

Infection Control Policy

Procedure Version	Version 14
Related Policy & Forms	Staff Absenteeism & Annual leave Policy, Hand Washing Policy, Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy, Covid-19 Policy, Visitor Policy
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Date Reviewed	October 2022
Responsible for Implementation	Managers & all staff
Staff Involved	All Staff
Date for Next Review	January 2024
Person responsible for review	Policy & Procedure review team

Part 1 Policy

Regulation 23: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Children states the protection and welfare of the children in ECEC services is paramount, and the children's safety and wellbeing are the priority. Registered providers must be committed to safeguarding the children within their care, and to providing a safe environment where they can play, learn and develop. We aim to protect all children and persons attending and working in our service from the transmission of infections. The health and well-being of all children, staff and visitors to our service is paramount and our aim is to prevent and manage any infection which may present in our service. When a child starts with Park Academy Childcare, the parents/guardians of the child will receive a copy of this policy. All families will sign a parental agreement which states they agree to our Infection Control Policy. All staff receive ongoing training in infection management and use their learning to support children in practising infection control through our different measures and systems in place.

Infection can lead to serious ill health among infants and young children. Infection control procedures seek to reduce the risk of children getting sick in a service by ensuring good hygiene practices are followed and the risk of infection is minimised. This policy will be reviewed in line with new guidelines issued by HPSC and Tusla.



Part 2 Procedure

Prevention and Infection Control Measures:

Immunisation

- On enrolment, parents are asked for their child's immunisation record. This information is recorded on the child's registration form
- Parents/guardians of children who are not immunised are made aware of the dangers of infectious diseases.
- Parents are encouraged to keep up to date with current vaccination requirements and to ensure that the service is kept informed, and the child's records updated as required.
- Parents/guardians are not required to have their children immunised to gain admission to the service but where a child's immunisation record is not up-to-date parents/guardians are encouraged to have their child vaccinated.
- If a child is not immunised, parents/guardians are advised that their children may be excluded from the service during outbreaks of some vaccine preventable diseases such as Measles, Whooping Cough etc, even if their child is well. This is to protect their non-immunised child.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are undertaken by staff to assess if actions or environments pose risk to children and staff from an infection control standpoint. Actions are implemented to eliminate or reduce the risk identified through continuous risk assessment. A risk assessment has been carried out in all our centres, identifying the risks of the spread of any infectious disease and systems have been put in place to minimise the spread of infectious diseases.

Handwashing

- Posters outlining correct hand washing procedures are available at wash hand basins for adults and children.
- Park Academy Childcare has a Hand Washing policy in place which all staff promote and model for children.



- Warm running water is available for hand washing at a temperature no greater than 43°C at children's wash hand basins.
- Soap is used when hand washing.
- Hand drying facilities are available e.g., disposable paper towels.
- We endeavour to supervise children's hand washing and hand drying.

Hand washing will take place at the following times:

- Staff will hand wash on arrival to the centre and children will hand wash on arrival to the room.
- Before and after preparing food, snacks and drinks.
- Before and after eating or handling food, and after feeding babies and children.
- Before and after administering medication. Gloves will be worn to administer any medical ointment.
- Before and after nappy changing and toileting.
- After toilet use.
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid.
- After handling animals or coming in contact with animal waste.
- After playing outdoors or in the sand.
- After handling rubbish.
- After blowing a child's nose.



Food Preparation

Our chefs follow strict systems in line with the FSAI and HACCP guidelines. We will continue to follow our Healthy Eating Policy with the additional steps outlined below.

