

Infection Control Policy

All information in this policy has been informed by the Public Health Agency.

Principle

Rainbow Stop Playgroup recognises the importance of infection control within our setting.

Policy

“Children have the right to be as healthy as possible, live and play in a safe healthy unpopulated environment and benefit from preventive health care and education.”

Procedure

We are committed to creating an environment for children and adults that is free from infection. In order to achieve this the following procedures must be followed.

Handwashing

Handwashing is the most important public health measure. Effective handwashing is the mainstay of infection control for most germs amongst children and adults in a pre-school setting, regardless of the way germs are transmitted.

- Hands will be washed after using the toilets and before meals.
- Very young children will need assistance in handwashing.
- Older children will be supervised during handwashing.
- Liquid soap will be used.
- Pre-moistened wipes should be used as a substitute to soap and running water.
- Paper towels will be used to dry hands.
- Hands will be washed vigorously using a small amount of liquid soap.
- Hands will be rubbed together covering all surfaces until a good lather has appeared. Allow to lather for at least 10 seconds and rinse thoroughly.

Accidental Soiling

Staff are not permitted to carry out sluicing of clothes, i.e. rinsing soiled clothes due to toileting/vomiting accident under the tap.

- Soiled materials can be scraped off in the toilet.
- Staff will wear disposable gloves and aprons.
- The soiled clothing will be placed in a bag for parents to launder.
- Staff must wash their hands after handling soiled clothing, even if wearing gloves.

Nappy Changing (Special Circumstances only)

In such circumstances staff will follow this procedure:

- The nappy changing area needs to be separate from the play and kitchen areas.
- Staff should wear disposable gloves and aprons when changing children.
- The child should be placed on a changing mat and made comfortable.
- Wet/soiled nappy will be removed and the child will be cleaned from front to back.
- A clean nappy will be secured on the child.
- The used nappy and changing materials will be disposed of.
- Staff should thoroughly clean the changing area with antibacterial cleaner.
- Staff should dispose of apron and gloves.

Cleaning Toilet Areas

Staff are to ensure that the toilets are clean at the start and finish of the session. Additional cleaning should be carried out during the session as necessary.

- All toilets are to be cleaned down daily with hot soapy water. This applies to the toilet seat, handles, sink, taps and door handles. If the toilet seat is stained a cream cleanser and disposable cloths will be used.
- If an area becomes contaminated with infected materials, such as diarrhoea or vomit, this area will be washed immediately and spillages attended to as they occur.
- Toilet paper will be provided for the children at all times.
- Staff will report any shortage to the leader immediately.
- Children will be educated on how to wash their hands properly.

Cleaning Material

Cleaning materials will be colour code and staff will adhere to this.

- Cloths should be disposable or changed daily or as necessary.
- Mops will be washed thoroughly after use in a cleaning equipment sink with hot soapy water and left to dry.
- Mops used to clean bodily fluids should be:
 - Cleaned with hot soapy water.
 - Rinsed with disinfecting agent.
 - Wrung as dry as possible
 - Hung to dry completely.
- Buckets and basins will be washed out and dried after use.
- Separate cleaning materials will be used for the kitchen and toilet areas.
- Colour coding is in place.

Cleaning of Toys, Equipment and Furniture.

Staff will ensure all area cleaned on a regular basis.

- Mats will be hoovered daily and steam cleaned as required.
- Tables and chairs will be cleaned and washed with hot water and detergent as and when required throughout the day.
- Hard toys will be washed with hot water and detergent and air dried.
- Additional cleaning will be carried out when required.
- Soft toys will be washed in the washing machine at a hot cycle, 60 degrees.
- Water toys should be stored dry and the water tray should be emptied, rinsed and dried daily.
- Play dough toys should be changed when needed and children should be discourage from putting play dough in their mouths.
- In case of an outbreak of infection, all water play will cease and play dough will be disposed of.

Exclusion of Sick Children

Parents will be provided with the exclusion times for common infections.

- Children who have a vomiting bug are to exclude from the setting for 48 hours from the last bout of vomiting and/or diarrhoea.
- Children who are unwell with an infectious disease should not be at the setting. Once they are better they can return to the setting unless they pose a risk to others.
- If a child falls ill while at Playgroup, the sick child will be excluded from others to a designated area.

- A member of staff will stay with the child while arrangements are made for the parent/carer to collect them.

Staff

All staff are required to follow the procedures in order to minimise the spread of infection.

- All staff will cover all cuts, breaks in their skin, scratches or moist skin conditions with a waterproof dressing when they are in work.
- Dressings and plasters will be replaced as often as necessary and these will be blue if staff are involved in preparing food.
- All staff immunisations will be checked and staff will report symptoms of sickness to the leader.
- Staff will observe exclusion periods of infectious disease and advice will be sought if in doubt.
- Some infection if caught by a pregnant woman can pose a danger to her unborn child.
- Chicken pox, rubella, parvovirus – when an outbreak of any of these occur please inform parents immediately
- If a female member of staff comes into contact with the above they will contact their leader and GP immediately.

