

Greenwich House School

Infectious Disease Control Policy

Greenwich House Independent School including the Kindergarten and Creche (“Greenwich House”) follows Public Health England’s Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities (updated 21 March 2021) (“the Guidance”). A copy of this guidance is attached and the internet link for the same is as follows:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

The Guidance contains the full list of notifiable diseases and includes the following:-

- Escherichia coli (VTEC) (also called E.coli 0157) or E coli VTEC infection
- food poisoning
- hepatitis
- measles, mumps, rubella (rubella is also called German measles)
- meningitis
- tuberculosis
- typhoid
- whooping cough (also called pertussis)

Greenwich House also follows HSE recommended guidelines for infectious disease control and any exclusion periods. It is acknowledged that these apply to staff and visitors as well as pupils. Public Health England’s Exclusion table can be accessed on the link below:-

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/789369/Exclusion_table.pdf

The Guidance has been referred and quoted extensively below in this policy and quotation marks have been used where it has been quoted directly.

This policy should be read with Greenwich House’s Health and Safety Policy.

So far as the preparation of food, Greenwich House follows the Food Standards Agency’s “Safer food, better business for caterers guidance”, the link for which is:-
<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers>

At the time of the review of this policy, additional and alternative procedures and practices are being followed in respect of **Coronavirus Covid-19** and this policy should be read in light of and subject to these procedures and practices. These

procedures and practices have, where appropriate, been provided to employees, parents and carers and pupils as well as other effected parties

Greenwich House acknowledges the Guidance and that “Children are particularly susceptible [to infection] because:

- they have immature immune systems
- have close contact with other children
- sometimes have no or incomplete vaccinations
- have a poor understanding of hygiene practices

Children who are unwell are best kept at home or with close family or friends. A place such as a school is not a fitting place for the unwell child and his/her presence can cause the child considerable stress and discomfort.”

Greenwich House also recognises that (as per the Guidance):-

“The way to prevent and manage infectious disease in your setting is to:

- promote immunisation
- promptly exclude the unwell child or member of staff
- check that effective handwashing is being carried out routinely”

Greenwich House recognises the most important ways in which infection can spread as set out in the Guidance ie:

- Respiratory spread eg. By coughing
- Direct contact spread eg. By playing contact sports
- Gastrointestinal spread eg. From contact with contaminated food or water or by not washing hands after going to the toilet
- Blood borne virus spread eg. By contact with infected blood or body fluids

The parents/emergency contacts of unwell children should be telephoned and the child taken home. This is in everybody’s best interests and certainly the kindest type of action for the child.

Once a child is better, they should return unless they pose a risk of infection to others. They should, in such cases, not return until the risk of infection has passed.

Any advice regarding the correct course of action in individual cases should be referred to a child’s parents or carers or their own GP.

Outbreaks of Infection

If an outbreak of infection is suspected the Head Teacher should be informed and she will contact the local health protection team:

PHE East Midlands Health Protection Team
Public Health England, Seaton House City Link
Nottingham
NG2 4LA

Phone: 0344 2254 524 option 1

The Guidance says that:-

“An outbreak or incident may be defined as:

- an incident in which two or more people experiencing a similar illness are linked in time or place
- a greater than expected rate of infection compared with the usual background rate for the place and time where the outbreak has occurred

For example:

- 2 or more cases of diarrhoea and/or vomiting which are in the same classroom, shared communal areas or taking part in the same activities
- higher than usual number of people diagnosed with scabies
- higher than usual number of people diagnosed with scarlet fever
- two or more cases of measles at the school or other childcare setting”

Disease Control

As well as exclusion the Guidance provides other ways to prevent and control infection.

Cleaning of the Environment

Greenwich House recognises that the cleaning of its environment including toys and equipment “is an important function for the control of infection in childcare settings.” Greenwich House has cleaning schedules in place which are monitored.

Handwashing

“Hand washing is one of the most important ways of controlling the spread of infections, especially those that cause diarrhoea and vomiting and respiratory disease.”

The children and staff (basic training procedures) should be actively encouraged to.

:-

- Always wash hands after using the toilet and before eating or handling food, drinking, taking medicine, putting on make-up or inserting contact lenses, after handling animals etc. Warm running water should be used and a mild, preferably liquid soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 15 seconds ensuring that all surfaces of the hands including wrists,

palms, back of hands and thumbs and under fingernails are washed thoroughly.

