

## **INFECTION CONTROL POLICY**

Mallusk Community Playgroup recognises the importance of infection control within our playgroup setting. All staff will attend Health and Safety and Food Hygiene training and keep our awarded certificates up to date (presently every 3 years).

### **Principles**

As outlined in UN Convention of the Rights of the Child '*Children have the right to be as healthy as possible, live and play in a safe, healthy, unpolluted environment and benefit from preventative health care and education*'.

### **Policy's Statement of Intent**

We at Mallusk Community Playgroup are committed to creating an environment for children and adults, free from infection and hazards. In order to achieve this, the following procedures will be strictly followed:

#### **Hand Washing**

Hand washing is the most important public health measure of all times. Effective hand washing is the mainstay of infection control for most germs amongst children and adults in an early years setting, regardless of the way germs are transmitted.

We will ensure that:

- ✓ Hand will be washed by staff and children after using the toilet and before meals;
- ✓ Children will be educated on how to wash their hands properly (as soon as they commence playgroup);
- ✓ Very young children will get assistance in hand washing;
- ✓ Older children will be supervised during hand washing;
- ✓ Liquid soap will be used;
- ✓ Pre-moistened wipes will not be used as a substitute for soap and water;
- ✓ Paper towels will be used to dry hands;
- ✓ Hands will be washed vigorously using unscented liquid soap.

#### **Accidental Soiling**

Staff are NOT permitted to carry out sluicing of clothes i.e. rinsing soiled clothes due to toileting or vomiting accident under a water tap. If accidental soiling occurs we will ensure that:

- ✓ Soiled material is scraped off into the toilet;
- ✓ Disposable gloves and apron are worn while doing this;
- ✓ Soiled clothing will be placed in a bag for parents to launder;
- ✓ Staff must wash their hands after handling soiled clothing, even though they have been wearing gloves.

#### **Cleaning of Toilet Area**

Staff are to ensure that the toilets are clean at the start and end of the session. Before parent's come into the setting to collect their child, a member of staff will ensure that toilets have been flushed and no towels are on the floor. Additional cleaning should be carried out during the session as and when necessary. The procedure for this is as follows:

- ✓ All toilets are to be cleaned daily with antibacterial spray or hot soapy water (includes toilet seat, handle, and cistern).
- ✓ If an area becomes contaminated with infected materials e.g. diarrhoea or vomit, the area will be washed immediately and spillages attended to as they occur.
- ✓ Sinks will be cleaned daily with antibacterial spray or hot soapy water (includes sink bowl, taps, unit and tiles).
- ✓ Toilet paper will be provided for children at all times.
- ✓ Staff will report any shortage to the playgroup leader/asst. playgroup leader who will order items from supplier.
- ✓ The water will be checked each morning to ensure correct temperature for hand washing (38°C).

### Cleaning Materials

All cleaning materials will be stored in the cupboard under the sink in the kitchen (H & S notice displayed and in cupboard in disabled toilet). The following also will be adhered to:

- ✓ Mops will be steeped thoroughly after use in a mop bucket with hot soapy water and left to dry.
- ✓ Buckets will be washed out and dried after use.
- ✓ Mops used to clean bodily fluid will be cleaned by:
  - Hot soapy water;
  - Rinsed with a disinfecting agent;
  - Wrung as dry as possible;
  - Hung to dry completely.

### Cleaning of toys, equipment and furnishings

Staff will ensure that all equipment are cleaned on a regular basis. The procedures are:

- ✓ Mats and carpet area will be vacuumed daily and steam cleaned as required (at least once a year);
- ✓ Tables and chairs will be cleaned and washed with antibacterial spray on a daily basis and as and when necessary;
- ✓ Toy equipment will be washed with hot water and detergent or antibacterial spray as and when necessary (or when being set out for children);
- ✓ Additional cleaning will be carried out as when required.
- ✓ Soft toys, such as the Media Initiative puppets and the table mascots will be washed by a member of staff in a washing machine at a hot cycle and tumble dried.
- ✓ Water play toys will be stored on the shelving units provided for water and the water tray will be emptied and covered each afternoon.
- ✓ Play dough will be made up each morning, alongside the children, and will be disposed of during tidy up time in the bin. Children will be discouraged from putting dough in their mouths.
- ✓ Sand will be checked at the end of the day by raking it through. Sand will be sieved weekly to check for dirt/hairs etc. Sand will be covered each afternoon.

### Exclusion of sick children

Children who are unwell with an infectious ailment should not be sent to playgroup. Once they have recovered they can return, unless they pose a risk to others.

If a child falls ill whilst at the playgroup, the sick child will be taken away from the other children and comforted by a member of staff until their parent/carer arrives. The Playgroup Leader/Asst. Playgroup Leader will get in touch with the parents/carers of the child to arrange collection.

## Staff

All staff are required to follow the following procedure in order to minimise the spread of infection:

- ✓ All staff will cover all cuts, breaks in their skin, scratches or moist skin conditions with a waterproof dressing when they are at work;
- ✓ Dressings and plasters will be replaced as often as necessary and these will be blue if staff are involved in preparing food;
- ✓ All staff will report symptoms of sickness to the Playgroup Leader/Asst Playgroup Leader;
- ✓ Staff will observe exclusion periods of infectious ailments and advice will be sought if in doubt;
- ✓ Some infections, if caught by a pregnant woman, can pose a danger to her unborn child so it is imperative that staff are aware if you think you may be pregnant;
- ✓ When an outbreak of chicken pox, rubella or parvovirus occurs, parents will be informed immediately;

## Animals

We believe that children should understand the importance of looking after animals, and as such, we have got a guinea pig and fish in the setting, to promote this learning. Children will always be supervised when handling our guinea pig and will help clean out the cage, alongside a member of staff, if they would like to. The following procedure will be adhered to:

- ✓ Staff member will explain to children the importance of cleaning out the animal;
- ✓ Staff member will put disposable gloves and an apron on themselves and the children who are helping;
- ✓ Staff member will lift the animal out of the cage and put him in a safe place;
- ✓ Only equipment designated for use of cleaning the guinea pig will be used;
- ✓ The old bedding will be put into a bin bag and disposed of, straight away, in the outside big bins;
- ✓ Children will dispose of apron and gloves in this bag also and proceed to wash their hands.
- ✓ Staff member will dispose of old bedding bin bag and wash their hands immediately.

At times, we may arrange visits from animal sanctuaries or visit an open farm/zoo. If this occurs the following procedures will be adhered to:

- ✓ Children will be supervised at all times around the animals;
- ✓ Visiting pets will only be in the playroom (not the quiet room) and the area will be disinfected on their departure;
- ✓ If visiting a farm the Playgroup Leader/Asst. Playgroup Leader will carry out a risk assessment alongside HSC (Leo Larkin). The farm will be checked to ensure that washing facilities and adequate (running water, liquid soap and disposable towels) and accessible for children;
- ✓ Children will not be allowed to eat or drink anything while touring the farm and explained to the importance of not putting their fingers in their mouths;
- ✓ Children will be supervised and explained that they are not to put their faces against the animals or taste the animal's food;
- ✓ Staff will ensure that children wash their hands after being in contact with animals and particularly before eating or drinking;
- ✓ Snack will be eaten away from the animal area, in a suitable area;
- ✓ Staff will ensure that children wear suitable footwear such as wellington boots or strong shoes;
- ✓ Children's allergies will be considered prior to visit;
- ✓ Staff will ensure that all children wash their hands before departure and that footwear is as clean as possible from faecal material.

