

# Infection Control Policy

**Clarity Independent School**

**Bridge Barn Farm  
Woodhill Road  
Sandon  
CM2 7SG**

**Clarity Independent School is committed to safeguarding...**

*"Our school is committed to our whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do, and underpins all systems, processes and policies...We promote an environment where children and young people feel empowered to raise concerns and report incidents and we work hard in partnership with pupils, parents and care-givers to keep children safe."*

Clarity Safeguarding Policy September 2023

**Written by Debbie Hanson**

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**Updated Name: Debbie Hanson**

## Introduction

This policy incorporates Public Health England guidance Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities and Department for Education guidance. It provides information for staff managing a range of common and important childhood infections in settings, including schools. (Please see Critical Incident Plan for more details relating to the principles of infection prevention and control re coronavirus COVID-19.)

Schools are common sites for transmission of infections. Children are particularly susceptible because:

- they have immature immune systems
- have close contact with other children
- sometimes have no or incomplete vaccinations
- have a poor understanding of hygiene practices

Many diseases can spread before the individual shows any symptoms at all (during the infectious period).

Infection prevention and control measures aim to interrupt the cycle of infection by promoting the routine use of good standards of hygiene so that transmission of infection is reduced overall. This is usually through:

- immunisation of pupils and staff
- good hand washing
- making sure the environment is kept clean
- teaching children about hygiene

Where a case of infection is known, measures aim to reduce or eliminate the risk of spread through information and prompt exclusion of a case.

## How infection spreads

Infections are spread in many different ways:

### Respiratory spread:

Contact with cough or other secretions from an infected person, like influenza. This can



happen by being near the infected person when they cough and then breathe in the organism; or by picking up the organism from an infected item, for example, a used tissue or on an object in the environment, and then touching your nose or mouth.

**Direct contact spread:**

By direct contact with the infecting organism, for example, contact with urine, or contact with the skin during contact sports such as rugby and in gyms, like impetigo or staphylococcal infections.

**Gastrointestinal spread:**

Resulting from contact with contaminated food or water (hepatitis A), contact with infected faeces, vomit or unwashed hands after using the toilet (typhoid fever).

**Blood borne virus spread:**

By contact with infected blood or body fluids, for example, while attending to a bleeding person or injury with a used needle (hepatitis B). Human mouths are inhabited by a wide variety of organisms, some of which can be transmitted by bites. Human bites resulting in puncture or breaking of the skin are potential sources of exposure to blood borne infections; therefore, it is essential that they are managed promptly.

**Respiratory Droplets: direct and indirect transmission**

Transmission of coronavirus mainly occurs via respiratory droplets generated during breathing, talking, coughing and sneezing. These droplets can directly infect the respiratory tracts of other people if there is close contact. They also infect others indirectly. This happens when the droplets get onto and contaminate surfaces which are then touched and introduced into the mouth or eyes of an uninfected person. Another route of transmission is via aerosols (extremely small droplets), but this is only relevant to certain aerosol-producing medical procedures for a very small number of children in education and social care settings.

In all education, childcare and children's social care settings, preventing the spread of coronavirus involves preventing:

- direct transmission, for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing
- indirect transmission, for instance, touching contaminated surfaces

## Prevention and control

### Hand washing:

Handwashing is one of the ***most important ways of controlling the spread of infections***, especially those that cause diarrhoea and vomiting and respiratory disease. Liquid soap, warm water and disposable paper towels are recommended.

- All staff and pupils are advised to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating or handling food, at every change of activity / lesson and after touching animals.
- Cover all cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing.
- Coughs and sneezes spread diseases. Children and adults are encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or sneeze into their elbow if they do not have a tissue, and wash hands after using or disposing of tissues. Spitting should be discouraged.
- Wear disposable gloves, safety goggles and plastic aprons if there is a risk of splashing or contamination with blood or body fluids during an activity. Gloves should be disposable, non-powdered vinyl or latex-free and CE marked. Wear goggles if there is a risk of splashing to the face.

### Bites

- If a bite does not break the skin: clean with soap and water and no further action is needed. Record in the accident book.
- If a bite breaks the skin: clean immediately with soap and running water. Record incident in accident book. Seek medical advice as soon as possible (on the same day) to treat potential infection, to protect against hepatitis B, for reassurance about HIV.

### Managing needle stick injuries

Occasionally children or staff may injure themselves with discarded used hypodermic needles which they have found. Dispose of the needle safely to avoid the same thing happening to someone else. This can be done by contacting your local authority or school nurse. If someone pricks or scratches themselves with a used hypodermic needle:

- wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water
- cover it with a waterproof dressing

- record it in the accident book and complete the accident form
- seek immediate medical attention from your local Accident and Emergency department

### **Cleaning blood and body fluid spills**

All spillages of blood, faeces, saliva, vomit, nasal and eye discharges should be cleaned up immediately, wearing PPE, using the correct product, which can be found in the locked metal medical cabinet in the medical room.