- Staff must wash their hands before and after preparing and serving food.
- Gloves are to be worn if there are any cuts or abrasions on hands.
- Perishable food is kept in a refrigerator, between temperatures of 0 and 5 Celsius. Any perishable food left at room temperature for more than 2 hours will be discarded safely.
- Any leftover food will be properly disposed of.
- Only the chef and Catering Manager are allowed enter the kitchen whilst food is being prepared and cooked.
- All deliveries will be delivered to the front door of the crèche. Delivery personnel will not be allowed enter the kitchen.
- If a room requires something from the kitchen, they must phone the chef and either the chef or Manager will deliver it to the room.
- The chef must remove their uniform when leaving the building.
- Chefs will continue to deliver the food to all rooms but will not enter the rooms. A staff member will take the tray of food from the chef's trolley at the main door to the room. If additional food is required, the chef will also deliver that to the room.
- Staff will continue to follow all room food checks of food delivered to their room.
- The chef will return to the rooms to collect all clean dishes at 1.30pm again not entering the rooms. At this time the chef will deliver the 2pm fruit snack.
- Early Years Educators will ensure all children have washed their hands before all meals and snacks.
- Early Years Educators will wash and sanitize their own hands prior to serving meals.

Interactions and holding and feeding babies and children

It is important that babies and children are comforted if they are upset throughout the day, or just need of a cuddle. Staff will continue to show affection for all children while following the below guidelines.



- All long hair to be tied up.
- Staff are required to have a change of uniform in the crèche should they need to change during the day.
- Staff will wash their hands, neck and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Staff will change a child's clothes if their clothes are covered in their secretions. All children will have multiple changes of clothes in the centre.
- All dirty clothes will be put in a tied nappy bag and sent home in the evening time.
- Staff wash their hands before and after handling any baby bottles that have been prepared at home.
- All equipment used for bottle feeding will be rinsed after each use and placed in the child's bag.

Nappy Changing and Toileting

- The nappy changing room is adequately ventilated, by window/mechanical ventilation.
- Where possible, the door to the nappy changing room is kept closed at all times.
- A wash basin is included in the nappy changing room and has hot (37 -43 degrees Celsius*) and cold running water and access to liquid soap and paper towel dispensers.
- Children's hands will be washed and dried after nappy changing/toileting.
- Staff will ensure that they have thoroughly washed their own hands before and after nappy changing.
- Staff that are changing nappies use powder free, synthetic vinyl or latex gloves and a disposable apron. In shared changing areas face masks will be worn by staff when deemed necessary (e.g., covid)
- All nappy changing mats are waterproof, in good condition i.e., no exposed stuffing or foam and have an easily cleanable cover. Nappy changing mats are sanitised and wiped down after each nappy change.
- Potties are emptied into the toilet and are cleaned and sanitised after each use as per Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy.
- All nappies are disposed of in a way which will not increase the risk of infection. Soiled nappies are placed in nappy sacks and stored in a sealed container that is removed from the premises at least once per day or more frequently if needed. Nappy disposal containers are kept away from children and out of their reach.
- Nappy changing units are cleaned thoroughly on a regular basis.



- All staff are fully trained and briefed in nappy changing and infection control.

Cleaning of Equipment and the Premises

All our cleaning schedules have been reviewed in line with the HPSC guidance and 'The Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings'. We follow a strict and effective cleaning schedule to minimise the risk of infection. We use appropriate sanitisers and disinfectants that are recommended for a childcare setting. We use an external cleaning company to clean our centres daily. They come during out of work hours and is in addition to our own cleaning schedule.

- All staff are aware of their role in maintaining high standards of hygiene.
- Park Academy Childcare encourages best 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 using PPE.
- Daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning schedules are in place and recorded. Cleaning records are located in each room. All cleaning checklists will be kept for 6 months.
- Park Academy Childcare has a contract with a bin removal company for the removal and disposal of all waste.
- Our premises are free from pests and rodents, and we have a contract with an external agent who checks our premises on a monthly basis.
- We maintain a sufficient stock of cleaning products and cleaning equipment (e.g., clean cloths, gloves, aprons, mops, buckets, and detergents) to ensure that good hygiene practices can be carried out at all times.
- Cleaning products and supplies are stored in a locked press that is not accessible to children.
- Crockery and cutlery are sterilised in a dishwasher. They are sprayed with sanitiser allowing 2 minutes for sanitiser to activate before the dishwasher is placed on the highest cleaning cycle. A dishwasher tablet is also used during this cycle to ensure maximum cleaning and sanitising.
- Toys and play materials are cleaned frequently with attention placed on especially soiled items. Toys are not brought into the toilet or changing areas. Milton baths are in all rooms for soiled toys/equipment.



