



Sickness and Exclusion Policy

Aim

At Clare House Nursery, we are committed to providing a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for all children, families and staff. We recognise that young children are more susceptible to illness and infection and therefore work in partnership with families to minimise the spread of infectious diseases whilst ensuring children receive the care and support they need.

The nursery follows current guidance from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Department for Education (DfE) on infectious diseases and exclusion periods.

Where there is an outbreak of an infectious illness or a suspected notifiable disease, the Nursery Manager will seek advice from the UKHSA Health Protection Team, notify Ofsted where required, and implement any recommended control measures to help protect the health and wellbeing of children, families and staff.

Children Arriving Unwell

Children should only attend nursery when they are well enough to participate comfortably in normal nursery activities.

If a child arrives at nursery appearing unwell, distressed, lethargic, or requiring a level of care beyond what staff can safely provide within normal staffing ratios, the nursery reserves the right to refuse admission. This decision will always be made in the best interests of the child and to protect the health of other children and staff.

Children Who Become Unwell During the Nursery Day

If a child becomes unwell whilst attending nursery, staff will carefully assess their condition and discuss any concerns with the Room Lead, Supervisor or Nursery Manager before contacting parents wherever possible.

The decision to ask for a child to be collected will consider:

- the child's overall wellbeing
- their ability to participate comfortably in nursery activities
- the level of care they require
- the risk of spreading infection to others
- current UKHSA guidance.

The presence or absence of a temperature alone will not determine whether a child needs to go home.

Parents or carers will be contacted promptly and asked to collect their child as soon as reasonably possible if staff feel they are too unwell to remain at nursery.

Emergency Medical Treatment

If a child's condition deteriorates and emergency medical treatment is required:

- An ambulance will be called immediately.
- Parents and all emergency contacts will be contacted without delay.
- If a parent or emergency contact has not arrived before the ambulance leaves, a familiar member of staff will accompany the child to hospital.
- The child's emergency contact details, medical information, registration records and any prescribed medication will accompany them.
- Nursery staff will continue attempting to contact parents until contact has been made.

Temperature and Fever Management

Where staff suspect a child has a raised temperature, an appropriate nursery thermometer will be used in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance.

Children with a raised temperature will be kept comfortable by removing excess clothing, encouraging fluids where appropriate and remaining under close supervision whilst awaiting collection.

In exceptional circumstances, where a child's temperature continues to rise and there are concerns regarding their immediate wellbeing, the nursery holds an emergency supply of paracetamol suspension (Calpol). This will only be administered after obtaining verbal consent from a parent or carer wherever possible and in accordance with the nursery's Medication Policy. Written consent will be obtained when the child is collected.

Infectious Illnesses

To reduce the spread of infection, children should remain at home if they have:

- a high temperature
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- an infectious illness requiring exclusion
- symptoms that prevent them from participating comfortably in nursery activities.

Parents may be advised to seek medical advice from their GP, NHS 111 or pharmacist before their child returns to nursery.

Children who have experienced vomiting or diarrhoea must remain away from nursery for **48 hours** after the last episode.

The nursery reserves the right to refuse admission to any child who appears too unwell to safely attend.

Common Childhood Illnesses and Nursery Exclusion Periods

At Clare House Nursery, we recognise that some childhood illnesses spread very quickly within early years settings and can affect children in different ways, particularly babies, younger children and those who may be more vulnerable.

The following exclusion periods have been risk assessed by the Nursery Manager as part of our Infection Prevention and Control procedures. In some cases, these exclusion periods may be longer than the minimum guidance issued by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). This reflects the nature of our nursery environment, where young children learn through close contact, shared play and personal care routines, increasing the risk of infection spreading.

Our aim is to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all children, families and staff whilst reducing the likelihood of widespread outbreaks that may significantly impact the nursery community.

Coughs, Colds and Sore Throats

Children with coughs, colds or sore throats may continue to attend nursery if they are well enough to participate in normal daily activities and do not have a raised temperature. If a child becomes unwell during the day or is unable to cope with the nursery routine, parents will be contacted and asked to collect them.