Clean spillages using a product which combines detergent and disinfectant (and ensure it is effective against both bacteria and viruses). This body fluids cleaning kit is stored in the metal cabinet in the medical room and comes with instructions which all staff have read and signed to confirm. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Use disposable paper towels or cloths to clean up blood and body fluid spills and dispose of after use, followed by the spillage kit.

### **Sanitary facilities**

Good hygiene practices depend on adequate facilities. A hand wash basin with warm running water along with a mild liquid soap, preferably wall mounted with disposable cartridges, should be available. Bar soap should **not** be used as it can store harmful bacteria and spread them to other users.

Disposable paper towels are placed next to basins in wall mounted, non-touch dispensers, together with nearby waste-paper bins.

Toilet paper (plus spares) are available in each cubicle.

Suitable sanitary disposal facilities are provided in each bathroom where there are female staff and pupils aged 9 or over (junior and senior age groups).

### **Children with continence aids**

Pupils who use continence aids (like continence pads, catheters) are encouraged to be as independent as possible. The principles of basic hygiene are applied by both pupils and staff involved in the management of these aids. Continence pads are changed in a designated area. Disposable powder-free non-sterile latex gloves and a disposable plastic apron are worn. Gloves and aprons are changed after every pupil. Hand washing facilities are readily available. Further advice can be obtained from the child's NHS advisor.



## **Dealing with contaminated clothing**

Clothing of either the child or the first-aider may become contaminated with blood or body fluids. Clothing should be removed as soon as possible and placed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child with advice for the parent on how to launder the contaminated clothing. The clothing should be washed separately in a washing machine, using a pre-wash cycle, on the hottest temperature that the clothes will tolerate.

## **What to do if you suspect an outbreak of infection**

An outbreak or incident may be defined as any of the following:

- an incident in which 2 or more people experiencing a similar illness are linked in time or place
- a greater than expected rate of infection compared with the usual background rate for the place and time where the outbreak has occurred

## **When to report**

Headteachers and managers will contact the local health protection team as soon as they suspect an outbreak to discuss the situation and agree if any actions are needed. Please see NHS website for more specific information on how to manage specific illness and when to report.

It is useful to have the information listed below available before this discussion as it will help to inform the size and nature of the outbreak:

- total numbers affected (staff and children)
- symptoms
- date(s) when symptoms started
- number of classes affected

For suspected cases of infectious illness where there is uncertainty it's an outbreak, the local HPT will be informed.

A range of approaches and actions should be employed. These can be seen as a hierarchy of controls that, when implemented, creates an inherently safer system where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. These include:

- Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell



- Clean your hands often
- Robust hand and respiratory hygiene (catch it, bin it, kill it)
- Enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often
- Minimise contact and mixing
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Social distancing measures are implemented

### **How to report**

The school telephones our local HPT (number below) as soon as possible to report any serious or unusual illness particularly for:

- Escherichia coli (VTEC) (also called E.coli 0157) or E coli VTEC infection
- food poisoning
- hepatitis
- measles, mumps, rubella (rubella is also called German measles)
- meningitis
- tuberculosis
- typhoid
- whooping cough (also called pertussis)
- COVID-19

The full list of notifiable diseases was updated 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/notifiable-diseases-and-causative-organisms-how-to-report>

The local HPT can also draft letters and provide factsheets for parents and carers to ensure the most up to date information is given.

### **Public Health Agency summary poster (updated March 2017)**

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance\\_on\\_infection\\_control\\_in%20schools\\_poster.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf)

### **UK Health Security Agency information (Updated 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023):**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities)

**UKHSA East of England Health Protection Team (formally known as Health Protection Team HPT)**  
Suite 1 First Floor Nexus,  
Harlow Innovation Park,



London Road,  
Harlow,  
CM17 9LX

[EastofEnglandHPT@phe.gov.uk](mailto:EastofEnglandHPT@phe.gov.uk)

Phone: 0300 303 8537 option 1

Out of hours for health professionals only: phone 01603 481 221

## **Immunisation**

Immunisations are checked at school entry and at the time of any vaccination. Parents are encouraged to have their child immunised. COVID-19 vaccinations are now well underway in the UK and the school supports and encourages everyone to participate in this National effort to rid the UK of this illness.

The NHS school nurse provides advice to the school and comes into school at regular intervals to provide immunisations for the children with parental consent.

