

Children's Sickness and Medication Policy

Statement of intent

It is our intention that all children at the nursery should be protected from serious infection.

Aims

We do not aim to exclude children from nursery unnecessarily.

We aim to inform our parents of our responsibilities and their own responsibilities if their child is, or becomes, unwell.

Methods

- ★ Parents are made aware of our sickness policy and procedures. This includes procedures for contacting parents, or other authorised adults, if a child becomes ill at nursery.
- ★ For the protection of everyone at nursery, we cannot admit sick or infectious children to the nursery. Information in the form of a list of childhood illnesses is included with this policy. Please be aware that this list is not exhaustive, and not all symptoms will be the same for every child. Parents and staff must communicate closely when a child is sick. The Nursery Manager* will liaise with parents when this is not a straightforward case. Ultimately the Nursery Manager* has a duty of care to all who attend nursery. Therefore, the Nursery Manager* will make the final decision about whether a child is well enough to attend. (* or the person in charge on the day.)
- ★ If a child becomes ill at nursery, staff will inform parents or an emergency contact. While awaiting the arrival of the parents, the staff will ensure the comfort of the child, taking appropriate action, which would include seeking medical advice immediately if required.
- ★ The Health Department advises that children should remain at home for 48 hours if they have suffered from diarrhoea or sickness. However, **Once upon a time** requires children to stay at home for **72 hours**.
- ★ Children with infectious or contagious diseases will be excluded for certain periods. If staff suspect that a child has an infectious or contagious disease, they will request that the parents consult a doctor before returning the child to nursery.
- ★ Public Health England/ Ofsted are notified of any infectious diseases which a qualified medical person considers notifiable.
- ★ When your child joins the nursery, we ask you to complete details about vaccinations and medical needs on his/her emergency contact form. Once your child has had a vaccination or if your child's medical needs change, please let us know so that we can keep our records up to date.
- ★ If your child is suffering from any of the listed infectious illnesses, please let a member of staff know by telephone so that we can monitor the situation and inform other parents if necessary.

The following information has been produced as a guide for you, but if you are concerned about your child and are unable to get an appointment with your GP, please consult a pharmacist or NHS direct.

Below is a list of the most common communicable diseases that young children experience. The list has been produced in consultation with the Health Commission and Norfolk County Council Social Services for communicable diseases.

1. Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting

Signs and symptoms

As diarrhoea and vomiting is infectious please **do not** bring your child back to nursery until he/she has been clear of these symptoms for **72 hours**.

2. Measles

Signs and symptoms

Early symptoms of measles may include a running nose, watery eyes, high temperature and a cough. Red spots with a white centre may also be seen on the inside of the mouth, behind the ears and on the face and limbs.

General medical advice

As measles is infectious until four days after the appearance of the rash, please exclude your child from nursery until the rash has disappeared.

3. Chicken Pox

Signs and symptoms

Children who suffer with Chicken Pox can display a wide range of symptoms, but usually they will appear fretful, suffer a loss of appetite and have a high temperature. A rash will appear on the trunk, face or limbs, and then small blisters will form which may cause an irritation.

General medical advice

To reduce the risk to others your child must be excluded from nursery for up to five days after the appearance of the spots, or until the spots are dry. You may find Calamine lotion soothes the irritation. Do not give your child Ibuprofen if they have Chicken Pox unless this is advised by a doctor.

4. Mumps

Signs and symptoms

Early symptoms of mumps can include swollen glands on one or both sides of the face, sore throat and loss of appetite. Your child may also experience difficulty swallowing.

General medical advice

Mumps can be infectious for up to one week after the facial swelling appears. Please exclude your child from nursery until there is no swelling.

5. Rubella 'German Measles'

Signs and symptoms

German Measles in appearance has a reddish rash that spreads initially across the trunk area.

General medical advice

German Measles can be infectious for up to 23 days. It is infectious for one week prior to a rash appearing, and up to four days after the onset of the rash. Please exclude your child from nursery for 7 days after the appearance of the rash.

6. Conjunctivitis

Signs and symptoms.

There are three kinds of conjunctivitis - allergic, bacterial and viral. Public Health England guidance suggests that children do not need to be excluded from Nursery unless there is an outbreak. However, at Once upon a time nursery school the following rule applies:

Children must be excluded for **24 hours** with confirmed cases from the onset of treatment, or until their eyes are not running/oozing with a **thick** discharge.

General medical advice

Whilst your child's eyes are red/sore, discharging, and causing irritation, conjunctivitis can be uncomfortable and extremely infectious.

