



Sickness, Infection and Exclusion Policy

Statement of intent

Toddington Childcare & Forest School is committed to promoting and protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of every child in our care.

We recognise that young children can be particularly susceptible to infections and that childcare settings can provide an environment in which infections may spread. We therefore have a responsibility to take appropriate and proportionate steps to reduce the spread of infection while ensuring that children who are unwell receive suitable care and support.

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear procedures for:

- deciding when a child should remain at home;
- managing a child who becomes unwell while attending;
- managing infectious diseases;
- preventing and controlling infection;
- responding to outbreaks or suspected outbreaks;
- contacting parents/carers;
- obtaining medical or public-health advice where necessary; and
- ensuring that children with medical conditions are appropriately supported.

The current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and current UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance will always take precedence where they are more recent than this policy.

Legal and statutory framework

This policy has been developed with regard to:

- the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers;
- the Childcare Act 2006;
- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), where applicable;
- the Equality Act 2010;
- the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR; and

- current UKHSA guidance on health protection, infection prevention and public-health exclusion periods.

The EYFS requires providers to have procedures for taking appropriate action where children are ill or infectious and to take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection.

Health information and registration

Before a child starts at Toddington Childcare & Forest School, parents/carers will be asked to provide relevant information about their child's health and medical needs.

This includes, where applicable:

- medical conditions;
- allergies;
- dietary requirements;
- prescribed medication;
- emergency medication;
- additional health needs;
- relevant medical history;
- contact details for parents/carers; and
- emergency contact details.

Parents/carers must inform the setting promptly of any significant change to their child's health or medical needs.

Where a child's condition requires medication, specialist treatment, equipment or emergency intervention, the setting will work with parents/carers and relevant health professionals to establish appropriate arrangements before or as soon as practicable after the child starts.

When children should remain at home

Parents/carers should not bring a child to the setting when the child:

- is too unwell to participate comfortably in normal activities;
- has symptoms for which current UKHSA guidance requires exclusion;
- has diarrhoea and/or vomiting and the relevant exclusion period has not elapsed;
- has a high temperature and is unwell;
- requires a level of individual care that cannot reasonably be provided within the setting's staffing arrangements;
- has been advised by a healthcare professional to remain at home; or
- would, because of their condition, present an unreasonable infection or health risk to themselves or others.

A child does not automatically need to stay at home simply because they have a minor cough, runny nose or other mild respiratory symptoms. Current UKHSA guidance permits children

with mild respiratory symptoms to attend where they are otherwise well and do not have a high temperature.

The setting will consider the child's **overall wellbeing and ability to participate**, rather than relying on a single symptom.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

Children who have diarrhoea and/or vomiting must remain away from the setting until **48 hours after the last episode**.

This applies even where the child appears otherwise well.

Where a child has a confirmed gastrointestinal infection, additional exclusion requirements may apply. Toddington Childcare & Forest School will follow current UKHSA advice.

Current UKHSA guidance confirms a two-day exclusion period following diarrhoea and vomiting.

Parents/carers must inform the setting if their child has been diagnosed with a significant gastrointestinal infection.

High temperature and fever

A child with a high temperature who is unwell should remain at home.

If a child develops a high temperature at the setting, staff will assess their condition and contact the parent/carer where the child is not well enough to remain.

Medication will not be administered solely to reduce a child's temperature so that they can remain at the setting.

Any administration of medication will be carried out in accordance with the setting's **Medicines Administration Policy**.

Mild respiratory symptoms

A mild cough, runny nose or mild sore throat does not automatically require exclusion.

However, children should remain at home where respiratory symptoms are more than mild, particularly where the child has a high temperature or is otherwise too unwell to participate normally.

Current UKHSA guidance applies this approach to respiratory infections, including COVID-19 and RSV.

Infectious diseases and public-health exclusion

Toddington Childcare & Forest School will follow the **current UKHSA public-health exclusion guidance**.

