**Infection Control Policy**

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| It is the priority of Kinnegad Community Childcare Clg to protect the children and adults attending our service from the transmission of infections. The health and wellbeing of all children, staff and visitors at our service is paramount and our aim is to prevent and manage any infection which may present in the service.  Special attention is given to infection control in relation to Covid 19 and other infectious illnesses.  The policy is underwritten by the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulation 2016 and Tusla (2018) Quality and Regulatory Framework. |

We aim to promote and maintain the health of children, parents and staff through the control of infectious illnesses.

We aim to control infection prevention by providing ongoing infection control training for staff. It is our aim to minimise the spread of infection for staff and children through the implementation of controls which reduce the transmission and spread of germs.

We aim to promote and maintain the health of children and staff through the control of infectious illnesses.

**Risk assessments**

Risk assessments are constantly undertaken by staff to assess if activities, actions or environments pose a risk from an infection control standpoint. This is especially important in relation to COVID-19.

**Hand washing**

Kinnegad Community Childcare has a hand washing procedure which all staff promote and model for children, after using the toilet, before eating or preparing food, after wiping noses, waste disposal and mopping up spills.

Staff must wash their hands, before preparing or serving food before eating or drinking, after using the toilet, assisting children using the toilet, dealing with bodily fluids, cleaning procedures, caring for sick children, handling soiled clothing, dealing with waste and after removing disposable gloves.

A wash hand basin is provided in each room with a constant supply of hot (no greater than 43 degrees Celsius) and cold running water, liquid antibacterial soap and paper towels. A wash hand basin is also available in all bathrooms, kitchens and activity rooms.

Children are encouraged to wash their hands with warm water and liquid soap under supervision after using the toilet, before eating, after sneezing, coughing or blowing noses, after handling animals, after touching a cut or sore and after outside play and activities. Clear guidance on hand washing is outlined for children and staff alike in our service.

Staff will supervise and assist children to encourage effective hand washing. The Rufus hand washing story should be used as a resource for teaching good hand washing techniques.

**Food preparation**

Staff always wear gloves when preparing and serving food and wash hands after removing gloves. Staff always wash their hands after preparing food and removing waste food and materials.

Perishable food is kept in a refrigerator between temperatures of 0 to 5 Celsius. Any perishable food left at room temperature for more than two hours will be discarded safely.

Staff involved in helping children with toileting are not involved in preparing food.

**Cleaning and the premises**

All staff are aware of their role in maintaining high standards of hygiene.

Kinnegad Community Childcare reinforces good practice regarding keeping the environment and premises clean and safe.

Spillages of blood, faeces, urine, vomit or other bodily fluids or excretions are cleaned immediately and with priority.

Mops are not used for these spillages and extreme caution is exercised at all times. Appropriate PPE is used when dealing with these spillages (disposable gloves, apron etc)

Daily, weekly and monthly cleaning schedules are in place and records kept.

Kinnegad Community Childcare have a contract with AES for the removal and disposal of all waste.

Our premises are kept free from pests and rodents, we have a contract with Midland Pest Control who conducts monthly inspections.

We carry and maintain a good stock of cleaning products and tools to ensure hygiene practices can be carried out at all times. Adequate supplies for cleaning are provided for use, clean cloths, gloves, aprons, mops, buckets and detergents.

Toys and play materials are cleaned daily, with attention placed on especially soiled items. These are not brought into toilet or changing areas.

Toilets, floors, shelves, storing bags, tables and chairs and other areas are cleaned daily to help decrease the spread of infection, cleaning agents used are detailed in our cleaning schedules.

All linen is washed once per week or more frequently if necessary. Children do not share bed clothes and all sheets and blankets are stored separately. These items are washed at the hottest wash the fabric will tolerate. Like linen, all children have individual hair brushes, clothing and towels. These items are not shared. Any soiled clothes are placed in a plastic bag, sealed and sent home with parents/guardians. Doors or windows are open daily to ensure rooms are aired out each day.

**Immunisations**

Are immunisation policy is followed at all times with children and staff. Information on childhood immunisation is required by Kinnegad Community Childcare on registration of their child, typically a copy of the child's immunisation record from their GP. Parents are asked to update us when children receive additional immunisations. If a child is not immunised, for their own safety they may be excluded from the Centre if an infectious disease that they are not immunised against is circulating. Parents are always consulted on this. We always work in the best interests of Children's Health.

We provide information leaflets on immunisation schedules, oral hygiene and prevention of infection to parents.

**Procedure for managing an infectious illness**

Children are encouraged to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue before sneezing or coughing. Hands are washed after blowing noses, sneezing or coughing.

Cots are kept at least 50 centimeters apart.

Staff will report any illness to the manager or supervisor on duty. Unwell children, with a temperature and or specific signs and symptoms, will be excluded from the service until a diagnosis can be made.

Staff can and will use their discretion when admitting a child back into the Centre if they believe the child is still ill and cannot take part in their usual activities. Children should remain at home if they are suffering from general diarrhea or vomiting for at least 48 hours after the last bout.

A plan has been drawn up to help prevent the spread of illness using the HSE guidelines: *Managing an infectious disease in a childcare setting.*

A list of notifiable diseases is available from HSE. In the case of notified diseases or if illness spreads, the manager will notify the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate by filling out the *notification of incidents form*.

When we have been contacted by the Department of Public health, HSE, in our area and have been advised that we have a confirmed case as listed we will contact Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate.

The Department of Public Health Medicine will advise us as to the next steps regarding precautions to be taken in our premises and follow-up of contacts and procedures.

Parents will be informed verbally and in writing if an outbreak has occurred, all reasonable information on the outbreak will be provided to them.

Exclusion from the Service:

Children will be excluded from the service based on the timeframes outlined in the exclusion criteria (see Illness and Exclusion Policy)

A doctor’s certificate may be required for certain conditions to ensure they are no longer contagious before returning to the service.

Staff and children should remain at home if they are suffering from general diarrohea or vomiting until 48 hours after their last bout and are symptom free.

Communication of new policies.

All new policies are communicated to parents and children. Parents are informed through our newsletter. The policy is also published on our website ([www.cairdeas.ie](http://www.cairdeas.ie)). A hardcopy is also available from the office should a parent or guardian wish to have one.

New policies are discussed with children so they have information and can give their input.

July 2023