- Toilets, floors, shelves, tables and chairs and other areas are cleaned daily or as required to help decrease the spread of infection. Cleaning agents used are detailed on our cleaning schedules. Mops for general floor washing will be washed in a 90-degree wash and will be left to dry. They are replaced regularly.
- All cloths and mop heads used are in line with our colour coding system and changed daily.
- All linen is washed once per week by an external company and more frequently if necessary. Children do not share bed clothes and all sheets and blankets are stored separately.
- All children have individual clothing and are not shared. Any soiled clothes are placed in a plastic bag, sealed, labelled and sent home with parents/guardians.
- At least once a day, even in winter, all rooms in the service are aired out.
- All staff receive regular support and supervision in relation to infection control and training is provided.
- Deep cleaning will be carried out regularly.

Toys and Equipment

- Toys that cannot be cleaned or sanitised will not be used.
- There will be enough equipment in all rooms so that staff can implement a toy rotation system to allow for cleaning and sterilisation.
- Any toys or equipment that a child has placed in their mouth will be removed from circulation. It will be cleaned and placed in a Milton bath for sterilisation.
- Machine washable fabric toys will be washed weekly or earlier if necessary.
- All toys and equipment will be sanitised daily.
- Children's books and art materials are not considered high-risk for transmission of infection and do not need additional cleaning or sanitising. We will continue to follow our normal cleaning schedule for these items.
- Sensorial play will continue in all of our rooms with material being disposed of and replenished daily.
- Sand is available in garden sand pits and rooms; this will be replenished as required.
- Park Academy advises that toys from home should not be brought to crèche. Children can bring their comforter to the creche.

Sleep Equipment

- All children's bedding will be stored separately in a sealed container/ zip lock bag under their cot or on a shelf. This will be labelled with the child's name on it.
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- Babies will share cot rooms with other children from their play pods. Where this is not possible, and two play pods have to be mixed, our team will ensure social distancing between cots in the cot room or maybe classed as one pod.
- All cot linen will be washed weekly, or as required, at a temperature that is above 60 degrees.
- Any child that requires a soother will have to bring in a brand-new packet of soothers that are still in their packaging. These will be sterilised and labelled on receipt. These will be stored in closed containers, individual to each child.
- All children over two years old have their own stackable bed which is labelled with their name on it.
- The stackable beds will be stripped weekly and sanitized and stacked for storage. Blankets and comforters are removed from beds daily and stored in individual sealed containers.
- All cots will be cleaned and sanitised daily.

Dealing with Spillages of Body Fluids (e.g., Blood, urine, faeces, or vomit)

- Staff will put on a disposable apron, gloves and face masks will be worn where deemed necessary (e.g. Covid).
- Staff will use absorbent disposable paper towels or kitchen roll to soak up the spillage.
- The area will be cleaned using warm water and a general-purpose neutral detergent.
- Staff will apply a chlorine-based disinfectant to the affected surface.
- Dry the surface thoroughly using disposable paper towels.
- Soiled/sodden paper towels, gloves, apron, and cloths will be disposed of in 2 doubled up white bin liners, tied and disposed of in the main waste area for the centre.
- Staff will wash and dry hands thoroughly.
- Staff will change any clothing that is soiled immediately

Illness

- If a child is unwell, Park Academy Childcare requests that the child is kept at home if they are unable to participate in normal activities and/or if they may be at risk of passing the infection to another child or adult in the service.
- If a child becomes ill while in Park Academy Childcare, we request that the child's parent/guardian or person authorised to collect will collect the child within a reasonable time frame from when they receive the call. Any children with Covid-19 symptoms will be brought to the isolation room



