

# Illness and Infectious Diseases

## Policy Statement.

We aim to provide a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health and well being of the children.

Parents will be asked not to bring sick children to the centre and to collect children who are unwell. This is because the care needs of a sick child cannot be met without dramatically reducing the general level of supervision of the other children, or risking other children's health.

All care and consideration will be given to the child who becomes ill while at the centre. Children with infectious diseases will be excluded from the centre for the period recommended by the Department of Health.

## Considerations.

National Standards Section 2.3 (Infectious diseases)

National Standards Section 2.4 (Illness and accidents)

Department of Health guidelines.

Department of Education guidelines.

## Procedures.

A child or adult will be considered sick if he/she:

- sleeps at unusual times, is lethargic.

- has a fever over 38°.

- Is crying constantly from discomfort.

- Vomits or has diarrhoea.

- Is in need of constant one to one care.

- Has an infectious disease.

If a child is unwell at home parents will be asked not to bring the child to the centre.

If a staff member is unwell they should not report for work. Staff should contact the centre as soon as possible to inform them that they are unable to attend work, So that a suitable replacement can be found.

If a child becomes ill or develops symptoms at the centre the parents will be contacted to take the child home.

If a staff member becomes ill or develops symptoms at the centre they can return home if able or organise for someone to take them home.

The Co-ordinator will organise a suitable replacement as soon as possible.

The child who is ill will be comforted, cared for and placed in a quiet area with adult supervision until the child's parent or other authorised adult takes them home.

If the child has a fever the parents will be informed and asked for permission to give paracetamol. Paracetamol will not be given without permission.

During a fever other methods will be employed to bring the child's temperature down until the parents arrive or help is sought. Such methods include: clothes removed as required, clear fluids given, tepid sponges administered.

If a child's temperature is very high, cannot be brought down and parents cannot be contacted, the child's doctor will be contacted and permission sought to give paracetamol. If the situation becomes serious the child will be taken to the doctor or an ambulance called.

## **Infectious Diseases**

Children and staff will be excluded from the centre if they are ill with any contagious illness. This includes diarrhoea and conjunctivitis.

The period of exclusion will be based on the recommendations outlined by the Department of Health.

The decision to exclude or re-admit a child or staff member will be the responsibility of the Co-ordinator based on the child's symptoms, medical opinion and Department of Health guidelines for children who have an infectious disease or who have been exposed to an infectious disease.

The Co-ordinator or staff members have the right to refuse access if concerned about the child's health.

Children with diarrhoea will be excluded for 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared or after a normal stool.

A doctor's clearance certificate will be required for all infectious diseases such as measles, mumps diphtheria, hepatitis A, polio, tuberculosis, typhoid and paratyphoid before returning to the centre.

Parents will be informed about the illness and infectious diseases policy on enrolment.

A regularly updated copy of the Department of Health guidelines on infectious diseases will be kept attached to the illness and infectious disease policy for reference by staff, management and made available to parents on request.

The Co-ordinator will follow the recommendations as outlined in the Health Department document.

Parents are required to notify the Coordinator if their child has an infectious disease. The centre will ensure that the individual rights of the child are not infringed upon.

Parents will be informed about the occurrence of an infectious disease in the centre ensuring that the individual rights of staff or children are not infringed upon. Notices will be placed on the parent notice board.

All staff will ensure proper hygiene practices are carried out as outlined in the Hygiene policy.

Under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1991 and Regulation, doctors, hospital chief executives (or general managers), pathology laboratories, directors of childcare centres and school principals are required to notify the following diseases:

Diphtheria	Measles
Mumps	Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
Poliomyelitis	Rubella (German Measles)
Tetanus	

Notification requested by phone, if possible.

### **Notification Mechanisms**

#### **Infectious diseases:**

Infectious diseases should be directed to the local Public Health Unit, and should be notified within 24 hours of diagnosis.

All infectious diseases notification forms are available from Public Health Units.

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