



Nourishing the fitrah of each unique child

Infection Control Policy

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

“Cleanliness is half of faith.”

(Sahih Muslim, 223)

Updated: January 2025	Review date: January 2026	Health and Safety Officer: School Administrator
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Infection Control Policy

Schools are common sites for transmission of infections. Children are particularly susceptible because:

- they have immature immune systems
- have close contact with other children
- sometimes have no or incomplete vaccinations
- have a poor understanding of hygiene practices

This policy provides information for staff managing a range of common and important childhood infections. It includes the principles of infection prevention and control to enable safe working conditions.

Infection

Infections in children are common. This is because a child's immune system is immature. Added to this, young children often have close contact with their friends, for example through play, and lack good hygiene habits, making it easier for infections to be passed on.

Many diseases can spread before the individual shows any symptoms at all (during the infectious period).

Infection prevention and control measures aim to interrupt the cycle of infection by promoting the routine use of good standards of hygiene so that transmission of infection is reduced overall. This is usually through:

- immunisation of pupils and staff
- good hand washing
- making sure the environment is kept clean

Where a case of infection is known, measures aim to reduce or eliminate the risk of spread through information and prompt exclusion of a case.

How Infection Spreads

Infections are spread in many different ways:

Respiratory spread:

Contact with cough or other secretions from an infected person, like influenza. This can happen by being near the infected person when they cough and then breathe in the organism; or by picking up the organism from an infected item, for example, a used tissue or on an object in the environment, and then touching your nose or mouth.

Direct contact spread:

By direct contact with the infecting organism, for example, contact with the skin during contact sports such as rugby and in gyms, like impetigo or staphylococcal infections.

Gastrointestinal spread:

Resulting from contact with contaminated food or water (hepatitis A), contact with infected faeces or unwashed hands after using the toilet (typhoid fever).



Blood borne virus spread:

By contact with infected blood or body fluids, for example, while attending to a bleeding person or injury with a used needle (hepatitis B). Human mouths are inhabited by a wide variety of organisms, some of which can be transmitted by bites. Human bites resulting in puncture or breaking of the skin are potential sources of exposure to blood borne infections, therefore, it is essential that they are managed promptly.

Transmission of coronavirus mainly occurs via respiratory droplets generated during breathing, talking, coughing and sneezing. These droplets can directly infect the respiratory tracts of other people if there is close contact. They also infect others indirectly. This happens when the droplets get onto and contaminate surfaces which are then touched and introduced into the mouth or eyes of an uninfected person.

Another route of transmission is via aerosols (extremely small droplets), but this is only relevant to medical procedures for a very small number of children.

Preventing the spread of coronavirus involves preventing:

- direct transmission, for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing
- indirect transmission, for instance, touching contaminated surfaces

Prevention and Control

Hand washing is one of the most important ways of controlling the spread of infections, especially those that cause diarrhoea and vomiting and respiratory disease. Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels are recommended.

- All staff and pupils were advised to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating or handling food and after touching animals.
- Cover all cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing.
- Coughs and sneezes spread diseases. Children and adults are encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissue and wash hands after using or disposing of tissues. Spitting should be discouraged.
- Wear disposable gloves and plastic aprons if there is a risk of splashing or contamination with blood or body fluids during an activity. Gloves should be disposable, non-powdered vinyl or latex-free. Wear goggles if there is a risk of splashing to the face.

Bites

- If a bite does not break the skin: clean with soap and water and no further action is needed.
- If a bite breaks the skin: clean immediately with soap and running water. Record incident in accident book. Seek medical advice as soon as possible (on the same day) to treat potential infection, to protect against hepatitis B, for reassurance about HIV.



Managing needle stick injuries

Occasionally children or staff may injure themselves with discarded used hypodermic needles which they have found. Dispose of the needle safely to avoid the same thing happening to someone else. This can be done by contacting your local authority or school nurse. If someone pricks or scratches themselves with a used hypodermic needle:

- wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water
- cover it with a waterproof dressing
- record it in the accident book and complete the accident form
- seek immediate medical attention from your local Accident and Emergency department

Cleaning blood and body fluid spills

All spillages of blood, faeces, saliva, vomit, nasal and eye discharges should be cleaned up immediately, wearing PPE.

