Managing Health & Illness policy

Policy Statement

Early Years Day Nursery Uxbridge is committed to promoting the health, wellbeing and safety of all children in our care. We recognise that effective management of illness and infection is essential to reduce the risk of spread, protect vulnerable children and staff and maintain a safe and hygienic environment.
The nursery promotes good health practices, including oral health and follows current guidance from the National Health Service and the UK Health Security Agency.
We ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities in identifying signs of illness, responding appropriately, and taking necessary action to safeguard the health of children and others within the setting.
This policy is implemented in line with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.
The nursery promotes a proactive approach to health and illness, ensuring early identification, clear communication with families, and consistent application of procedures.

Procedure

- If a child appears unwell during the nursery day, staff will assess the situation promptly and take appropriate steps to support the child and minimise the risk of infection spreading within the setting.
- If a child becomes ill whilst at nursery, parents or carers will be contacted immediately and asked to collect their child as soon as possible. During this time, the child will be cared for in a quiet and comfortable area under close supervision until they are collected.
- Children who are unwell must not attend the nursery. In cases of infectious illness, including sickness and diarrhoea, children must remain at home and may only return once they have been **symptom-free for at least 48 hours.**
- For the purposes of this policy**, diarrhoea is defined as three or more loose or watery stools within a 24-hour period.** If a child experiences three loose stools during the nursery day, parents or carers will be contacted and required to collect their child promptly. **The child must not return to the nursery until they have been free from symptoms, including any episodes of diarrhoea or vomiting, for a minimum of 48 hours.**
- The nursery recognises that the overall wellbeing of the child and the potential risk of infection transmission must always be considered. Therefore, there may be occasions where management exercises discretion based on the child's general presentation, including signs of illness such as lethargy, discomfort, reduced appetite, fever, or changes in behaviour, as well as any known cases of infectious illness within the nursery.
- **Where there are concerns regarding a child's health or a heightened risk of infection within the setting, the manager may request that a child is collected and excluded from nursery, even if they have experienced only one episode of loose stool.** Any decision made under managerial discretion will be based on the child's best interests and the need to protect the health and wellbeing of all children ad staff.
- Where a contagious illness is identified within the nursery, parents will be informed promptly so they can monitor for symptoms. All equipment, toys and areas that may have been exposed will be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly to reduce the risk of transmission.
- The nursery follows guidance from the National Health Service and the UK Health Security Agency when determining appropriate action, including exclusion periods and infection control measures. Parents may be advised to seek medical guidance where necessary before a child returns to the setting.
- Where a child has been prescribed antibiotics, they **cannot attend nursery for the first 24 hours** of the course. This ensures the child is well enough to participate in the nursery day and helps reduce the risk of infection spreading.
- Parents must inform the nursery as soon as possible if their child is unwell and unable to attend.
- If a child has been given Calpol or any medication to reduce a temperature before attending nursery, **they must remain at home until they are well, temperature-free for 24 hours and no longer requiring medication to manage symptoms.** The same applies where a child is sent home from nursery with a temperature.
- If a parent or primary caregiver has given permission for the nursery to administer Calpol to a child with a temperature, and the child's temperature persists for longer than 45 minutes to one hour after administration, the child will be sent home and **must remain temperature-free for 24 hours before returning to the nursery.**
- The Nursery Manager retains the discretion to refuse entry to any child who appears unwell, even if an exclusion period has passed or medical advice has been given. This decision will be based on the child's overall wellbeing and their ability to take part in normal nursery activities.
- Parents must inform the nursery if their child has a contagious illness. All information will be handled sensitively and confidentially. The nursery follows current government guidance on exclusion periods for infectious diseases.
- A child's temperature will be taken using a digital thermometer in line with manufacturer guidance. A temperature of 38°C or above will be treated as a high temperature and managed in line with guidance from the National Health Service and monitored appropriately.