If you are concerned about your child's eyes, please take him/her to be seen by a Medical Practitioner, this can be a Pharmacist, Practice Nurse or Doctor, as this infection in some cases needs to have prescribed treatment. It is also advised that you disinfect all toys, towels and face cloths that your child has come into contact with.

7. Head lice

Signs and symptoms

Head lice are still common amongst school children and can very often be passed through to nurseries. They have a lice appearance and form eggs on hair follicles. They spread very easily and are passed from one head to another during head-to-head contact. Symptoms may include your child scratching their head and eggs appearing, particularly behind the ears.

General medical advice

If you are concerned that your child has head lice, treatment is available from your chemist or pharmacist. It would be appreciated if you could let a member of staff know if you are treating your child. It is also wise to treat the whole household. It may be advisable for you to routinely check your family's hair. No exclusion from nursery is necessary once treatment has started.

8. Threadworms

Signs and symptoms

If you notice your child is scratching his/her bottom. Especially at night it may be due to Threadworms. They are tiny, white thread-like worms that may be visible in faeces.

General medical advice

They are easy to treat, and medicine can be bought without prescription from a pharmacist, it is wise to treat the whole family. No exclusion is necessary once treatment has started.

9. 'Fifth Disease' Parvovirus B19

Signs and symptoms

Fifth Disease is usually a mild illness caused by a human virus B19. The rash has a 'slapped face' appearance and particularly affects children.

General medical advice

Please exclude your child from nursery until well, as there is no immunisation or medicine which will prevent or cure the disease. The disease is usually spread by direct contact through secretions from the nose, throat or chest of an infected person. It can take between 4-20 days after contracting the virus for the rash to appear.

10. Hand, Foot and Mouth

Signs and symptoms

Hand, foot and mouth is usually a mild illness which can cause blisters on the palms, soles of the feet and in the mouth.

General medical advice

We ask that your child does not attend nursery with symptoms of hand, foot and mouth, until they are clinically well. This means they cannot attend with a cough, runny nose, filled or weeping blisters, especially if your child is still at the age of putting things in their mouth. We understand that NHS guidance states they *may* attend if well in themselves, but this is enabling the infection to spread around the nursery to other children who may become poorly. We do not want to unnecessarily exclude children from nursery, but we also need to think of stopping the virus spreading further. Although children may seem fine in themselves with the virus, a long nursery day may negatively impact how they are

feeling. Hand, Foot and Mouth can sometimes cause a sore rashy bottom. If this is the only symptom your child has, they will be able to return, once well enough, as it can take a while for this to clear once aggravated.

11. Impetigo

Signs and symptoms

Impetigo is an infection of the skin caused by bacteria. It most commonly occurs on the skin around the nose and mouth but can also affect the skin in other parts of the body. It makes the skin go red and weepy, and sometimes small blisters can be seen.

General medical advice

An infected person scratching the rash, and passing it on their fingers, to another person usually spreads it. Good personal hygiene is very important, particularly through hand washing after touching the rash. The infected person should have separate towels and flannels until the rash has cleared. It can take 4-10 days for the rash to appear after the skin is infected. An infected child should not attend nursery until medical advice has been sought. Children should be excluded for 48 hours after treatment has started.

12. Scabies

Signs and symptoms

Scabies is more of a nuisance than a serious medical problem. However, it does require medical treatment. Scabies is not a sign of being dirty or unhygienic, it is caused by a tiny mite (half the size of a pin head) which burrows into the surface of the skin causing visible raised lines or small red spots or blisters. These occur particularly in the wrists, back of hands and between the fingers.

General medical advice

It may take between 2-6 weeks from the first infestation for the itching to start. All close physical contacts of a case, and the whole household should be treated on the same day. Children who are infested with scabies should not attend nursery until at least 24 hours after the treatment has begun.

13. Meningococcal Meningitis Septicaemia

Signs and symptoms

Meningitis and Septicaemia are the inflammation of the lining covering the brain and spinal cord. It can display a wide range of different symptoms, these include a rash, fever/vomiting, cold hands and feet, rapid breathing, stomach/joint/muscle pain, drowsiness/impaired consciousness, severe headache, stiff neck and a dislike to bright lights.

Not all of the symptoms must be present at the same time.

General medical advice

In most cases, someone with Meningitis or Septicaemia will become seriously ill rapidly.

Trust your instincts – seek medical help immediately if you are concerned.

You may also wish to try the 'Tumbler test' by pressing a glass firmly against your child's skin. If it is a Septicaemia rash, the rash will not fade, and you will be able to see the rash through the glass. If this happens you should get medical help immediately. When a case of Meningococcal Meningitis or Septicaemia is diagnosed the Public Health doctor will make sure that all those who need antibiotics are contacted.