Clean spillages using a product which combines detergent and disinfectant (and ensure it is effective against both bacteria and viruses). Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Use disposable paper towels or cloths to clean up blood and body fluid spills and dispose of after use. A spillage kit should be available for bodily fluids like blood, vomit and urine.

Sanitary facilities

Good hygiene practices depend on adequate facilities. A hand wash basin with warm running water along with a mild liquid soap, preferably wall mounted with disposable cartridges, should be available. Bar soap should not be used.

Place disposable paper towels next to basins in wall mounted dispensers, together with a nearby foot-operated waste paper bin.

Toilet paper should be available in each cubicle.

Suitable sanitary disposal facilities should be provided where there are female staff and pupils.

Children with continence aids

Pupils who use continence aids (like continence pads, catheters) should be encouraged to be as independent as possible. The principles of basic hygiene should be applied by both pupils and staff involved in the management of these aids. Continence pads should be changed in a designated area. Disposable powder-free non-sterile latex gloves and a disposable plastic apron should also be worn. Gloves and aprons should be changed after every pupil. Hand washing facilities should be readily available. Contact your school health team for further advice.

Dealing with contaminated clothing

Clothing of either the child or the first-aider may become contaminated with blood or body fluids. Clothing should be removed as soon as possible and placed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child

with advice for the parent on how to launder the contaminated clothing. The clothing should be washed separately in a washing machine, using a pre-wash cycle, at the hottest temperature that the clothes will tolerate.



When to report

The Headteacher will contact the local health protection team as soon as possible to discuss the situation and agree if any actions are needed. Their contact details are as follows:

PHE North West London Health Protection Team,
61 Colindale Avenue,
London,
NW9 5EQ

Email: phe.nwl@nhs.net

Phone: [020 3326 1658](tel:02033261658)

Fax: [020 3326 1654](tel:02033261654)

Out of hours for health professionals only: please phone 01895 238 282

It is useful to have the information listed below available before this discussion as it will help to inform the size and nature of the outbreak:

- total numbers affected (staff and children)
- symptoms
- date(s) when symptoms started
- number of classes affected

For suspected cases of infectious illness

Where there is uncertainty it's an outbreak, call the local HPT

- If the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste
- If the individual tests positive, then store it for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste
- If storage for at least 72 hours is not appropriate, arrange for collection as a Category B

infectious waste either by your local waste collection authority if they currently collect your waste or otherwise by a specialist clinical waste contractor. They will supply orange clinical waste bags to place bags into so the waste can be sent for appropriate treatment.

Toys and equipment

For shared toys, only hard toys should be made available because they can be wiped clean after play. The condition of toys and equipment should be part of the monitoring process and any damaged item that cannot be cleaned or repaired should be discarded.

Soft modelling and play dough should be replaced regularly or whenever they look dirty and should be included in the cleaning schedule.

Sandpits should be securely covered when not in use to protect from contamination. Sand should be changed regularly.

Sand should be sieved (indoor) or raked (outdoor) regularly to keep it clean.



The tank should be washed with detergent and water, and dried before refilling with sand. Water play troughs or receptacles should be emptied, washed with detergent and hot water and dried and stored inverted when not in use. The water should be replenished either daily or twice daily when in use and it should always be covered when not in use.

Enhanced cleaning during an outbreak of infection

In the event of an outbreak of infection in the school, the local health protection team will recommend enhanced or more frequent cleaning, to help reduce transmission.

Advice may be given to ensure regular cleaning of areas with particular attention to door handles, toilet flushes and taps and communal areas where surfaces can easily become contaminated such as handrails. Plans should be developed for such an event on how the school might carry this out which could also include during term time. Dedicated cleaning equipment must be colour coded according to area of use.

Staff welfare

All staff should complete a medical health questionnaire.

Exclusion

Staff who are excluded from working due to being ill, may return to work when they are no longer infectious, provided they feel well enough to do so.

Pregnant staff

If a pregnant woman develops a rash or is in direct contact with someone with a rash who is potentially infectious, she should consult her doctor or midwife.

Chickenpox can affect the pregnancy if a woman has not already had the infection. The GP and midwife should be informed promptly. Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox therefore anyone who has not had chickenpox is potentially vulnerable to the infection if they have close contact with a case of shingles.