- During any outbreak of infectious illness, certain activities that increase the risk of cross-contamination, such as shared sensory play or self-service food, may be temporarily suspended.
- In the event of a medical emergency, an ambulance will be called immediately. Staff will not transport a child in their own vehicle. Parents will be informed without delay and arrangements made to meet at the hospital. A member of staff will accompany the child and take all relevant documentation, including emergency contact details, medical records, care plans and any required medication.
- Any concerns regarding a child's health that may indicate a safeguarding issue will be managed in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff Illness

Staff must not attend work if they are unwell or may pose a risk of infection to others. Staff must follow the same exclusion periods as children, particularly in cases of sickness and diarrhoea and must only return when they are fit to work.

Hygiene and Infection Control

Hygiene precautions when dealing with body fluids are applied consistently for all children and adults to minimise the risk of infection.
Staff will wear single-use gloves and aprons when changing nappies or handling clothing or materials soiled with blood, saliva, urine, faeces, or vomit.
Any soiled clothing or personal items will be placed in a sealed bag and returned to parents or carers.
All spills of bodily fluids will be cleaned immediately using appropriate disinfectant solutions. Materials used for cleaning will be disposed of safely in line with clinical waste procedures.

Oral Health

The nursery recognises that promoting good oral health in early years is essential for protecting children's teeth and establishing lifelong healthy habits.
We support children's oral health by following guidance from the National Health Service and embedding good practices into daily routines.
This may include providing opportunities for children to learn about oral health through age-appropriate activities, sharing information and guidance with parents and carers, ensuring menus support healthy teeth by limiting sugar and promoting balanced nutrition, and encouraging positive links with local dental services where appropriate.

Immunisations

Early Years Day Nursery Uxbridge has a duty of care to protect the health and wellbeing of all children, families and staff within the setting. This includes taking appropriate steps to reduce the risk of infectious diseases and ensuring a safe environment for everyone.
The nursery will notify parents, carers and staff where there is a known case of an excludable illness within the setting, in line with current public health guidance. We will follow appropriate exclusion periods and infection control measures to limit the spread of illness.
Where possible, the nursery will maintain an up-to-date record of each child's immunisation status. This supports the identification of children who may be at increased risk during an outbreak and enables the nursery to provide timely and relevant information to parents and carers.
We recognise that children attending group settings may have a higher exposure to infectious illnesses. Maintaining accurate records and working in partnership with families supports effective risk management and helps protect all children within our care.
The nursery will support parents and carers by sharing information and guidance on immunisations in line with recommendations from the National Health Service and the UK Health Security Agency. Parents are encouraged to ensure their child's vaccinations are up to date in accordance with national guidance.

Further Guidance

The nursery follows recognised guidance and resources, including:

- National Health Service – Vaccinations - NHS

- UK Government guidance on health protection in schools and childcare settings Health protection in children and young people's settings, including education - GOV.UK
- NHS guidance on infectious illnesses in children Is my child too ill for school? - NHS
- NHS oral health and dental care guidance Children's teeth - NHS

Exclusion periods for common infectious illnesses (THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTATIVE):

ILLNESS	INCUBATION PERIOD	INFECTIOUS PERIOD	EXCLUSION PERIOD
Chicken Pox	13 - 17 days	1 - 2 days before rash appears until all spots scabbed over (usually 5-7 days)	When all spots are scabbed over (minimum of 5 days from rash)
Conjunctivitis	12 hrs to 3 days	As long as symptoms are present	Until weeping has stopped and redness has disappeared
Gastroenteritis/ Diarrhoea & vomiting	A few hours to a few days	Not always infectious	Until free of symptoms for 48 hours
Hand, foot & mouth disease	3 - 5 days	4 - 6 days	Recommended until the blisters have cleared (usually 4-6 days)
Impetigo	4 - 10 days	While the spots are discharging pus	Once the lesions have crusted or healed
Cold Sores	2 - 12 days	While 'active' cold sore is present	None recommended
Unexplained diarrhoea &/or vomiting (e.g. car sickness, teething, coughing etc.)	N/A	N/A	At manager's discretion: (if there are other cases of D &/or V the child may be excluded as a precaution)
Ringworm	4 – 10 days	Until lesions has crusted	Until lesions has crusted
Scarlet Fever	N/A	Up to 14 days prior to rash appearing	10 days after starting treatment
Whooping Cough	N/A		Up to 5 days after starting treatment