- Rinse the hands under warm running water and dry the hands with a clean paper towel. This towel should then be discarded in the foot pedal waste bins provided for this purpose.
- Cover all cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing.
- If a food handler has diarrhoea or vomiting, Public Health England's advice or that of a statutory health organisation should be sought urgently and the food handler must absent themselves from the premises.

Coughing and sneezing

“Coughs and sneezes spread diseases. Children and adults should be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue and wash hands after using or disposing of tissues. Spitting should be discouraged.”

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Disposable gloves and plastic aprons are available and must be used when treating injuries, changing nappies etc. Goggles should be worn if there is a risk of splashing to the face

Ensure that the gloves are removed correctly and disposed of appropriately.

Anti-bacterial soap is to be used to wash hands after treating injuries, contact with any body fluids or after changing nappies.

Kitchen staff are to wear protective clothing including headgear in compliance with current food hygiene regulations.

Managing cuts, bites and nose bleeds

There are a number of trained first aiders in the setting aware of the requirements to manage cuts and nose bleeds.

In the case of bites:-

“If a bite does not break the skin:

1. Clean with soap and water.
2. No further action is needed [save to make a record of the matter in accordance with Greenwich House's policies].

If a bite breaks the skin:

1. Clean immediately with soap and running water.
2. Record incident in accident book.
3. Seek medical advice as soon as possible (on the same day):
 - to treat potential infection
 - to protect against hepatitis B

- for reassurance about HIV”

Managing needle stick injuries

Whilst unlikely on the setting, “... children or staff may injure themselves with discarded used hypodermic needles which they have found. Dispose of the needle safely to avoid the same thing happening to someone else. This can be done by either contacting your local authority or school nurse. If someone pricks or scratches themselves with a used hypodermic needle:

- wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water
- cover it with a waterproof dressing
- record it in the accident book and complete the accident form
- seek immediate medical attention from your local Accident and Emergency department”

Cleaning up of blood and body fluid spills

Spills of body fluids i.e. blood, faeces, nasal and eye discharges, saliva and vomit must be cleaned up immediately wearing PPE.

Staff should wear disposable gloves and aprons (provided). Avoid getting any of the fluid that you are cleaning up in your eyes, nose, mouth or in any open sores you may have.

Clean and disinfect any surface on which bodily fluids have been spilled. Use as per the manufacturer’s instructions. Never use mops for cleaning up blood and body fluid spillages - paper towels should be used.

Discard fluid contaminated material in a plastic bag along with the disposable gloves. The bag must be securely sealed and disposed of in the yellow hazardous waste bags and bin provided outside the school.

Managing nappies

Staff must wash and dry their hands after every nappy change, before handling another child or leaving the nappy changing room. Soiled nappies should be securely sealed and deposited in the yellow hazardous waste bags and bin provided outside the school.

Clean children’s skin with a disposable wipe. Flannels should not be used to clean bottoms. Label nappy creams and lotions with the child’s name and do not share with others.

Wipe changing mats with soapy water or a baby wipe after each use. Mats should be cleaned thoroughly with hot soapy water if visibly soiled and at the end of each day. Check weekly for tears and discard if the cover is damaged.

Potties should be cleaned in the designated sink for cleaning potties. Staff must wear household rubber gloves to flush contents down the toilet. The potty should be washed in hot soapy water, dried and stored upside down.

The rubber gloves should be washed whilst wearing them and then wash and dry hands after taking them off.

Toilets

- Keep toilets clean at all times. The school cleaners have a responsibility of ensuring that the toilets are clean at the beginning of the day. Staff may have to supplement this cleaning procedure on occasions and check the state of cleanliness regularly.

One to one carers have responsibility of ensuring basic hygiene procedures are adhered to for children in their care.

Children with continence aids

Pupils who use continence aids (like continence pads, catheters) should be encouraged to be as independent as possible. The principles of basic hygiene should be applied by both pupils and staff involved in the management of these aids. Continence pads should be changed in a designated area. Disposable powder-free non-sterile latex gloves and a disposable plastic apron should also be worn. Gloves and aprons should be changed after every pupil. Hands should be washed as appropriate.

Laundry

Staff involved with laundry services should ensure that:

- manual sluicing of clothing is not carried out as this can subject the operator to inhale fine contaminated aerosol droplets; soiled articles of clothing should be rinsed through in the washing machine pre-wash cycle, prior to washing
- gloves and aprons are worn when handling soiled linen or clothing
- hands are thoroughly washed after removing gloves
- that the laundry machines are operated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, that faults to the laundry machines are promptly reported as per Greenwich House's Health and Safety Policy, and, that the lint is removed from the dryer after each use and such removal logged in the log provided.