- where they will wait for collection. A staff member from their play pod will comfort them while they wait.
- If Park Academy Childcare cannot contact the parents/guardians/emergency contact for a child, it may be necessary to transfer the child to hospital via ambulance depending on the severity of their symptoms.
- Unwell children, with a temperature (not teething related) 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 service. If they believe the child is still ill and cannot take part in their normal activities, they will request that the parent/guardian keeps the child at home.
- Children/staff must remain at home for at least 48 hours following the last episode of diarrhoea/vomiting.
- Unwell children and staff should only return to Park Academy Childcare when they have fully recovered. The exclusion notes in Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings are followed. An email informing all parent/guardian/carers of an infectious disease outbreak/incidence will be sent and a notice will be displayed in a prominent place and all parent/guardian/carers will also be verbally informed.
- Parents/staff must fill in a declaration form on returning to the crèche after being sick with a notifiable infectious disease to state they have followed all medical and public health guidance they have received with respect to exclusion of the child/staff from the centre.
 - Staff will report any illness to the Manager/Designated Person in Charge.
 - A plan will be drawn up to help prevent the spread of the illness and the HSE guidelines (Managing an Infectious Disease in Childcare Setting) will be followed in the case of a child in the service contracting an infectious illness.
 - Head louse infestation is a contagious condition, and if noticed in our service will be brought to the attention of all parents/guardians/carers. Children with lice infestation will be collected within a reasonable time frame and brought home to be treated prior to returning to the centre.

Coughing /Sneezing

- We will teach children to cough/ sneeze into their elbow. Our staff will role model this.
- We will teach the children to dispose of their used tissue away into a closed bin and wash their hands.

Notifiable Diseases

A notifiable disease is any disease that is required by law to be reported to government authorities. The list for notifiable diseases is available on www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases. When Park Academy Childcare is informed of a diagnosis by the HPSC, or a parent/guardian of a child attending the service, or an



employee, an unpaid worker, a contractor or other person working in the service, the following procedure will be followed.

- The parent will be asked has their GP reported the notifiable disease to the HPSC. If the parent is unsure of this, the Centre Manager will inform the parent that they will be contacting the Medical Officer for the child's residential region for clarification around the illness.
- The parent will be informed that due to the seriousness of this illness, we are obliged to ask them to provide us with a letter from their GP stating what exactly the child is suffering from. This may be dropped in or scanned to the crèche by the close of that business day.
- The HPSC will advise us on what action needs to be taken in the centre. If further information is required for families, this will be provided by the Medical Officer and issued by management to our parents.
- Senior Management will be informed of the situation and any staff working in the crèche will be informed about the situation on a need-to-know basis.
- Management will inform all families and staff of the notifiable disease. An information leaflet is to be given to them and a record taken of everyone who has been informed and by whom.
- The Manager will ring any families who may be absent or on holidays; informing them about the situation (this is only necessary if their child could have been in contact with the ill child during the infectious/contagious period of the illness).
- A deep clean will be carried out in the rooms, cot rooms, changing areas, door handles, etc. using a product that will eliminate bacteria.
- All staff/children from the room where the ill child usually attends are to stay in their own room and not visit other rooms or have visits from other staff/children from other rooms for the infectious period. This will help reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- Tusla must be notified, through submission of a Notification of Incident Form, within 3 days of a breakout of a notifiable disease within any centre.

Contact Details for Notifiable Diseases:

Dublin / Kildare / Wicklow

Department of Public Health

Health Service Executive

Dr. Steevens' Hospital

Dublin 8.

Tel: Main Switch (01) 6352000

Direct lines for ID Notifications: (01) 6352145

Fax: (01) 6352103

Email: dph.east@hse.ie



COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a new Coronavirus (SARS CoV-2), which is spread mainly through tiny droplets scattered from the nose and mouth of a person with the infection. This can happen when the infected person coughs, sneezes, talks or laughs. To infect a person, it must get from the infected person's nose or mouth into another person's mouth, nose or eyes.