Animal Contact

During the year the children may have visits from animals or may go on trips to the zoo or farms.

- Children will be supervised at all times around animals.
- Visiting pets will only be in the playroom and the area will be disinfected on their departure.
- If visiting a farm the leader will carry out a risk assessment. The leader will check that the farm has washing facilities adequate and accessible for children. The leader will also check there is running water, liquid soap and disposable towels.
- Children will be told they must not eat or drink anything while touring the farm or put their finger in their mouths for risk of infection.
- Children will be warned not to put their faces against the animals or taste the animals feed.
- Staff will ensure children wash their hands after being in contact with animals and particularly before eating or drinking.
- Snack time will be taken away from the area where the animals are kept.
- Staff will ensure children wear suitable footwear.
- Children's allergies will be considered prior to visit.
- Staff will ensure all children will wash their hands thoroughly before departure and that footwear is as clean as possible.

Food Hygiene

Staff will ensure that good hygiene is followed and every precaution is made to minimise infection.

- Snack tables will be washed with detergent and hot water prior to and after snack times.
- Snacks will be served on individual plates.
- Children will be encouraged to use tongs to serve themselves fruit.
- Fridge temperatures will be recorded daily and will be kept between 1 degree – 5 degrees.
- Separate chopping boards will be used for preparing fruit and toast. All utensils will be washed thoroughly on a daily basis.
- Tea towels should be laundered on a daily basis.

Children's Personal Items

Children's toothbrushes should not be shared with others.

- Children should be encouraged to brush their teeth after snack/meals.
- Each child should have their own toothbrush which is easily recognised by each child. E.g. symbolised.
- Appropriate amounts of toothpaste should be allocated on a clean surface.
- Children are not permitted to eat or lick the toothpaste.
- After use, toothbrushes are to be thoroughly rinsed and left to air dry with the head sitting upright.
- Toothbrush holders should be cleaned regularly and toothbrushes should be replaced every 3-4 months.

COVID – 19

Children with Symptoms of Coronavirus

The person in charge must have procedures to follow when a child becomes sick in the setting to protect other children and staff from the Covid-19 illness. The following procedure will be implemented to help prevent the spread of Covid-19:

- Children should not attend if they have symptoms or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household.
- A plan will be put in place for sharing information and guidelines with parents and guardians that includes:
 - A system to check with parents and guardians daily on the status of their children when children are dropped off at the setting;
 - Ensuring that up-to-date email addresses and home, work, and mobile phone numbers from parents and guardians of children at the setting so the setting can reach them at all times and testing that methods of communication work;
 - Providing parents and guardians with information on COVID-19 symptoms, transmission, prevention, and when to seek medical attention;
 - Encouraging parents and guardians to share the information with their children as appropriate;
 - Communicating with parents and guardians that children should stay at home if they are sick, have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19, or if someone in the household has symptoms (loss of taste or smell, cough, fever, shortness of breath);
 - Establishing voluntary methods for parents and guardians to help screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms (For example, ask parents and guardians to check their children every day before coming to the Childcare setting and to keep their children at home if their temperature is high, that is, if they feel hot to touch on the chest or back - they do not need to measure the child's temperature.)
 - Requiring parents to advise the Person in Charge if they, their child or any other family member with whom they live or have had contact has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - Know how to notify the Public Health Agency and the HSC Trust Early Years Team's Early Years Team upon learning that someone who has been at the childcare setting has a COVID-19 infection.

If a Child Becomes Sick at the Setting

A plan will be established which sets out clearly what steps need to be taken if a child becomes sick at the setting, both in relation to a child who does not display symptoms of COVID-19 and a child who develops symptoms (cough, a change in or loss of sense of taste or smell, fever (temperature of 37.8 or higher). The plan includes:

- Procedures for contacting parents and guardians immediately and criteria for seeking medical assistance;
- Designated areas where sick children can rest, be isolated and attended to by a limited number of trained staff. If direct care is required while waiting for the child to be collected, you should wear PPE - a mask, plastic apron and gloves;
- If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.
- If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.
- PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).
- In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a Member of Staff Becomes Unwell in the setting

If a member of staff in the setting becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature (37.8 or higher), or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home immediately.

If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

Confirmed Case of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the Setting

When a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19) they should be sent home, advised to self-isolate for 10 days, and arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 10 days. All staff who are attending the childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their Play Pod within their childcare setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 10 days. The other household members of the Play Pod do not need to self-isolate unless the child, or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health Agency will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger number of other children, may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole pod or setting. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.