

22. POLICY ON INFECTION CONTROL

In line with the HPSC guidance, Little Buds applies the three basic principles to prevent infectious diseases. These are:

- Following standard infection control precautions including handwashing at every opportunity;
- Requiring that all children that attend our service are immunised; and
- Excluding any unwell staff member or child in line with our exclusion schedule.

A. Standard precautions:

Staff apply standard precautions when they have 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); and
- Mucous membranes (eyes and mouth).

Standard precautions are:

- Handwashing and skin care
- Use of protective clothing e.g. gloves and plastic apron
- Management of spillages, i.e. blood and 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
- Food hygiene

Handwashing and skin care:

Throughout the service we have included guidance on correct hand washing procedures at all wash hand basins for adults and children.

The water temperature in our service is thermostat controlled and water at the children's wash hand basin is no greater than 43°C. Soap is available at all wash hand basins.

Disposable paper towels are available at all wash hand basins for hand drying. Children's hand washing and drying is supervised at all times.

We require hand washing for children and staff:

- after using the toilet;
- before and after changing nappies;
- after sneezing, blowing nose or coughing;
- before eating;
- before handling food;
- after handling animals.
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Use of protective clothing:

Disposal gloves are available to staff at all times and required for the following activities:

- Changing nappies;
- Handling food;
- Cleaning spills of blood and body fluids;
- Management of cuts, bites and needle-stick injuries
- Disposal of waste.

Management of spillages:

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

Children are kept away from any spillage until the area has been cleaned and disinfected.

While due care and caution is important in handling potentially infectious fluids, fear of infection will never prevent First Aid being given.

The following procedure applies for spillages of body fluids:

- Put on disposable plastic apron and gloves.
- Use absorbent disposable paper towels or kitchen towel roll to soak up the spillage.
- Clean the area using warm water and a general purpose neutral detergent, use a disposal cloth.
- Apply a chlorine based disinfectant (diluted to a concentration of 1000 ppm available chlorine) to the affected surface.
- Dry the surface thoroughly using disposable paper towels.
- Dispose of surface thoroughly using disposable paper towels.
- Dispose of soiled/sodden paper towels, gloves, apron and cloths in a manner that prevents any other person coming in contact with these items e.g. bag separately prior to disposal into a general domestic waste bag.
- Change clothing that is soiled immediately.
- Wash and dry hands thoroughly.

The following procedure applies for spillages of blood spillages:

- Put on disposable plastic apron and gloves.
- Use absorbent disposable paper towels or kitchen towel roll to soak up the spillage.
- Apply a chlorine based disinfectant (diluted to a concentration of 1000 ppm available chlorine) to the affected surface. Leave for at least two minutes (check manufacturer's instructions).
- Wash the area thoroughly with warm water and a general purpose neutral detergent and dry using disposable paper towels.
- Dispose of surface thoroughly using disposable paper towels.
- Dispose of soiled/sodden paper towels, gloves, apron and cloths in a manner that prevents any other person coming in contact with these items e.g. bag separately prior to disposal into a general domestic waste bag.
- Wash and dry hands thoroughly.
- Change clothing that is soiled immediately.

Management of cuts, bites and needle-stick injuries:

Where a child has a cut, bite or needle-stick injury the staff member with first-aid training will be called upon depending on the severity of the injury.

Cuts:

When dealing with cuts the following general procedures will apply:

1. Put on disposable gloves and apron;
2. Stop the bleeding by applying pressure to the wound with a dry clean absorbent dressing;
3. Place a clean dressing on the wound and refer the child for medical treatment if needed, e.g. stitches required or bleeding that cannot be controlled;
4. Once bleeding has stopped, dispose of the gloves and apron safely immediately in a manner that prevents another person coming in contact with the blood, i.e. bag separately prior to disposing into general domestic waste bag.
5. Wash and dry hands.

Bites:

If a child is bitten by another child the bite will be cleaned with soap and water and no further action is needed if the bite does not break the skin.

If the bite by another child breaks the skin and bleeds, the following procedure will apply:

- Encourage the wound to bleed if not bleeding freely (apply pressure to the sides of the wound);
- Wash the wound thoroughly with warm running water;
- Cover it with waterproof dressing;
- Record the incident in the accident book;
- If the biter has blood in the mouth they should swill it out with tap water;
- Children who may have been exposed should be medically evaluated by a GP or in a hospital emergency department.

Coughing and sneezing etiquette:

All staff will cover their mouths and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Children will be encouraged to do the same.

Tissue boxes will be available in all classrooms for quick access for both staff and children for use when required.

Environmental hygiene:

General:

- Fresh solutions of cleaning agents are made up daily (or as instructed by the manufacturer).
- Expiry dates are checked regularly on all chemical packaging.
- Toys and other play materials are **not** allowed into the toilet area.
- Staff ensure that they observe any specified health and safety precautions.
- Individual combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, personal clothing, bedding and towels are labelled and not shared.

