



Infection Control

Policy Statement:

It is the priority of Homework Hub to protect all school aged children attending our service and all persons working in our service from the transmission of infections. The health and well-being of all children, staff and visitors to our service is paramount and our aim is to prevent and manage any infection which may be present in the service. This policy is available on request or via our website

Principle:

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Regulation of School Aged Services) Regulations 2018.

Rationale:

Infection can lead to serious ill-health for anyone involved. Infection control procedures seek to reduce the risk of children and staff contracting an illness in Homework hub by ensuring good hygiene is followed at all times and the risk of infection is minimised. We aim to promote good hygiene practices within the setting.

Preventing the spread of infection.

Risk Assessments:

- Risk assessments are undertaken by staff to assess if activities, actions or environments pose risks from an infection control standpoint to the children and staff of Homework Hub. Actions are implemented to eliminate or reduce the risk identified through risk assessment.

There are three basic principles of infection prevention outlined in the HPSC guidance:

1. Hand washing is the single most effective way of preventing the spread of infection and should be used at every opportunity

2. Immunisation. All children and staff should be appropriately immunised

3. **Exclusion.**

Any unwell staff member or child should be excluded

- *To protect staff and children from the spread of infections, staff need to understand how diseases are spread and which measures interrupt their spread.*
- *The spread of germs can be greatly reduced if standard precautions are used consistently and regularly.*
- *It is vital that staff receive training in the use of Standard Precautions. This is particularly important because some diseases are contagious before symptoms appear and because the disease status of a child may not be known.*
- *The single most important way to prevent the spread of germs is by hand washing.*
- *Maintaining a good standard of environmental hygiene, coupled with appropriate cleaning of toys, personal care items and utensil.*

Standard precautions are applied when anyone has contact with:

- Blood
- All body fluids, secretions (nasal secretions) and excretions (urine, faeces, vomit) except sweat, regardless of whether or not they contain visible blood
- Non-intact skin (broken skin, sores)
- Mucous membranes (eyes and mouth).

The key elements of standard precautions taken in the service include:

- Hand washing and skin care
- Use of protective clothing, e.g. gloves and plastic apron
- Management of spillages, i.e. blood or other body fluids
- Management of cuts, bites and needle-stick injuries
- Coughing and sneezing etiquette
- Environmental hygiene
- Safe handling of laundry
- Safe handling and disposal of waste including sharps
- Food hygiene.

Children are excluded only if they are actually ill, present a danger or a risk to others (children or adults) or are unable to benefit from the service's normal activities.

There are some particular illnesses where exclusion is necessary. In general, parents/guardians are asked to keep their child away from the service, and staff members are required to stay away until they have seen their GP if any of the following are evident:

- Diarrhoea and vomiting.
 - A temperature of 101°F / 38°C or above.
 - Eye discharge.
 - Rash or skin disorder.
 - Strep throat.
 - An earache or a bad cough.
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- **Any ill child in the service who becomes ill with fever, headache and vomiting will be sent home as soon as their parents/guardians can be contacted.** Parents will immediately be made aware of the staff's concerns for the child's wellbeing. In this situation, if there is any significant delay in contacting the child's parents/guardians the child will be brought directly to the local hospital Emergency Department. **A child with fever, headache and vomiting must not be allowed to wait indefinitely in the service.**
 - Parents/guardians are included in the team approach to infection control. A co-operative approach between parents and the service will help to ensure a healthy environment for the children.
 - Parents/guardians who feel their child is too ill or unwell to participate in indoor or outdoor activity, are advised to keep them home to ensure a complete recovery.
 - Keeping immunisation records for all children attending the service is a legal requirement. Prior to enrolment parents/guardians are asked for a copy of their child's immunisation passport or record card. Parents/guardians are encouraged to ensure that their child is fully up to date with their immunisations and are required to inform the service if their child has not received any of the standard vaccinations.
 - Parents/guardians must inform the service of any known infectious illness in their child. This is of particular importance if the illness might affect others in the service, for example, if a child develops chickenpox or measles or other such contagious illnesses.
 - Parents/guardians are informed if there are any outbreaks of infection in the service.
 - Parents/guardians of children with any chronic (persistent or long-term) infectious conditions will be encouraged to share this information with the service.

