

Infection Control Policy

Aim:

Belinay Early Learning Centre (BELC) is obligated to ensure the Health and Safety of the children that use its service, along with its employees. To ensure that children and employees are not subjected to any risk from other individuals, attendance at the ELC will be dictated by whether there is a definite risk of spreading illness. We may require parents to withdraw their child from the nursery, in event that they require special medical attention, which is not available or refused by parents or it is considered the child is not well enough to attend their nursery sessions. We may also ask parents to withdraw their child from the nursery, if we have reasonable cause to believe that they are or maybe suffering from or have suffered from any contagious disease/infection and there remains a danger that other children at the nursery may contract such a disease/infection. We accept no responsibility for children contracting contagious diseases/infections. Parents are requested to inform the nursery if their child is suffering from any illness, sickness or allergies before attending the nursery. Children should not attend the nursery when they have a condition or illness that can be deemed to be infective and could bring harm to others.

Symptoms that would exclude a child from care include:

- ✓ If the child has a temperature of over 37.5°C (99.5°F)
- ✓ Unexplained skin rash or infection
- ✓ Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 48 hours
- ✓ Conjunctivitis which is untreated, or which has been treated for less than 24 hours
- ✓ Persistent cough or dry cough lasting more than one week without doctor's attention
- ✓ Certain illnesses, which are considered to be actively infectious or contagious.

Children must be symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to the nursery. A letter from the doctor stating that the child is fit to attend the facility should also be made available.

A brief description of infectious and contagious illnesses:

Conjunctivitis

This is an infection of the eye or eyes and is generally caused by bacteria, which is spread by hand to eye contact, or by viruses associated with a cold. The symptoms include redness, discomfort and discharge from the affected eye. Attention to scrupulous hand hygiene can prevent spreading of the infection.

Chicken Pox

This is a common infectious disease, which is characterized by a rash (pustules) and slight fever. The disease is spread by airborne droplets and can be infectious 21 days before rash appears up until a week after, or until the rash has scabbed and dried.

Gastroenteritis (D&V)

This is an inflammation of the stomach and intestines caused by any of a variety of bacteria, viruses and other small organisms that have contaminated food or water. Symptoms include appetite loss, nausea, vomiting, cramps and diarrhea. The affected individual can spread the illness when attention is not paid to personal hygiene, including hand washing.

Measles

This is highly infectious characterized by a rash and fever. It is spread by airborne droplets of nasal secretions. Infected children can transmit the virus during the 8-to-14-day incubation period and up to one week after the onset of symptoms.

Mumps

This is a viral illness spread by airborne droplets. The chief symptom is inflammation and swelling of the parotid glands just inside the angle of the jaw. This disease can be spread to others for about a week before and up to two weeks after the symptoms appear.

Scabies

This is a skin infestation caused by mites, which burrow into the skin. The mite's burrow can be seen on the skin as scaly swellings usually between the fingers and on the wrist. The infestation causes itching. Scabies is highly contagious during close physical contact. Specific treatment is required and 24 hours after treatment individual can attend nursery.

Impetigo

Impetigo is highly contagious. Sensible hygiene precautions prevent the spread of bacteria and reduce the risk of other people catching it. Impetigo has a characteristic look to it, with inflamed red lumps and leaking pus to form thick yellow crusts. It spreads very quickly. It is common on the hands and around the mouth and nose. Severe infections can affect the whole body. To prevent the impetigo returning, keep skin clean and ensure than any condition causing broken skin (e.g., eczema, nappy rash) is treated early.

Whooping Cough

This is caused by bacteria, which is spread by airborne droplets. Child is seen as infectious when exhibiting symptoms such as cough (which can have a characteristic whoop), sneezing, nasal discharge, fever and sore eyes.

Hand, Foot & Mouth

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a common infectious disease, caused by Coxsackie virus. It is a disease mainly of children, especially of toddlers, and is very serious. Hand, foot and mouth disease is very contagious (easily spread) and is common in children under 10 years of age. However, adolescents and adults can also be affected. It features many small blisters (vesicles) in the mouth and on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. These may also appear on other parts of the body. There may be some difficulty in swallowing, a slight fever and occasionally vomiting.

