Principal or Principal so safe and appropriate measures can be taken to support the affected student and minimise spread of the illness.

There is no onus on any person to reveal their medical history or any non-communicable illness.

Anyone with an infectious or communicable disease can expect to be treated with dignity and respect, and without blame.

The harassment or discrimination of persons with an infectious or communicable disease, or those assumed to have an infectious or communicable disease, will not be tolerated.

2. Privacy and confidential information

Generally speaking, anyone disclosing that they have an infectious or communicable disease, will be afforded privacy and their disclosure kept confidential.

Where the presence of the infection or disease within the College community will impact others (for example the presence of COVID-19 may cause other students or staff to have to go into isolation) or where awareness of its presence may help limit its spread, some limited information may be shared with other staff and students. In such cases, it will first be discussed with the affected person. Only the Principal can authorise the sharing of information without the consent of the affected person.

3. Quarantine and isolation

In some cases of infectious illness, the affected student may be required to isolate away from other members of the community for the duration of the illness. This includes, but is not limited to, COVID-19.

4. Recommended vaccinations and immunisations

From time to time, in response to a health crisis, Sancta may require students to acquire certain vaccinations to remain eligible to reside at Sancta. Students will be given adequate notice of such a requirement, and medical exemptions will be accommodated where possible.

As of January 2023, there are no vaccine requirements at Sancta. However, given the close living environment it is recommended that students be immunised for COVID-19, seasonal influenza, pneumococcal disease, tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis; measles, mumps and rubella (MMR); herpes zoster (HZ); and human papillomavirus (HPV).

For information on the suggested immunisation schedule please go to:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-throughout-life/national-immunisation-program-schedule>