- All female staff members need to know if they are immune to Rubella. (A simple blood test can tell if someone is susceptible to infection.) All parents/ guardians/carers and staff members will be notified of any known incidence of Rubella.

Procedures & Practices Prevention of Spread of Infection

Hand washing

- Posters of correct hand washing procedures are available at wash hand basins for adults and children.
- Warm running water is available for hand washing at a temperature no greater than 43°C at children's wash hand basins.
- A cleaning agent such as soap is used when hand washing.
- Hand drying facilities are available, disposable paper towels/ hand dryers.
- Children's hand washing and hand drying is supervised at all times.
- Hands are washed and dried after using the toilet, after handling animals, after sneezing, blowing nose, coughing, or touching a cut or sore and before eating or handling food.
- Staff are required to follow the hand washing procedure and encourage children to do the same at all times.

Respiratory hygiene (coughing and sneezing)

All adults and children cover their mouths and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

As required, we will notify the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate when the department of Public Health has confirmed to us that there is a diagnosis of a child attending the service, an employee, unpaid worker, contractor or other person working in the service as suffering from an infectious disease within the meaning of [The Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981](#) (SI No 390 of 1981) and amendments. www.hpsc.ie/NotifiableDiseases/ListofNotifiableDiseases/

We will contact the local Department of Public Health:

- If we have a concern about a communicable disease or infection, or if we need advice on infection control.
- If we are concerned that the number of children who have developed similar symptoms is higher than normal / if we think that we may have an outbreak of infectious disease in the service.
- If we are not sure whether to exclude a child or member of staff.
- Before sending letters to parents/guardians about an infectious disease.

Other Standard Precautions

Cleaning the environment

- A cleaning programme is in place
- Detergents and disinfectants are used correctly
- Detergents and disinfectants are used according to the manufacturers' instructions.
- Cleaning of toilets and sinks are conducted daily with appropriate products.

Personal protective clothing

Protective clothing is used when required (gloves and aprons).

Blood and body fluid spillages

Standard Precautions as outlined in [Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings](#) (2012) are used when any member of staff has contact with:

- Blood
- All body fluids, secretions (nasal secretions) and excretions (urine, faeces, vomit) except sweat, regardless of whether or not they contain visible blood
- Non-intact skin (broken skin, sores)
- Mucous membranes (eyes and mouth)

Spillages of blood, faeces, urine and vomit are cleaned immediately using disposable cloths and disposed of in closed bin. Mops are never used for cleaning blood, urine, vomit or faeces.

Extreme care must be taken in cleaning up bodily fluids using Standard Precautions.

It should be assumed that blood is infectious, regardless of its source.

The procedure used for dealing with blood and body fluid spillages is as outlined in [Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings](#) (2012) on Page 13.

First Aid should not be withheld if gloves are not available. While due care and caution is important in handling potentially infectious fluids, fear of infection should never prevent First Aid being given.

Avoid direct contact with blood or bloody fluids. Should blood come in contact with skin the likelihood of transmission of infection through intact skin is very remote. DO NOT PANIC. Wash the area with soap and water. If blood splashes into the eye or mouth, rinse with water.

Waste

- Waste is recycled in accordance with local authority policy where possible.
- Nappies are stored in a leak proof airtight container which is easy to clean.
- Foot operated pedal bins are used to dispose of gloves, aprons and soiled dressings.

External bins are stored away from children's access

Perishable food

All perishable food is kept in a refrigerator at temperatures of 0°– 5°C.

Perishable food is not left at room temperature for more than two hours.

Perishable food left at room temperature for two hours or longer is discarded.

Food preparation:

- Our staff always washes hands before preparing or serving food.
- Our staff always washes their hands after removing waste food and materials.
- Appropriate food hygiene practices are followed at all times.
- Perishable food is kept in a refrigerator, between temperatures of 0 and 5 Celsius. Any perishable food left at room temperature for more than 2 hours will be discarded safely.