Scarlet Fever

The disease often starts with a sore throat or a skin infection about 12 hours before the main symptoms appear. The characteristic symptom of scarlet fever is a fine rash on the body that feels like sandpaper to touch. It may start in one place, but soon spreads to many parts of the body, commonly the neck, chest, elbows, inner thighs and groin. The rash does not normally spread to the face, but the cheeks become flushed and the area just around the mouth stays quite pale. The overall impression of someone with a flushed, red face is what gives the disease its name. Other symptoms include: - high temperature, headache, white coating on tongue (which peels a few days later, leaving the tongue looking red and swollen – known as strawberry tongue), and a general feeling of malaise. Scarlet Fever is infectious. It is spread through close physical contact or by contact with the mucus from an infected person. Very severe infections may cause high fever, feeling sick and vomiting. Scarlet Fever is a notifiable disease. This means that the nursery must report any cases to the local health authorities, so they can monitor the spread of the disease.

Tonsillitis

Tonsillitis, whether due to a virus or bacteria, is spread from person to person by saliva, hand contact or airborne droplets. The incubation period between picking up the infection and its onset is usually between 2 and 4 days. Children may have a sore throat, pain on swallowing, headache, a feeling of malaise, fever, which may be very high in young children. Constipation and earache are also common. The tongue may well be furry and breath unpleasant. It may be difficult to open mouth and speech may be thickened. Tonsillitis caused by streptococcal bacteria responds well to antibiotic treatment. This should always be given if the infection is streptococcal.

Antibiotic Treatment/Medicine

Children who are prescribed antibiotic medicine must be refrained from attending the Nursery for 24 hours after the first initial dose. Antibiotics have the potential to cause allergic reaction thus necessitating close observation by parent/carer.

GUIDELINES FOR ILLNESSES WHERE CHILDREN ARE ASKED TO REFRAIN FROM ATTENDING THE EARLY YEARS SETTING

Ailment/Illness	Exclusion period/Treatment
Conjunctivitis	Must take to doctor to confirm and treat. Infection must be cleared before the child can attend the Nursery.
Chicken Pox	Can take up to 10-20 days for rash to come out, return to the setting allowed only when sores have dried and scabbed over.
Gastroenteritis/ Gastric Disorders	One clear week since last episode.

Measles	7-10 days from outset of rash.
Mumps	10 days from outset of swollen glands.
Scabies Impetigo Skin Disorders	24 hours after full course of treatment/until infection has cleared. Children with impetigo should be kept away from the nursery until spots have dried up and no longer leaking fluid. With use of antibiotics, impetigo usually heals within a week.
Whooping Cough	5 days from commencing the antibiotic treatment.
Diarrhea	After a minimum of 3 soiled nappies, exclusion 48 hours.
Vomiting	After 48 hours from onset.
High Temperature	If we cannot maintain a safe temperature, a child will need to be collected for his/her own safety.
Hand, Foot and Mouth	There is a short four-to six-day incubation period between exposure and development of initial symptoms (fever and malaise). A person is most contagious during the first week of illness.
Scarlet Fever	Common treatment is a short course of antibiotics. Paracetamol can be used to bring down the fever. Children should be excluded for five days after the start of treatment and kept away from other the children as much as possible.
Tonsillitis	Antibiotic treatment required, exclusion until infection clears.
Antibiotic Medicine	24 hrs. exclusion after initial dose of antibiotic

Belinay Early Learning Centre reserves the right to administer first aid and any emergency treatment as required. Parents will be informed of all accidents and will be required to sign an accident form/ incident form.

We will administer prescribed medicines only if parents have completed a 'Medical consent' form.

We have a realistic attitude to the needs of working parents, but we reserve the right to contact parents if their child becomes ill during the nursery hours. Parents would need to pick their child up as soon as possible. Please note that if the child is travelling by our nursery transportation, we cannot take the responsibility of sending your child by bus if they are sick.