Dealing with contaminated clothing

Clothing of either the child or the first-aider may become contaminated with blood or body fluids. Clothing should be removed as soon as possible and placed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child with advice for the parent on how to launder the contaminated clothing. The clothing should be washed separately in a washing machine, using a pre-wash cycle, on the hottest temperature that the clothes will tolerate.

Vulnerable Children

Some children have medical conditions that make them especially vulnerable to infections that would rarely be serious in most children.

Such children include those being treated for leukaemia or other cancers, children on high doses of steroids by mouth and children with conditions which seriously reduce their natural immunity.

The 'Essential Information On Pupils' document which is filled in on every child prior to entry into the school, kindergarten or crèche should enable parents to inform us of such special needs with regard to their child/children.

These children are especially vulnerable to chicken-pox or measles. If a vulnerable child is exposed to either of these, the parents/carers should be informed promptly so that they can seek further medical advice as necessary.

Pregnant staff in school

Some infections, if caught by a pregnant woman can pose a danger to her unborn baby.

The Guidance says:-

“It should be noted that the greatest risk to pregnant women from such infections comes from their own household rather than the workplace. However, if a pregnant woman develops a rash, or is in direct contact with someone with a rash who is potentially infectious, she should consult her doctor or midwife.

Chickenpox

Chickenpox can affect the pregnancy if a woman has not already had the infection. The GP and midwife should be informed promptly. A blood test may be arranged to check immunity if it isn't already known. Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox therefore anyone who has not had chickenpox is potentially vulnerable to the infection if they have close contact with a case of shingles.

Measles

Measles during pregnancy can result in early delivery or even loss of the baby. If a pregnant woman is exposed, the midwife should be informed immediately. All female staff of child-bearing age working with young children, should have evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine.

Rubella (German measles)

If a pregnant woman comes into contact with German measles she should inform her GP and midwife immediately. The infection may affect the developing baby if the woman is not immune and is exposed in early pregnancy.

All female staff of child-bearing age working with young children, should have evidence of 2 doses of MMR vaccine.

Slapped cheek disease (Parvovirus B19)

Slapped cheek disease (Parvovirus B19) can occasionally affect an unborn child if exposed early in pregnancy. The pregnant woman should inform their midwife promptly.”

Food handling staff

“Food handlers and catering staff may present a particular risk to the health of their pupils and staff if they become infected (or have close contact) with diseases that can be transmitted to others via the medium of food or drink.”

Greenwich House will follow the exclusion guidelines referred to above in relation to food handling staff but will also seek advice from the local Environmental Health Officer before confirming that a food handler is clear of infection to return to work. As per the Guidance, “...persons suffering from gastro-intestinal diseases should not return to work until 48 hours post recovery (no further diarrhoea or vomiting).”

Greenwich House will notify the local Environment Health Department immediately if they are informed that a food handler is suffering from or is carrying an infection likely to cause food poisoning. As they are legally obliged to do, food handlers should notify the Head Teacher or her nominated representative immediately if they are suffering from:

- typhoid fever
- paratyphoid fever
- other salmonella infections
- dysentery
- shigellosis
- diarrhoea (cause of which has not been established)
- infective jaundice
- staphylococcal infections likely to cause food poisoning like impetigo, septic skin lesions, exposed infected wounds, boils
- E. coli VTEC infection

As set out above, for the preparation of food, Greenwich House follows the Food Standards Agency’s “Safer food, better business for caterers guidance”, the link for which is:-

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers>

Animals in School

It is the policy of Greenwich House School not to have any resident animal/ pets in school.

Animals may carry infectious diseases, especially gastroenteritis.

Stray animals found on site should immediately be reported to your supervising member of staff.

For the safety / wellbeing of the children, pets belonging to parents should always be kept on a lead and must not enter the premises. Young children should never play with animals unsupervised and children must wash their hands after contact with animals.

In the event a visit by a visitor with a pet or animal being proposed, Greenwich House will follow the Guidance and undertake the appropriate risk assessment before agreeing the visit.

Bees, Wasps and Insects

Should a wasp or bee's nest be suspected do not approach it. Report it to your supervisor who will arrange for it to be dealt with.