Immunisation

On enrolment, parents/guardians are asked for their child's immunisation record.

Parents/guardians of children who are **not** immunised are made aware of the dangers of infectious diseases. Parents are encouraged to keep up to date with current vaccination requirements and to ensure that the service is kept informed and the child's record updated when required.

Parents/guardians are not required to have their children immunised to gain admission to the service but where a child's immunisation record is not up-to-date parents/guardians are encouraged to have their child vaccinated.

If a child is not immunised, parents/guardians must be advised that their children will be excluded from the service during outbreaks of some vaccine preventable diseases such as Measles, Whooping Cough etc., even if their child is well. This is to protect their non-immunised child.

Illness:

- If a child is unwell Homework hub requests that the child is kept at home if they are unable to participate in normal activities and/or if they may be at risk of passing the infection to another child or adult in the service.
- If a child becomes ill while in Homework hub we request that the child's parent/guardian or person authorised to collect will collect the child within 30 minutes. Sick children are separated from well children where possible.
- If Homework hub cannot contact the parents/guardians/emergency contact for a child it may be necessary to transfer the child to hospital via ambulance depending on the severity of their symptoms.
- Unwell children, with a temperature and/or specific signs and symptoms, will be excluded from the service until a diagnosis can be made. Staff can and will use their discretion when admitting a child back into named service, if they believe the child is still ill and cannot take part in their normal activities they will request that the parent/guardian keeps the child at home.
- Children/Staff must remain at home for at least 48 hours following the last episode of infectious diarrhoea/vomiting.
- Unwell children and staff should only return to Homework hub when they have fully recovered. The exclusion notes in Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings are followed.
- Staff will report any illness to the manager/designated person in charge
- A plan will be drawn up to help prevent the spread of the illness and the HSE guidelines: Managing an infectious disease in childcare setting will be followed in the case of a child in the service contracting an infectious illness.

Exclusion periods for infectious illnesses

Ill children and staff should only return when they have fully recovered from infectious illness. See exclusion notes for the different diseases outlined in Chapter 9 of [Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings](#) (2012) page 33.

Procedure for notifying infectious diseases

When the service is informed by the Department of Public Health of a diagnosis of a child attending the service or an employee, unpaid worker, contractor or other person working in the service, as suffering from an infectious disease within the meaning of the Infectious Disease Regulations 1981(SI No 390 of 1981) and amendments – See: www.hpsc.ie/NotifiableDiseases/ListofNotifiableDiseases/ – this will be notified

to Tusla Early Years Inspectorate by *[the owner/manager]* using the Child Care Act (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 Part VIII, Article 31,

Outbreak of an infectious disease

In the case of the outbreak of an infectious disease homework hub will take all precautions necessary to avoid the spread of disease including excluding where required and deep cleaning the facilities.

When to contact the local Department of Public Health/Tusla

- If there is a concern about a communicable disease or infection, or advice is needed on controlling them.
 - If there is a concern that the number of children who have developed similar symptoms is higher than normal.
 - If there is an outbreak of infectious disease in the service.
 - To check whether to exclude a child or member of staff
 - Before sending letters to parents/guardians about an infectious disease.
 - All parents/guardians are to be informed of the policy and procedures regarding Infection Control on enrolment and made aware that it is applied equally to all children, aimed at maintaining a healthy environment for all children and adults.
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- Staff members will check with parents/guardians that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.
 - A summary of this policy will be included in the parent handbook. This policy will also be reviewed with staff at induction and annual staff training.
 - Handouts on infection may be given to parents/guardians/carers as a guide.
 - A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents/guardians in the Policy Folder located in
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 - Parents/guardians may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request. Parents/ guardians and all staff members will receive written notification of any updates.

This policy links with our –

- Administration of Medication Policy.
- Health & Safety Policy.

- Staff absence Policy.
- Risk management Policy.
- Staff training Policy.

Person Responsible: Rory McGrath

This policy was adopted by (Homework Hub) on Date: 22/07/2019

Signed by: Rory McGrath

On behalf of Management

Review Date: 22/07/2020