

INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This document 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 pandemic influenza and clarifies communication procedures.

In the event of a pandemic or other infectious outbreak in the community some pupils and staff may need to shield, advice on who should shield can be sought from your local GP or hospital. Any staff or pupils that need to shield should inform the school immediately.

Vulnerable children

Some medical conditions make children vulnerable to infections that would rarely be serious in most children, these include those being treated for leukaemia or other cancers, on high doses of steroids and with conditions that seriously reduce immunity. The school will have been made aware of such children. These children are particularly vulnerable to chickenpox, measles or parvovirus B19 and, if exposed to either of these, the school will contact the parent/carer and inform them promptly and further medical advice sought.

PRINCIPLES

The school recognises that infections such as influenza pandemics 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.

Good pastoral care includes promoting healthy living. School staff will give pupils positive messages about health and wellbeing through lessons and through conversations with pupils

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 their parents/ staff to report to their GP. 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 (such as pandemic influenza) 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 Trust. It is likely that school will remain open, but we recognise the fact that both the illness itself and the caring responsibilities of staff will impact staff absence levels. The school will close if lessons cannot be staffed or there is not adequate supervision for the children.

Students will be asked to complete work at home or at a local library using the school website or educational websites.

INFECTION CONTROL

- **Hand washing is the single most important part of infection control in schools**

Infections are usually spread from person to person by close contact. They may be spread through droplet transmission (such as in the case of influenza) or via the faecal-oral route (such as in the case of a norovirus). Infected people can pass a virus to others through

- large droplets when coughing, sneezing, or even talking within a close distance
- 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.
- 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.

Good Personal Hygiene can help to reduce the spread of the infection. Staff and pupils are given the following advice about how to reduce the risk of passing on infections to others:

- wash your hands regularly (for at least 20 seconds, using soap and water), 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.
- Inform someone if you become unwell while at school. If you feel ill during the day go to reception or first aid room. Parents/ carers will be contacted if First Aiders feel pupils are not well enough to be in school.

To raise awareness of hygiene procedures

- Inform all attending adults of the existing procedures.
- Insure that pupil induction includes this information.
- Provide visual instructions where possible for ease of understanding.

- **These messages are promoted through Personal and Social Education lessons**

To prevent cross-contamination

- The schools provided adults and children with separate toilet facilities.
- The schools have an agreed and monitored cleaning regime
 - Cleaning throughout the school is frequent and thorough including the cleaning of all toys and equipment in class.
 - Cleaning standards are checked periodically against a service level agreement

- Cleaning contracts are monitored regularly to ensure cleaners have access to PPE and sufficient cleaning products.

Staying away from school when ill

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

- Children and staff who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting should not be included in cooking for 48 hours after symptoms cease.

General school practices to promote control of infection

We ensure that good hand washing facilities are provided at all times for use by pupils, teachers, and others. We encourage good hand washing procedures (toilet, handling animals, soil, food) and children are encouraged to blow and wipe their own noses when necessary and to dispose of the soiled tissues hygienically.

We keep a record of the washing of equipment and we ensure different cloths and towels are kept for different areas.

We cover all cuts and open sores.

Aprons are worn when preparing food.

First Aid and dealing with accidents

We wear protective clothing when dealing with accidents. (e.g. gloves) A protocol is in place that is followed regarding contact with blood and body fluids.

- Gloves worn
- Soiled articles sealed in a plastic bag
- Staff aware of procedures for the prevention of HIV infection and other blood borne pathogens
- Staff are trained in infection prevention and control.
- First aiders will be provided with PPE where necessary this includes, disposable gloves, disposal apron, face mask and eye protection.
- Any soiled materials including used PPE will be placed inside a sealed bag and placed in the general waste preferably in an outside bin.

If a child is unwell in school

They should wait in the medical room until they are collected by their parents or carers. 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 as to signs of infection persisting or recurring.

- Ask parents/carers to keep their child at home if they have an infection, and to inform the school as to the nature of the infection.
- Remind parents/carers 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.

Food Hygiene

Food hygiene associated with catering at the schools is assessed, monitored, and supervised. We will ensure relevant staff have Food Hygiene Certificate or other training in food handling (to at least Level 3 for supervisory staff, and to at least Level 2 for all other staff).

All food handling is subject to food hygiene risk assessments, with detailed HACCPs created to ensure adequate controls are in place (such as refrigeration, cleaning schedules, temperature checks, inspections when food stuffs are received, etc.)

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 the recommended date.

School trips, including Farm Visits

All school visits are subject to a detailed risk assessment that is carried out and agreed in advance of the trip. Part of this risk assessment must include personal hygiene considerations.

In the case of farm visits, hand washing is essential throughout the visit and particularly after coming into contact with livestock. Students will be supervised to ensure hand washing is thorough.

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.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Senior staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any current concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and pupils.