On occasions, wasp or bees nests' found in the garden or school grounds may necessitate the evacuation of the gardens/ grounds for a period of time.

The school has access to pest control personnel who will deal with the problem and advise on any safety issues.

Wasp stings can trigger allergic reactions and reference should be made to Greenwich Houses' Food Allergy and Acute Allergic Reaction Policy

The Sun

Although not in any way an infectious disease, the rays of the sun can soon damage not only the skin of young children and babies, but also the skin of carers.

Its dangers therefore must not be ignored.

The school provides various kinds of shade including trees. New staff should ask more experienced staff to advise where these are at various times of day.

Sun hats and cream: Parents/carers are asked to provide a suitable sun hat for their children during periods of warmer weather. In Kindergarten and Creche we provide suncream onsite which we use with parental consent, alternatively parents/carers provide their own suncream. We request that cream is applied prior to every child arriving at school in warm weather and we ensure it is reapplied as necessary throughout the day. In school, parents/carers are requested to provide suncream for their child and all children are reminded about staying safe in the sun.

Trips

The Head Teacher or her designated representative should be consulted before arranging any trip.

For visits to **petting farms and zoos** the Guidance says:-

"There are a number of diseases that can be passed on to pupils and staff from infected farm animals such as campylobacter, salmonella and cryptosporidium. It is not possible to know which animals are carriers so a standard approach to reducing the risk of transmission of infection to children and staff should be taken.

Before you go

Emphasise the importance of hand hygiene during and after the visit and check that the farm has easily accessible hand washing facilities. Educate pupils not to eat, drink or put fingers in their mouths except when in designated eating areas and after they have washed their hands.

Check that the farm is well managed. Drinking taps should be clearly marked and sited in a clean area away from the animals.

During the visit

If children are allowed to handle or feed the animals, ask them not to put their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths afterwards. Check that children wash and dry their hands thoroughly after contact with animals and particularly before eating and drinking. Younger children should be supervised. Food should only be taken in the designated picnic areas. Children should be reminded not to eat anything which may have fallen on the ground. They should not eat or drink unpasteurised products like milk, cheese or ice-cream, or taste animal feed stuff such as silage and concentrates.

Manure or slurry presents a particular risk of infection and children should be warned against touching it. If they do, ensure hands are promptly washed and dried.

At the end of the visit

Ask all the children to wash and dry their hands before leaving. Ensure that they are as free as possible from faecal material²

For **water based activities** the Guidance says:-

“There is a risk of infection associated with any water-based activity on rivers, canals and freshwater docks, and also with the collection of specimens from ditches, streams and ponds. Water-based activities should only be undertaken at education authority residential centres.

Exercises such as ‘capsize drill’ and ‘rolling’ should ideally be practised in swimming pools and never in stagnant or slow-moving natural bodies of water.

Children and staff should cover all cuts, scratches and abrasions with a waterproof dressing prior to the activity. Do not eat or drink immediately after water-based activities until after hands have been washed.

The use of appropriate footwear is recommended to reduce the risk of cuts to the feet. Pupils and staff should always wash or shower after canoeing or rowing.

Anyone taking part in water based activities who becomes ill within 3 to 4 weeks of the activity is advised to seek medical advice.

It should be made clear to parents and carers that if their child becomes ill following participation in outdoor or water-based activities, the treating doctor should be made aware of the child’s participation in these activities.

Babies or children shouldn’t swim in public swimming pools for 2 weeks after diarrhoea and vomiting has stopped²

Greenwich House acknowledges that school trips may involve low risk activities and this is borne in mind when undertaking pre-trip risk assessments.

Managing specific infectious diseases

The Guidance contains additional information on managing specific infectious diseases and should be referred to when appropriate.

Immunisations

Greenwich House will seek to be supportive of parents to immunise their children and when appropriate its staff. Parents should refer to the NHS Choices NHS Vaccination Schedule at the following link:-

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/>

Additional Support

Greenwich House will provide its staff and when appropriate its pupil and parents with guidance and advice relating to the control of infectious diseases.

Various speakers will be invited into the School, Kindergarten and Crèche to pass on any new procedures or advice as may, from time to time, become available e.g. medical practitioners, school nurses, or health inspector etc.

Signed on behalf of the setting by:

..... Head Teacher

Date: Reviewed Oct 2012
Reviewed Aug 2017
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Reviewed November 2020
Reviewed March 2021
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