Mask wearing is not requested by Park Academy in our centres, we do ask everyone to risk assess their own situation whilst taking others into consideration. We continue to follow all public health measures for Early Year settings including hand and respiratory hygiene, staying at home if symptomatic to reduce the risk of spread of all viral infections. These measures are important for mitigating the spread of COVID-19 and other infections.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 or other viral respiratory tract infection, regardless of vaccination status, should immediately self-isolate until 48 hours after symptoms have substantially or fully resolved. Please note children can have persistent minor symptoms e.g. a cough. However, if all new or acute symptoms have substantially or fully resolved, children can return to school or crèche. If their condition significantly deteriorates, please contact your GP for further advice. For further information on this please go to the HPSC website. WWW.hpsc.ie

High- Risk Groups

Park Academy Childcare develops care plans for any child or staff member that has an underlying health condition. During pandemics, these care plans may need to be amended. Parents/guardians/staff must discuss this further with their centre manager so that further measures can be put in place to support the child or staff while in Park Academy Childcare. We will endeavour to support all children and staff with underlying health conditions; however, this may not always be possible during pandemics. If this is the case, the at-risk person may be asked to stay at home based on medical advice to protect the child or staff member during this time.

Children's Belongings

Car seats, buggies, scooters, or bikes will no longer be allowed stored in the centre or the sheds at the centre.

All children's belongings will be stored in a backpack or sealed containers. Parents will be advised daily/weekly if they need to bring items in.

Visitors and Contractors

Park Academy Childcare welcomes visitors to their centres, however, during periods of serious infectious disease outbreaks or pandemics we limit these visits. Visitors will always be supervised by



the Person in Charge at the time of the visit. The different reasons for these visits would include contractors that need to carry out essential and non-essential maintenance, people from the community coming in to speak with the children, new business, Inspectors from the regulatory bodies, and other Park Academy Childcare employees not ordinarily working from this centre. Our policy is under pinned by the Childcare Regulations 2016 and the Return to Work Safely Protocol Covid-19 (Nov 2021).

Please see our visitor policy for further information on this.

Parents visiting for meetings with staff will be by appointment only when possible.

Sun Cream & Sun Hats

A bottle of sun cream and a sun hat must be provided for each child. We will not share sun creams or sun hats. If you do not leave sun cream in for your child, they will be unable to participate in outdoor play until the sun cream is provided. The sun cream will be labelled with the child's name, the date we received the bottle of sun cream and stored in a closed container. The sun cream will only be kept for the recommended time or date on the bottle. Once it has expired it will be sent home with the child. The sun cream will be applied twice a day or as required. A sun cream checklist will be filled in each time sun cream has been applied to a child by the staff member who applied it. When the staff member is applying the sun cream, they will wear disposable gloves which will be changed after each child's application.

All sun cream records will be kept for 3 months.



Exclusion Periods

These are the minimum exclusion periods as recommended by the HSE. Park Academy Childcare may impose longer periods if we have a concern:

Chickenpox:	Until scabs are dry; this is usually 5-7 days after the appearance of the rash.
Conjunctivitis:	Exclusion of affected children until they recover, or until they have had antibiotics for 48 hours.
Covid-19	
Diarrhoea:	48 hours from last episode.
Diphtheria:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply and will be advised by the Department of Public Health.
Food poisoning:	Until authorised by GP.
Glandular Fever:	Exclusion is not necessary.
Haemophilus Influenzae Type B: (Hib)	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease:	While the child is unwell, he/she should be kept away from service. If evidence exists of transmission within the day centre exclusion of children until the spots have gone from their hands may be necessary.
Head Lice:	Exclusion is not necessary [if treated]
Hepatitis A: (Yellow Jaundice, Infectious Hepatitis):	Recommended while the child feels unwell, or until 7 days after onset of jaundice, whichever is later.