Measles during pregnancy can result in early delivery or even loss of the baby. If a pregnant woman is exposed, the midwife should be informed immediately. All female staff under the age of 25 years, working with young children, should have evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine or a positive history of measles.

If a pregnant woman comes into contact with German measles she should inform her GP and midwife immediately. The infection may affect the developing baby if the woman is not immune and is exposed in early pregnancy.

All female staff under the age of 25 years, working with young children, should have evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine or a positive history of Rubella.

Slapped cheek disease (Parvovirus B19) can occasionally affect an unborn child if exposed early in pregnancy. The pregnant woman should inform their midwife promptly.



Managing specific diseases and infections

Please refer to Public Health England advice on specific diseases and infections -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases>

Pets and animal contact

Please refer to Public Health England on pet and animal contact -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-8-pets-and-animal-contact>



Appendix One

Diarrhoea and Vomiting outbreak – School Action Checklist

Date Completed:			
Checklist Completed By (Print Name):			
Name & Tel No of Institution:			
Name of Head Teacher/Manager:			
	Yes	No	Comments:
Deploy 48 hour exclusion rule for ill children and staff			
Liquid soap and paper hand towels available			
Staff to check/encourage/supervise hand washing in children			
Check that deep cleaning, ie twice daily (min) cleaning and follow through with bleach/Milton/ appropriate disinfectant is being carried out, (especially toilets, frequently touched surfaces eg handles and taps and including any special equipment and play areas). Ensure that all staff/contractors involved in cleaning are aware of, and are following, the guidance			
Disposable protective clothing available (ie non-powdered latex/synthetic vinyl gloves & aprons)			
Appropriate waste disposal systems in place for infectious waste			
Advice given on cleaning of vomit (including steam cleaning carpets/furniture or machine hot washing of soft furnishings)			
Clean and disinfect hard toys daily (with detergent and water followed by bleach/Milton). Limit and stock rotate toys			
Suspend use of soft toys plus water/sand play and cookery activities during outbreak			
Segregate infected linen (and use dissolvable laundry bags where possible)			
Visitors restricted. Essential visitors informed of outbreak and advised on hand washing			
New children joining institution suspended			
Keep staff working in dedicated areas (restrict food handling if possible). Inform HPT of any affected food handlers.			
Check if staff work elsewhere (restrict) and that all staff are well (including agency). Exclude if unwell (see above re 48 hour rule)			
HPT informed of any planned events at the institution			
Inform School Nurse and discuss about informing OFSTED, if applicable.			



List of Notifiable Diseases

Diseases notifiable (to Local Authority Proper Officers) under the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations:

- acute encephalitis
- acute meningitis
- acute poliomyelitis
- acute infectious hepatitis
- anthrax
- botulism
- brucellosis
- cholera
- diphtheria
- enteric fever (typhoid or paratyphoid fever)
- food poisoning
- haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS)
- infectious bloody diarrhoea
- invasive group A streptococcal disease and scarlet fever
- legionnaires' disease
- leprosy
- malaria
- measles
- meningococcal septicaemia
- mumps
- plague
- rabies
- rubella
- SARS
- smallpox
- tetanus
- tuberculosis
- typhus
- viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF)
- whooping cough
- yellow fever
- Covid-19



Local health protection contact information

Get support from your local health protection team (HPT) to prevent and reduce the effect of diseases and chemical and radiation hazards.

HPTs provide support to health professionals, including:

- local disease surveillance
- alert systems
- investigating and managing health protection incidents
- national and local action plans for infectious diseases

If you need to send information that might reveal someone's identity, put it in an encrypted email. Do not put personal information in the subject line.

PHE North West London Health Protection Team,
61 Colindale Avenue,
London,
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Email: phe.nwl@nhs.net

Phone: [020 3326 1658](tel:02033261658)

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Useful links

Exclusion Table: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/789369/Exclusion_table.pdf

Public Health England pet and animal contact:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-8-pets-and-animal-contact>

Public Health England advice on specific diseases and infections:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases>

NHS Immunisation information: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/>

Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

Public Health England School Zone- e-Bug stop germs spreading with fun e-Bug resources

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/school>