## **Cleaning the environment**

Cleaning of the environment, including shared resources and equipment, is an important function for the control of infection in school settings. It is important that cleaning schedules clearly describe the activities needed, the frequency and who will carry them out. Cleaning standards are monitored regularly by the school caretaker. Cleaning staff are appropriately trained and have access to personal protective equipment.

## **Cleaning contract**

Essential elements of a comprehensive cleaning contract include daily, weekly and periodic cleaning schedules, based on national guidance. A proper colour coding system is recommended by the Health and Safety Executive. Choosing to employ a colour system in your workplace can make cleaning easy, efficient and in turn, increase general hygiene and cleanliness.

Colour-coded equipment is used in different areas with separate equipment for kitchen, toilet, classroom and office areas:

- **Disposable disinfectant wipes for toilets and wash-rooms (no reusable cloths used)**
- **Yellow sponges and cloths for hand wash basins and sinks**
- **Blue for general areas e.g. desks and tables, chairs, resources**
- **Green for kitchens - disposable cloths changed every day**

Cloths are disposable (or if reusable, disinfected after use).



Cleaning solutions are stored in accordance with Control of Substances of Hazardous to Health (COSHH), and cleaning equipment changed and decontaminated regularly.

Consideration is given to situations where additional cleaning will be required including during term time (for example in the event of an outbreak) and how the school might carry this out.

A nominated member of staff is chosen to monitor cleaning standards and discuss any issues with cleaning staff. This is the Site Manager:

**Steve Hanson**

## **Staff welfare and immunisation**

All staff undergo a full health self-disclosure questionnaire before starting employment; this includes ensuring they are up to date with immunisations, including Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) and COVID-19 including boosters. Staff with health conditions impacting every-day life have an Individual Risk Assessment and Individual Health Care Plan.

## **Exclusion**

Staff employed in schools, nurseries and other childcare settings should have the same rules regarding exclusion applied to them as are applied to the children. They may return to work when they are no longer infectious, provided they feel well enough to do so.

## **Pregnant staff**

If a pregnant woman develops a rash or is in direct contact with someone with a rash who is potentially infectious, she should consult her doctor or midwife.

Chickenpox can affect the pregnancy if a woman has not already had the infection. The GP and midwife should be informed promptly. Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox therefore anyone who has not had chickenpox is potentially vulnerable to the infection if they have close contact with a case of shingles.

Measles during pregnancy can result in early delivery or even loss of the baby. If a pregnant woman is exposed, the midwife should be informed immediately. All female staff under the age of 25 years, working with young children, should have evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine or a positive history of measles.

If a pregnant woman comes into contact with German measles she should inform her GP and midwife immediately. The infection may affect the developing baby if the woman is not immune and is exposed in early pregnancy.

All female staff under the age of 25 years, working with young children, should have evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine or a positive history of Rubella.

Slapped cheek disease (Parvovirus B19) can occasionally affect an unborn child if exposed early in pregnancy. The pregnant woman should inform their midwife promptly.

### **Food handling staff**

All teaching staff and staff who handle food are trained annually to Level 2 food hygiene using the Educare online courses. No member of staff is permitted to enter the kitchen unless they have completed the Food Hygiene qualification and passed it at 70%. Their names are certified on the kitchen door.

Food handlers and catering staff may present a particular risk to the health of their pupils and staff if they become infected or have close contact with diseases that can be transmitted to others via the medium of food or drink.

These diseases commonly affect the gastrointestinal system (stomach and bowel) and usually cause diarrhoea or vomiting, or both.

Food handling staff suffering from such diseases must be excluded from all food handling activity in the school or nursery setting until advised by the local Environmental Health Officer that they are clear to return to work. There are legal powers for the formal exclusion of such cases but usually voluntary exclusion will suffice with 'off work' certificates from the GP, as necessary.

Staff and attenders should **not** be present at the school if they are currently suffering from diarrhoea or vomiting, or both. At the very least, persons suffering from gastro-intestinal diseases should not return to work until 48 hours post recovery (no further diarrhoea or vomiting).

Employers are to notify their local Environmental Health Department immediately that they are informed of a member of staff engaged in the handling of food has become aware that he or she is suffering from, or is the carrier of, any infection likely to cause food poisoning.

This policy should be made clear to the person in charge of the kitchen and all catering staff at the time of appointment. Food handlers are required by law to inform their employer immediately if they are suffering from:

- typhoid fever
- paratyphoid fever
- other salmonella infections
- dysentery

- shigellosis
- diarrhoea (cause of which has not been established)
- infective jaundice
- staphylococcal infections likely to cause food poisoning like impetigo, septic skin lesions, exposed infected wounds, boils
- E. coli VTEC infection

### **COVID-19 advice**

Clinically extremely vulnerable people were advised to take extra precautions during the peak of the pandemic in England. This is known as 'shielding'. However, all children are now permitted to return to education and follow reduction of transmission measures.

