

Coppice Primary School Infectious Diseases Policy

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This policy aims to provide the school community with guidance when preparing for, and in the event of an outbreak of an infection such as pandemic influenza and/or COVID-19. It contains a checklist of actions to aid planning and preparing for an outbreak of COVID-19 and clarifies communication procedures.

PRINCIPLES

The school recognises that infections such as influenza and COVID-19 pandemics are not new. No-one knows exactly when the school will be faced with having to deal with a potentially contagious illness amongst its community. We recognise the need to be prepared.

Infections could spread particularly rapidly in schools and as children may have no residual immunity, they could be amongst the groups affected. Staff are more likely to be affected in an outbreak of COVID-19 as medical evidence proves this. We recognise that closing the school may be necessary in exceptional circumstances in order to control an infection. However, we will strive to remain open for targeted pupils unless advised otherwise.

Good pastoral care includes promoting healthy living and hygiene. School staff will give pupils positive messages about health, hygiene and well-being through lessons and through conversations with pupils.

PLANNING AND PREPARING

In the event of the school becoming aware that a pupil or member of staff has an infectious illness we would direct their parents to report to their GP and inform the Public Health England. In addition, they must contact the school to advise us that a pupil or member of staff has sought medical attention and has been diagnosed as having an infectious illness. During an outbreak of an infectious illness such as pandemic influenza or COVID-19 the school will seek to operate as normally as possible but will plan for higher levels of staff absence.

The decision on whether school should remain open or close will be based on medical evidence and advice given from Public Health England and the Local Authority. It is likely that school will remain open but we recognise the fact that both the illness itself and the caring responsibilities of staff will impact staff absence levels. The school will close if classes cannot be staffed or there is not adequate supervision for the children. Students will be asked to complete work at home using the school website or educational websites.

INFECTION CONTROL

Infections are usually spread from person to person by close contact, for example:

- Infected people can pass a virus to others through large droplets when coughing, sneezing or even talking within a close distance.
- Through direct contact with an infected person: for example, if you shake or hold their hand, and then touch your own mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands.
- By touching objects (e.g. door handles, light switches) that have previously been touched by an infected person, then touching your own mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands.
- Viruses can survive longer on hard surfaces than on soft or absorbent surfaces. Staff and students are given the following advice about how to reduce the risk of passing on infections to others:
 - Wash your hands regularly, particularly after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
 - Minimise contact between your hands and mouth/nose, unless you have just washed your hands.
 - Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
 - Do not attend school if you think you may have an infectious illness.
 - Inform school if you are feeling unwell at home.

- If you feel ill during the day go to the medical room. Parents will be contacted if First Aiders feel you are not well enough to be in school.

These messages will be promoted through posters around the school, in group assemblies and through Personal and Social Education lessons.

HAND WASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF INFECTION CONTROL IN SCHOOLS

Minimise sources of contamination

We will ensure relevant staff have Food Hygiene Certificate or other training in food handling.

We store food that requires refrigeration, covered and dated within a refrigerator, at a temperature of 5°C or below.

We wash hands before and after handling food.

We clean and disinfect food storage and preparation areas.

Food is bought from reputable sources and used by recommended date.

To control the spread of infection

We ensure good hand washing procedures (toilet, handling animals, soil, food)

Children are encouraged to blow and wipe their own noses when necessary and to dispose of the soiled tissues hygienically.

We keep a record of the washing of equipment and communal areas.

Ensure different cloths and towels are kept for different areas.

We cover all cuts and open sores.

Aprons are worn when preparing food.

We wear protective clothing when dealing with accidents or with any child showing symptoms of an infectious disease. (e.g. gloves and apron)

A protocol is in place that is followed regarding contact with blood and body fluids.

- Gloves and apron worn
- Soiled articles sealed in a plastic bag
- Staff aware of procedures for the prevention of HIV infection

To raise awareness of hygiene procedures

Inform all attending adults of the existing policy and procedures.

Insure that student induction includes this information and they are reminded at regular intervals.

Provide visual instructions where possible for ease of understanding.

To prevent cross-contamination

Ensure that adults and children have separate toilet facilities and groups visit toilets on a rota basis.

During an outbreak children are kept in small groups “bubbles” in line with Government guidelines. Groups of children do not mix.

During outbreaks of diarrhoea and/or vomiting the following should be actioned:

The use of play dough should be suspended until 48 hours after the symptoms end and the play dough used prior to the outbreak is disposed of;

The use of play sand should be suspended until 48 hours after the symptoms end and the sand used prior to the outbreak is disposed of;

The use of water should be suspended until 48 hours after the symptoms end and the water and water toys should be thoroughly cleaned prior to use.

Children who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting should not be in school for 48hours after their last bout.

If a child is unwell in school

They should wait in a designated area until they are collected by their parents or carers. They should be closely monitored and should not wait in communal areas.

If they have symptoms of COVID-19 they will be isolated in an outside area and accompanied by an adult wearing full PPE. Parents will be called to take them home. Government guideline will then be followed with all children and adult that they have come into contact with, and appropriate areas of school will be deep cleaned.

To prevent the persistence and further spread of infection

Ensure that dedicated sinks are clearly marked.

Be vigilant as to signs of infection persisting or recurring.

Ask parents to keep their child at home if they have an infection, and to inform the school as to the nature of the infection.

Remind parents not to bring a child to school who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until at least 48 hours has elapsed since the last attack.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any current concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and pupils.