Public-health exclusion is different from an educational disciplinary exclusion. It is the period during which a person should stay away from the setting to reduce transmission of infection.

The following table provides a quick reference:

Infection/condition	Current public-health exclusion
Diarrhoea/vomiting	Until 2 days after symptoms have stopped
Chickenpox	Until 5 days after rash first appears
COVID-19	Stay away if symptoms are more than mild, e.g. high temperature
Flu	Until better and no longer has a temperature
Group A Strep / Scarlet fever	Until 24 hours after starting antibiotics
Hand, foot and mouth	No exclusion required
Head lice	No exclusion required
Conjunctivitis	No exclusion required
Cold sores	No exclusion required
Slapped cheek syndrome	No exclusion required
Impetigo	Until all blisters have scabbed or 2 days after starting antibiotics
Measles	Until 4 days after rash started
Mumps	Until 5 days after swelling began
Rubella	Until 5 days after rash started
Ringworm	Until treatment has started
Scabies	Children aged 5 and under, or those unable to follow treatment guidance, should stay away until 24 hours after first treatment
Whooping cough	Until 2 days after starting antibiotics, or 21 days from onset if no antibiotics
RSV	Stay away where symptoms are more than mild, e.g. high temperature

Shingles	Stay away if spots cannot be covered or have not formed scabs
Tuberculosis	Active TB: until 2 weeks after starting antibiotics, subject to medical advice
Meningitis/meningococcal meningitis	Stay away until symptoms have resolved and follow Health Protection Team advice

This table is a summary only. The current UKHSA guidance must be consulted where an infection is diagnosed or suspected.

Chickenpox

Children with chickenpox must remain away from the setting until **5 days after the rash first appeared**.

Parents/carers should notify the setting when chickenpox is diagnosed or suspected.

The setting will seek Health Protection Team advice where required, including where scarlet fever and chickenpox are circulating within the same group at the same time.

Measles

Measles is highly infectious.

If measles is suspected or confirmed:

1. The child must remain away until **4 days after the rash started**.
2. Parents/carers should seek appropriate medical advice.
3. Toddington Childcare & Forest School will contact the local Health Protection Team in accordance with current UKHSA guidance.
4. The setting will follow any further public-health instructions.
5. Information will be shared sensitively and confidentially.

Current UKHSA guidance specifically requires Health Protection Team contact for measles.

When a child becomes unwell at the setting

If a child becomes unwell:

1. Staff will assess the child's immediate condition.
2. Appropriate comfort and care will be provided.
3. The child's individual healthcare plan will be followed where one exists.
4. Parents/carers will be contacted where the child is too unwell to remain.
5. Parents/carers will be asked to collect the child as soon as reasonably practicable.
6. The child will remain appropriately supervised while awaiting collection.
7. Appropriate infection-control measures will be taken.
8. An emergency contact will be contacted if the parent/carer cannot be reached.
9. Emergency medical assistance will be sought where necessary.

10. The incident will be recorded where appropriate.

Emergency medical treatment

If a child becomes seriously ill or suffers a serious accident or injury, staff will follow the setting's emergency and first-aid procedures.

Where necessary, **999 will be called without delay.**

Staff will not delay emergency treatment while waiting for a parent/carer to arrive.

Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.

Medication

Medication will be administered in accordance with Toddington Childcare & Forest School's **Medicines Administration Policy**.

This sickness policy does not replace the Medicines Administration Policy.

Where a child requires emergency or regular medication, the setting will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place and that staff have the necessary information and training.

Infection prevention and control

Toddington Childcare & Forest School will take appropriate steps to prevent and control infection.

Hand hygiene

Children and adults will be encouraged and supported to wash their hands:

- after using the toilet;
- after nappy changing;
- before eating or handling food;
- after outdoor play and activities where appropriate;
- after contact with animals;
- after contact with bodily fluids; and
- whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Foaming soap, warm running water and disposable paper towels will be available.

