



Stepping Stones Nursery

Children who are ill or infectious policy



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At **Stepping Stones Day Nursery** we promote the good health of all children attending (including oral health) through maintaining high hygiene standards to help reduce the chances of infection being spread. We follow the health protection in schools and other childcare facilities guidance¹ which sets out when and how long children need to be excluded from settings, when treatment/ and or medication is required and where to get further advice from.

Viruses and infections can be easily passed from person to person by breathing in air containing the virus, which is produced when an infected person talks, coughs or sneezes. It can also spread through hand and face contact after touching a person or surface contaminated with viruses.

- Asking parents* to keep children at home if they are unwell. If a child is unwell, it is in their best interest to be in a home environment rather than at nursery with their peers.
- Asking staff and other visitors not to attend the setting if they are unwell or have an illness which is contagious.
- Helping children to keep healthy by providing balanced and nutritious snacks, meals and drinks
- Minimising infection through our rigorous cleaning and hand washing processes ensuring children have regular access to the outdoors and having good ventilation inside
- Sharing information with parents about the importance of the vaccination programme for young children to help protect them and the wider society from communicable diseases
- Having areas for rest and sleep, where required and sharing information about the importance of sleep and how many hours young children should be having.

Our procedures

In order to take appropriate action of children who become ill and to minimise the spread of infection we implement the following procedures:

- If a child becomes ill during the nursery day, we contact their parent(s) and ask them to pick up their child as soon as possible. During this time we care for the child in a quiet, calm area with their key person. This includes children with a temperature of 38 degrees or above.
- We follow the guidance published by UK Health Security Agency for managing specific infectious diseases² and advice from our local health protection unit on exclusion times for specific illnesses, e.g. sickness and diarrhoea, measles and chicken pox, to protect other children in the nursery
- Should a child have an infectious disease, such as sickness and diarrhoea, they must not return to nursery until they have been clear for at least 48 hours

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/managing-specific-infectious-diseases-a-to-z>

- We inform all parents if there is a contagious infection identified in the nursery, to enable them to spot the early signs of this illness. We thoroughly clean and sterilise all equipment and resources that may have come into contact with a contagious child to reduce the spread of infection
- We notify Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practical, but in any event within 14 days of the incident of any food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises.
- We ask parents to keep children on antibiotics at home for the first 24 hours of the course (unless this is part of an ongoing care plan to treat individual medical conditions e.g. asthma and the child is not unwell) This is because it is important that children are not subjected to the rigours of the nursery day, which requires socialising with other children and being part of a group setting, when they have first become ill and require a course of antibiotics. This is also in case the child has a reaction to the antibiotics.
- We have the right to refuse admission to a child who is unwell. This decision will be taken by the manager on duty and is non-negotiable
- We have information about head lice readily available and all parents are requested to regularly check their children's hair. If a parent finds that their child has head lice, we would be grateful if they could inform the nursery so that other parents can be alerted to check their child's hair.

We follow the guidance below to prevent a virus or infection from spreading around the nursery.

Our staff:

- Encourage all children to use tissues when coughing and sneezing to catch germs
- Ensure all tissues are disposed of in a hygienic way and all children and staff wash their hands once the tissue is disposed of
- Develop children's understanding of the above and the need for good hygiene procedures in helping them to stay healthy
- Wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when changing nappies, toileting children and dealing with any other bodily fluids. Staff are requested to dispose of these in the appropriate manner and wash hands immediately
- Clean and sterilise all potties and changing mats after each use
- Clean toilets at least daily and check them throughout the day
- Remind children to wash their hands before eating, after visiting the toilet, playing outside or being in contact with any animal and explain the reasons for this
- Clean all toys, equipment and resources on a regular basis by following a comprehensive cleaning rota and using antibacterial cleanser, or through washing in the washing machine
- Wash or clean all equipment used by babies and toddlers as and when needed, including when the children have placed it in their mouth
- Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child's name to prevent cross-contamination with other children
- Immediately clean and sterilise (where necessary) any dummy or bottle that falls on the floor or is picked up by another child

- Provide labelled individual bedding for children that is not used by any other child. These will be washed weekly.

In addition:

- The nursery manager retains the right of refusal of all children, parents, carers, staff and visitors who are deemed contagious and may impact on the welfare of the rest of the nursery
- Parents will be made aware of the need for these procedures in order for them to follow these guidelines whilst in the nursery
- Periodically each room in the nursery will be deep cleaned including carpets and soft furnishings to ensure the spread of infection is limited. This will be implemented earlier if the need arises
- In the event of an infection outbreak the nursery will, where appropriate, undertake a deep clean to ensure the spread of infection is contained
- We will follow Government health guidance, as well as seeking legal advice and information from our insurers, on any national outbreak of a virus and or pandemic and keep parents informed of any course of action. Each specific circumstance will differ and to ensure we take the most appropriate action; we will treat each case on an individual basis
- In addition, where contagious outbreaks occur, we will adopt Government guidance for all visitors to minimise the risk of further spreading of the infection
- The nursery will ensure stocks of tissues, hand washing equipment, cleaning materials and sterilising fluid are maintained at all times. These will be increased during the winter months, or when flu and cold germs are circulating.

Meningitis procedure

If a parent informs the nursery that their child has meningitis, the nursery manager will contact the Local Area Infection Control (IC) Nurse. The IC Nurse will give guidance and support in each individual case. If parents do not inform the nursery, we may be contacted directly by the IC Nurse and the appropriate support given. We will follow all guidance given and notify any of the appropriate authorities including Ofsted where necessary.

We will follow the transporting children to hospital procedure in any cases where children may need hospital treatment.

The nursery manager or a selected member of staff must:

- Inform a member of the management team immediately
 - Call 999 for an ambulance immediately if the illness is severe. DO NOT attempt to transport the unwell child in your own vehicle
 - Follow the instructions from the 999 call handler
 - Whilst waiting for the ambulance, a member of staff must contact the parent(s) and arrange to meet them at the hospital
 - Redeploy staff if necessary to ensure there is adequate staff deployment to care for the remaining children. This may mean temporarily grouping the children together
 - Arrange for the most appropriate member of staff to accompany the child taking with them any relevant information such as registration forms, relevant medication sheets, medication and the child's comforter

Remain calm at all times. Children who witness an incident may well be affected by it and may need lots of cuddles and reassurance. Staff may also require additional support following the accident

If a child's temperature is high and exceeds 38.0 degrees whilst at nursery the parent/carer will be contacted to come to collect the child. Staff cannot give Calpol for a high temperature unless it is an emergency (e.g parent is over an hour away from nursery. In these circumstances verbal consent will be given)

At Stepping Stones Day Nursery we follow these exclusions for common childhood illnesses:

- **Diarrhoea and vomiting: 48 hours from the last episode**
- **Conjunctivitis: 48 hours from start of treatment**
- **Chicken Pox: 5 days from the onset of rash, providing the spots are dry and healed over**
- **Hand, foot and mouth: 48 hours from onset of rash, providing children are well and the child's mouth is not causing them discomfort**
- **Impetigo: 48 hours after treatment has commenced or if no treatment all spots must be crusted over and dry.**
- **Headlice: parents to be made aware and child must have treatment before returning**
- **Threadworm: parents to be made aware and child must have treatment before returning**

Parents are asked to keep children off from nursery for 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually in consultation with staff and parents and/or after a significant incident, e.g. serious illness/hospital visit required.

* For the purpose of this publication the term 'parents' will be used to describe all types of primary caregivers, such as biological and adoptive parents, foster carers and guardians.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>April 2026</i>	<i>Emma Keller</i>	<i>April 2027</i>