There is specific guidance on what will happen if there is a local lockdown in our area. The Head Teacher stays abreast of current changes on all COVID-19 guidance daily and will implement the procedure where necessary.

### **Managing specific diseases and infections (updated 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023)**

Please refer to Public Health England advice on specific diseases and infections - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/managing-specific-infectious-diseases-a-to-z>

### **COVID-19**

The school will follow advice from the Department for Education and Public Health England (currently there are no restrictions in the UK):

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

Our COVID-19 risk assessment to assess the risk of COVID-19 and the control measures is now expired and replaced with a COVID-19 statement (website). COVID-19 is now covered by our Critical Incident Policy (website). Staff are re-trained at each update. This risk assessment will be reviewed on a regular basis and in light with any change in guidance.

In the event a member of staff or pupil has COVID-19, they may stay at home until they feel better as per the usual school sickness policy.

## **Pets and animal contact**

Please refer to Public Health England on pet and animal contact -

[https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/30047/7/Chapter%20 %20pets%20and%20animal%20contact%20-%20GOV.UK.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/30047/7/Chapter%20%20pets%20and%20animal%20contact%20-%20GOV.UK.pdf)

Overall responsibility for Infection Control in **Clarity Independent School** rests with the Head Teacher:

Debbie Hanson, Head Teacher

## Appendix 1

### Diarrhoea and vomiting outbreak – school action checklist

Date Completed:			
Checklist Completed By (Print Name):			
Name & Tel No of Institution:			
Name of Head Teacher/Manager:			
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
Deploy 48 hour exclusion rule for ill children and staff			
Liquid soap and paper hand towels available			
Staff to check/encourage/supervise hand washing in children			
Check that deep cleaning, ie twice daily (min) cleaning and follow through with bleach/Milton/ appropriate disinfectant is being carried out, (especially toilets, frequently touched surfaces eg handles and taps and including any special equipment and play areas). Ensure that all staff/contractors involved in cleaning are aware of, and are following, the guidance			
Disposable protective clothing available (ie non-powdered latex/synthetic vinyl gloves & aprons)			
Appropriate waste disposal systems in place for infectious waste			
Advice given on cleaning of vomit (including steam cleaning carpets/furniture or machine hot washing of soft furnishings)			
Clean and disinfect hard toys daily (with detergent and water followed by bleach/Milton). Limit and stock rotate toys			
Suspend use of soft toys plus water/sand play and cookery activities during outbreak			
Segregate infected linen (and use dissolvable laundry bags where possible)			
Visitors restricted. Essential visitors informed of outbreak and advised on hand washing			
New children joining institution suspended			
Keep staff working in dedicated areas (restrict food handling if possible). Inform HPT of any affected food handlers.			
Check if staff work elsewhere (restrict) and that all staff are well (including agency). Exclude if unwell (see above re 48 hour rule)			
HPT informed of any planned events at the institution			
Inform School Nurse and discuss about informing OFSTED, if applicable.			

## Appendix 2: List of notifiable diseases

Diseases notifiable (to Local Authority Proper Officers) under the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010:

- acute encephalitis
- acute meningitis
- acute poliomyelitis
- acute infectious hepatitis
- anthrax
- botulism
- brucellosis
- cholera
- diphtheria
- enteric fever (typhoid or paratyphoid fever)
- food poisoning
- haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS)
- infectious bloody diarrhoea
- invasive group A streptococcal disease and scarlet fever
- legionnaires' disease
- leprosy
- malaria
- measles
- meningococcal septicaemia
- mumps
- plague
- rabies
- rubella
- SARS
- smallpox
- tetanus
- tuberculosis
- typhus
- viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF)
- whooping cough
- yellow fever

## Appendix 3: Useful links

Exclusion Table:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/children-and-young-people-settings-tools-and-resources>

Covid-19 Public Health England Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

Public Health England pet and animal contact:

[https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/30047/7/Chapter%208\\_%20pets%20and%20animal%20contact%20-%20GOV.UK.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/30047/7/Chapter%208_%20pets%20and%20animal%20contact%20-%20GOV.UK.pdf)

Public Health England advice on specific diseases and infections:

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

NHS Immunisation information: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/>

Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities information:

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

Children and Family Health Surrey school nursing

<https://childrenshealthsurrey.nhs.uk/services/school-nursing-general>

Public Health England School Zone- e-Bug stop germs spreading with fun e-Bug resources

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools>