

INFECTION CONTROL POLICY



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INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This policy aims to provide the school community with guidance when preparing for, and in the event of an outbreak of an infection such as pandemic influenza. It contains a checklist of actions to aid planning and preparing for an outbreak of a pandemic and clarifies communication procedures.

PRINCIPLES

The school recognises that infections such as influenza are not new. No one knows exactly when the school will be faced with having to deal with a potentially contagious illness amongst its community. We recognise the need to be prepared. Infections are likely to spread particularly rapidly in schools and as children may have no residual immunity, they could be amongst the groups worst affected. We recognise that closing the school may be necessary in exceptional circumstances in order to control an infection. However, we will strive to remain open unless advised otherwise.

PLANNING AND PREPARING

In the event of the school becoming aware that a pupil or member of staff has an infectious illness, we would direct them or their parents to report to their GP or dial 111. Alternatively, they may contact the school to advise us that a pupil or member of staff has sought medical attention and has been diagnosed as having an infectious illness. During an outbreak of an infectious illness, the school will seek to operate as normally as possible but will plan for higher levels of staff absence. The decision on whether school should remain open or close will be based on medical evidence. This will be discussed with the East of England's Health Protection Agency. School will likely remain open but we recognise the fact that both the illness itself and the caring responsibilities of staff will affect staff absence levels. The school will close if lessons cannot be staffed or there is not adequate supervision for the children. Pupils will be asked to complete work at home using the school website as our communication tool.

INFECTION CONTROL

Infections are usually spread from person to person by close contact, for example:

- Infected people can pass a virus to others through large droplets when coughing, sneezing or even talking within a close distance.
- Through direct contact with an infected person: for example, if you shake or hold their hand, and then touch your own mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands.

- By touching objects (e.g. door handles, light switches) that have previously been touched by an infected person, then touching your own mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands.

Viruses can survive longer on hard surfaces than on soft or absorbent surfaces. Staff and students are given the following advice about how to reduce the risk of passing on infections to others:

- Wash your hands regularly, particularly after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Minimise contact between your hands and mouth/nose, unless you have just washed your hands.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. · Do not attend school if you think you may have an infectious illness.
- If you feel ill during the day go to the medical room.
- Parents will be contacted if First Aiders feel you are not well enough to be in school.
- These messages are promoted through posters around the school, in assemblies and through Personal, Social and Health Education lessons.

HAND WASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF INFECTION CONTROL IN SCHOOLS.

Minimise sources of contamination

- We will ensure relevant staff have a Food Hygiene Certificate or other training in food handling.
- We store food that requires refrigeration, covered and dated within a refrigerator, at a temperature of 5 C or below.
- We wash hands before and after handling food.
- We clean and disinfect food storage and preparation areas.
- Food is bought from reputable sources and used by recommended date.

To control the spread of infection:

- We ensure good hand washing procedures (toilet, handling animals, soil, food).
- We keep a record of the washing of equipment.
- Ensure different cloths and towels are kept for different areas.
- We cover all cuts and open sores.
- Aprons are worn when preparing food.
- We wear protective clothing when dealing with accidents (.g. gloves and apron).

A protocol is in place that is followed regarding contact with blood and body fluids:

- Gloves, face covering and apron worn.
- Children are encouraged to blow and wipe their own noses when necessary and to dispose of the soiled tissues hygienically.
- Soiled articles sealed in a plastic bag.
- Staff aware of procedures for the prevention of HIV infection.

To raise awareness of hygiene procedures:

- Inform all attending adults of the existing policy and procedures.
- Ensure that student induction includes this information.
- Provide visual instructions where possible for ease of understanding.
- To prevent cross-contamination Ensure that adults and children have separate toilet facilities.

During outbreaks of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, the following should be actioned:

- The use of play dough should be suspended until 48 hours after the symptoms end and the play dough used prior to the outbreak is disposed of;
- The use of play sand should be suspended until 48 hours after the symptoms end and the sand used prior to the outbreak is disposed of;
- The use of water should be suspended until 48 hours after the symptoms end and the water and water toys should be thoroughly cleaned prior to use.
- Children who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting should not be included in cooking for 48 hours.

If a child is unwell in school:

- They should wait in the medical room until their parents or carers collect them.
- They should be closely monitored and should not wait in communal areas.
- To prevent the persistence and further spread of infection
- Ensure that dedicated sinks are clearly marked.
- Be vigilant for signs of infection persisting or recurring.
- Ask parents to keep their child at home if they have an infection, and to inform the nursery of the nature of the infection.
- Remind parents not to bring a child to school who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until at least 48 hours has elapsed since the last attack.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF, STUDENTS, PARENTS AND CARERS

The school has a number of qualified first aiders who assess pupils and staff before recommending further action.

Individuals who are believed to have an infectious illness are sent home and are advised to contact their GP or local hospital.