14. Cold sores

Cold sores start as small blisters that form around the lips and mouth. They sometimes appear on the chin, cheeks and nose too. After a few days the blisters begin to ooze, then form a crust and heal completely in one to two weeks. If your child suffers from cold

sores, then you should liaise with the Nursery Manager/Deputy Nursery Manager. Exclusion will be decided on a case-by-case scenario.

Please note: The cold sore virus can be very serious for babies six months old and under. Babies of this age should never be kissed by someone with an open cold sore.

All the above information is included in the 'Communicable Diseases – Guidance for Pre-schools and Nurseries' which is provided by Norfolk County Council Social Services Department. Information and advice have also been provided by the consultant in control of communicable diseases who is based at the Norfolk and Norwich Health Care Trust.

COVID-19

- ★ We continue to have a risk assessment in place for COVID-19.
- ★ We will continue to monitor all advice given by the government.
- ★ We will continue to have as much ventilation in the nursery rooms as possible.

If your child has a high temperature, they should remain at home for 24 hours and return to nursery only when they are well enough to do so.

If they test positive for COVID-19 they should remain at home for three days from their test result.

Medicines

If your child has been **prescribed** medicine, please bring it to nursery with clear instructions of when you would like it to be given to your child whilst they are at nursery. This must be brought in the bottle it was dispensed in.

For the best interests of your child and to allow the medication to begin working, your child must have been receiving the medication for 24 hours before they are able to return to nursery.

Unfortunately, we cannot administer medicine unless a Doctor has prescribed it. (Please see separate procedure for Calpol below)

Calpol (or any brand of Infant Oral Suspension)

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic it has been our policy to not administer Calpol routinely for children with a temperature. The reason for this is that one of the main symptoms for COVID-19 is a high temperature and by administering Calpol we could be masking this virus. Although we understand that children's temperatures can be high for a number of other reasons, without testing no one knows exactly what could be causing a temperature.

It is our duty of care to safeguard all children who attend our settings and also our staff team. So, from Monday, 28 February 2022, our policy re Calpol will be as follows:

Methods

- ★ When your child starts at nursery you will be asked to sign a form which gives permission for Calpol to be administered to your child in an emergency. This is so that we can, if necessary, reduce a high temperature and prevent a febrile convulsion. Staff will always try and reduce a child's high temperature by removing clothing to allow the child's core body temperature to cool naturally first.
- ★ If your child's temperature reaches 38°C while at nursery you will be contacted to discuss your child's wellbeing.
- ★ If your child's temperature exceeds 38°C you will be contacted and expected to collect your child straightaway.
- ★ With written consent, and while we wait for parents to arrive, we will administer Calpol to your child if their temperature exceeds 38°C. (According to the NHS website 38°C, in most cases, is a fever.)

- ★ Even though a signed permission form is obtained at registration, we would always try and contact parents to discuss the administration of Calpol. We will consider all aspects of the child's well-being at that time and discuss this with parents. If parents were not contactable, as long as the child has been at nursery for longer than four hours, Calpol will be administered. However, a message would be left for parents to contact us as soon as possible. If the need arises to administer Calpol before the child has been at nursery for four hours and parents are not contactable, then the person in charge will call 111 for advice.
- ★ You must call the Nursery Manager if you have had to administer Calpol or any other infant oral suspension up to 4 hours before your child attends their nursery session.
- ★ We will only administer Calpol for pain relief if this has been recommended by a doctor. We will require a written Doctor's letter to do this.

Administering Calpol should not be a go-to procedure to enable your child to attend nursery. If a child needs any form of infant oral suspension, then they should be kept at home while their little bodies are fighting the cause of the temperature.

Coughs, colds and flu

Naturally, in this kind of environment, we are open to all kinds of disease and as most germs are air-borne, we do appreciate that children will pick-up illnesses. If your child is unwell and would not cope with a nursery day, you must keep them at home so to reduce the risk of spreading the infection to the other children.

Summary

If you would like to discuss any of the illnesses mentioned in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact your GP or a member of the nursery team.

Your child's health is primarily your responsibility. If they are ill and need one-to-one comfort, they must stay at home as we are unable to offer an unwell child that kind of care on an extended basis. We value the opportunity to work with you for the best interests of your child, and we are happy to discuss any concerns you may have. If you are ever unsure of anything you are welcome to contact us.

This policy was adopted by Once upon a time nursery school

Date: 24 September 2007

Amended on: 1 September 2025

Signed on behalf of the nursery

To be reviewed: Annually or sooner if any matters arise