Hepatitis B (Serum Hepatitis)	Children will be too ill to attend the service and families will be given specific advice about when their child is well enough to return.
Impetigo:	Until lesions are crusted and healed, or 24 hours after commencing antibiotics.
Influenza and Influenza-like Illness: (Flu and ILI)	Remain at home for 7 days from onset of symptoms. Children should not re-attend the service until they are feeling better, and their temperature has returned to normal.
Living with HIV/AIDS:	Exclusion is not necessary.



Measles:	Exclude the child while infectious i.e., up to 4 days after the rash appears.
Meningitis:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Meningococcal Disease:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Molluscum Contagiosum:	Exclusion is not necessary.
MRSA: (Meticillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus)	Children/infants known to carry staphylococcus aureus (including MRSA) on the skin or in the nose do not need to be excluded from the setting. Children who have draining wounds or skin sores producing pus will only need to be excluded from the service if the wounds cannot be covered or contained by a dressing and/or the dressing cannot be kept dry and intact.
Mumps:	The child should be excluded for 5 days after the onset of swelling.
Pediculosis (lice):	Until appropriate treatment has been given
Pharyngitis/Tonsillitis:	If the disease is known to be caused by a streptococcal (bacterial) infection, the child or member of staff should be kept away from the service until 24 hours after the start of treatment. Otherwise, a child or member of staff should stay at home while they feel unwell.

Polio:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply and will be advised by the Department of Public Health.
Poliomyelitis:	Until declared free from infection by GP
Pneumococcus:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Respiratory Syncytial Virus:	Children who have RSV should be excluded until they have no symptoms, and their temperature has returned to normal. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Ringworm:	Children need not be excluded from service once they commence treatment.
Rubella:	For 7 days after onset of the rash and whilst unwell.





(German Measles)	Park Academy Childcare www.parkchildcare.ie
Scabies:	Not necessarily once treatment has commenced.
Scarlet fever:	Once a patient has been on antibiotic treatment for 24 hours they can return to the service, provided they feel well enough.
Shingles:	Until scabs are dry.
Slapped Cheek Syndrome:	An affected child need not be excluded because he/ she is no longer infectious by the time the rash occurs.
Temperature:	Over 38 degrees

Tetanus: (Lockjaw)	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the Service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Tuberculosis (TB):	Recommendations on exclusion depend on the particulars of each case, e.g., whether the case is “infectious” or not. The Department of Public Health will advise on each individual case.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply; the local Department of Public Health will advise.
Viral Meningitis:	Children with the disease will usually be too ill to attend the Service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Vomiting:	48 hours from last episode of vomiting
Whooping Cough: (Pertussis)	The child is likely to be too ill to attend the Service and should stay at home until he/she has had 5 days of antibiotic treatment or for 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment.
Worms:	Exclusion is not necessary.
Verrucae:	Exclusion is not necessary.



Animals, pets including poultry and fish

- Handwashing and drying procedures are adhered to before and after handling animals, pets, poultry, and fish.
- All animals, pets, poultry, and fish are managed in accordance with required and appropriate instructions for their care.
- Children are not allowed unsupervised access to animals, pets, poultry, and fish.
- Animals, pet, poultry vaccination and health care are in accordance with veterinary advice.

Other Precautions

- Cots and beds are at least 50cm apart.
- A box of tissues is always readily available to all children and adults.
- The sand pit is covered when not in use and the water tray will be emptied after each use as per Cleaning Toy Policy.
- Any damaged feeding or drinking equipment will be disposed of immediately.
- Hand sanitising units are located throughout the building.
- All staff covering in other rooms will wear full PPE when deemed necessary by Park Academy Childcare.

Record Keeping

Risk Assessment	3 years from date it was reviewed.
Cleaning Checklists	6 months from date it was completed.
Food Preparation Check Sheets	6 months from date it was completed
Sun Cream Checklists	3 months from date it was completed.
Medical Documentation	2 years from the date the child finished in the centre



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