Respiratory hygiene

Children and adults will be encouraged to:

- cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue;

- dispose of tissues appropriately;
- cough or sneeze into the elbow where a tissue is unavailable; and
- clean hands after contact with respiratory secretions.

Cuts and abrasions

All cuts and abrasions should be covered with a waterproof dressing.

Cleaning

The setting is cleaned thoroughly each evening by our cleaner.

Staff are also responsible for maintaining cleanliness throughout the day, including:

- cleaning surfaces before food preparation;
- cleaning toilets after use and at the end of sessions;
- cleaning tables and eating areas; and
- spraying toys and equipment after sessions with the setting's approved antibacterial, food-safe spray.

Any spills or contamination will be dealt with promptly using appropriate cleaning procedures.

Bodily fluids

Blood, vomit, faeces, urine, saliva and other bodily-fluid spillages will be dealt with promptly using appropriate PPE and cleaning procedures. Contaminated materials will be securely concealed and disposed of in the setting's clinical waste bins.

Current UKHSA guidance requires appropriate PPE and cleaning arrangements for blood and bodily-fluid spillages.

Toileting and nappy changing

Nappy changing and toileting will be carried out using appropriate hygiene procedures.

Staff will:

- wash and dry hands after each nappy change;
- use appropriate PPE;
- clean changing mats after each use;
- keep creams and lotions labelled or stored separately for individual children;
- dispose of nappies appropriately; and
- maintain appropriate separation between nappy-changing and food preparation areas.

These arrangements will follow current UKHSA infection-control guidance.

Animals

Where animals are present as part of activities, staff will take appropriate infection-control precautions.

Children will be encouraged to wash their hands after touching animals, animal bedding or animal equipment and before eating.

Animals will be managed in accordance with the setting's risk assessments.

Current UKHSA guidance recognises that animal contact can present infection risks and recommends appropriate hygiene measures.

Outbreaks and Health Protection Team advice

The setting will monitor patterns of illness and absence.

Advice will be sought from the local Health Protection Team where appropriate, including where:

- there is an unusually high level of absence;
- several children or staff develop similar symptoms;
- a serious infectious disease is suspected;
- an outbreak is suspected;
- a notifiable disease is identified; or
- specialist public-health advice is required.

The setting will follow instructions provided by the Health Protection Team or UKHSA.

Notifiable diseases

Some infectious diseases are legally notifiable.

Where the setting is informed of a suspected or confirmed notifiable disease, Toddington Childcare & Forest School will follow the current requirements and advice of the relevant public-health authorities.

Confidentiality

Information about a child's health will be treated confidentially.

Information will only be shared where there is a legitimate reason, including where sharing is necessary to protect a child, another person or public health.

Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate if information needs to be shared about their child, subject to safeguarding and legal requirements.

Equality and inclusion

Toddington Childcare & Forest School will not exclude a child unnecessarily because they have a disability, medical condition or additional need.

Where a child has a long-term health condition, the setting will consider reasonable adjustments and appropriate support.

Where specialist care or treatment is required, the setting will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals.

Any decision that a child should remain at home will be based on their health, welfare, ability to participate safely and/or public-health requirements.

Records

Appropriate records will be maintained where required, including:

- medication administration forms;
- accident and first aid forms;
- records of significant illness or health incidents;
- records of infectious diseases where appropriate; and
- written communication with parents/carers and relevant healthcare or public-health professionals.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- the EYFS changes;
- UKHSA guidance changes;
- relevant legislation changes;
- an outbreak or significant incident occurs;
- Ofsted or the local authority identifies a concern; or
- the setting's procedures change.

The current UKHSA guidance will be checked whenever an infectious disease is suspected or confirmed.

Date Adopted: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Signed on behalf of Toddington Childcare and Forest School:

Name: Sarah Malcolm

Position: Chair of the Board of Trustees