- Washing up is done thoroughly in hot water with detergent, using rubber gloves. Where there has been an outbreak of infection, toys have been placed in the child's mouth or been soiled with blood or body fluids then a chlorine based disinfectant at a concentration of 1,000ppm available chlorine is used. Each item is rinsed and dried thoroughly in line with manufacturer's instructions.
- All chemicals are stored in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place. Children do not have access to the store of chemicals.
- Mop heads are removed and machine washed at the end of each day in line with the manufacturer's instructions.
- All cleaning equipment is stored clean and dry to prevent the growth of germs.
- Any cleaning routine which poses a safety risk does take place when children are on the premises.

Frequency of cleaning:

- All areas are cleaned regularly in line with our cleaning rota schedule (available on request).
- All toilets, surrounding walls and wash hand basins are cleaned and disinfected daily.
- The daily and weekly cleaning rota in place in respect of tables, floors, classrooms and outdoor equipment, toys, and frequently mouthed objects are followed.
- Toys that children put in their mouths are washed after use or before use by another child.
- Dressing up clothes/imaginative play materials are regularly washed.
- When not in use the sandpit (where available) is covered, and the water tray (where available) is emptied between sessions or daily.
- All cleaning cloths, towels, etc. are changed every day. Separate cloths are used in the bathroom and kitchen.
- Any leftover food is properly disposed of.

Nappy changing and toileting of children:

Our nappy changing policy is on display in all changing areas. General points with respect to our nappy changing procedure are:

- Children's hands are washed and dried after nappy changing or toileting.
- Staff wash their hands before and after nappy changing or toileting.
- Nappy changing procedures as displayed are adhered to at all times.
- Changing mats in the nappy changing unit are waterproof and have an easily cleanable cover and are kept in a good state of repair to ensure there are no breaks or tears. Should a break or tear be identified the nappy changing mat is replaced.
- Nappy changing mats and the unit is cleaned after each nappy change.

Safe handling of laundry:

Where linen is soiled, staff will use gloves and aprons when handling the linen. The soiled linen will then be washed separately at the hottest wash the fabric will tolerate.

Where the child's clothing is soiled, staff will use gloves and aprons when handling the clothing and place it in a sealed plastic bag. The sealed bag will then be provided to the parent/guardian at collection time.

Safe handling and disposal of waste:

Where possible, waste is recycled.

Foot operated pedal bins are available for staff to dispose of gloves, aprons and soiled dressings. External bins are stored away from the children's access.

Nappies are stored in a leak proof airtight container and cleaned regularly in line with the cleaning program in place.

Waste is removed from the building on a daily basis and all bins are maintained in good condition.

Food hygiene:

Any person preparing or serving food will wear a hair net, apron and gloves. Any person showing signs of ill health will not be permitted to handle food.

Fresh potable water is available at all times.

When preparing food, in order to avoid cross contamination of food, staff will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene and training by:

- Always washing hands with anti-bacterial soap and hot water before and after handling food, using the toilet or changing nappies.
- Using clean, disposable cloths and having specific cleaning implements for a specific area.
- Ensuring the use of the correct colour coded chopping boards (e.g. red for raw meat etc).
- Not being involved in food preparation if they are unwell.
- Wearing correct sterile clothing – hair net, apron, closed toe shoes etc.
- Making sure all fruit and vegetables are washed before being served.
- Avoid wearing jewellery, especially rings, watches and bracelets.
- Any cuts, spots or sores on the hands and arms must be covered completely with a waterproof dressing.
- Fingernails should be kept short and clean.

Temperature control:

All perishable food is kept in a refrigerator at temperatures 0° to 5°C. The fridge temperature is checked daily to ensure the correct temperature is being upheld.

Perishable food is not left at room temperature for more than two hours. If perishable food was found to be left at room temperature for more than two hours it is discarded.

Cleaning of food preparation areas:

Every week the fridge is thoroughly cleaned and all items in the fridge are checked for freshness, and all food past their use by or best before date are correctly disposed of.

- Shelves and drawers are removed and cleaned with warm soapy water.

- The inside walls are cleaned from top to bottom with anti-bacterial cleaner.
- The seals around the fridge are cleaned to ensure no spillages or stains.
- Freezers are defrosted (on non-frost-free) and cleaned once a month following the same procedure.

All food preparation surfaces are wiped clean after use with an approved anti-bacterial cleaner and disposable cloths/paper towels.

All chopping boards are cleaned after use with warm soapy water, anti-bacterial cleaner and then thoroughly rinsed.

B. Immunisations:

As part of child enrolment, parents are asked to provide the service with 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.

C. Sickness exclusion:

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 38°C or above.
- Eye discharge.
- Rash or skin disorder.
- Strep throat.
- An earache or a bad cough.

Specific exclusion periods are necessary, and are applied, for particular diagnosed illnesses as outlined in **Appendix 1**. 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.

Outbreak:

Should there be an outbreak of a contagious illness in the service, parents will be notified. A notice informing all parents and guardians of an infectious disease outbreak is displayed in a prominent place and parents/guardians are also verbally informed.

Incidences of head louse are also brought to the attention of all parents/guardians immediately.

The department of public health will be contacted in the following circumstances:

- 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 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/) in the service.
- To check whether to exclude a child or member of staff.
- Before sending letters to parents/guardians to inform them of the outbreak of an infectious disease.

Emergency:

If a child becomes ill while in the service, the procedure as outlined in the policy on the administration of medication policy for medical emergencies will be followed.