Conjunctivitis

If a child develops symptoms of conjunctivitis whilst attending nursery, parents will be contacted and advised to seek advice from a GP or pharmacist.

Where treatment has been given or prescribed by pharmacist, we ask that children remain at home for **48 hours after treatment has commenced**, allowing time for the medication to take effect and helping to reduce the spread of infection within the nursery.

If parents choose not to use treatment, we ask that children remain away from nursery until all symptoms have completely resolved and their eyes are clear.

Chickenpox

Children should remain absent from nursery for a **minimum of five days** from the onset of the rash and may return once all spots have crusted over, dried completely and they are otherwise well enough to participate in normal nursery activities.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

Due to the highly contagious nature of Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease within an early years environment, Clare House Nursery asks that children remain at home for the **first three days after the blisters appear**.

Children should only return once they are feeling well, are free from a high temperature and are able to participate comfortably in nursery activities.

Slapped Cheek Syndrome (Parvovirus B19)

Although children are usually no longer infectious once the rash appears, because this illness can present a risk to pregnant women and vulnerable individuals, we ask that children remain away from nursery until they have **fully recovered and are well enough to participate in normal activities**.

Whooping Cough

Children must remain absent from nursery until they have **completed the recommended course of antibiotic treatment**, or for the exclusion period advised by their healthcare professional, and are well enough to return.

Head Lice

Head lice are not normally an excludable condition. Parents will be informed if lice are identified and asked to begin treatment promptly. In exceptional circumstances, where an infestation is severe or remains untreated, parents may be asked to keep their child at home until appropriate treatment has been completed.

Antibiotics

Children prescribed antibiotics do not routinely need to be excluded from nursery. They may return once they are well enough to participate fully in nursery activities unless advised otherwise by their GP or UKHSA guidance.

COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Infections

Clare House Nursery manages COVID-19 in the same way as other respiratory infections, in line with current guidance from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), the NHS and the Department for Education.

Children who have a high temperature, feel generally unwell or are unable to participate comfortably in nursery activities should remain at home until they are well enough to return.

Good infection prevention remains part of our daily practice and includes:

- regular handwashing with soap and water

- promoting good respiratory hygiene using the "Catch it, Bin it, Kill it" approach
- regular cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces
- maintaining good ventilation throughout the nursery
- encouraging good personal hygiene practices.

Parents are encouraged to notify the nursery if their child has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or another significant infectious illness. This enables us to monitor patterns of illness and implement any additional measures if required.

Please note: This list is not exhaustive. Where a child develops another infectious illness, or where there is uncertainty regarding exclusion periods, Clare House Nursery will assess the individual circumstances, seek advice from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) where appropriate, and implement any additional control measures necessary to protect the wider nursery community.

Outbreak Management

If an outbreak of an infectious illness occurs within the nursery, the Nursery Manager will seek advice from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Somerset Council Public Health and Ofsted where appropriate.

Additional infection control measures may include:

- enhanced cleaning and disinfection
- increased ventilation
- temporary suspension of activities where there is a higher risk of cross-contamination
- additional hand hygiene measures
- communication with families regarding the outbreak and any recommended exclusion periods.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents and carers are expected to:

- keep children at home when they are genuinely unwell
- notify the nursery promptly of any infectious illness or diagnosis
- collect their child as soon as reasonably possible when requested
- ensure emergency contact details remain accurate and up to date
- follow current exclusion guidance before returning their child to nursery.

Nursery Responsibilities

Clare House Nursery will:

- monitor children's health and wellbeing throughout the day
- maintain high standards of hygiene and infection prevention
- follow current UKHSA guidance regarding exclusion periods

- communicate openly with families during periods of illness or outbreaks
- support children to return to nursery safely following illness.

We appreciate the support of our families in helping us maintain a healthy nursery environment. By working together and following current public health guidance, we can reduce the spread of infection and help protect the health, wellbeing and safety of all children, families and staff.

