



Lawrence Area School Sickness and Infectious Disease Policy

Rationale

The health and well-being of children and staff is paramount.

Purpose

1. To ensure that children and staff are protected from the spread of disease while attending school.
2. To ensure that all children who become unwell while at school are cared for appropriately.
3. To reduce the spread and impact of infectious diseases.

Guidelines:

Parents' responsibilities

- Parents will provide the school with current health information about their child including allergies, changes in their health, as well as contact details and emergency numbers.
- Parents will keep their children home when they are unwell (see guidelines below).
- Parents should contact the school before 9.30am if their child is unwell and will not be attending school for the day.
- Parents should inform the school if they suspect or know their child has an infectious disease.
- Children should be kept home for 48 hours after having diarrhoea or vomiting.
- Parents will inform the school if their child requires to be given any medications at school or have their medications supervised, in which case they will sign a form giving consent for this.
- Parents will consent to the school managing emergency treatments.
- An individual health plan can be written by the parents and the public health nurse to cover a child's individual health needs and management of a health condition.

Schools responsibility

- School will notify parents immediately when a child is unwell and request children to be taken home if they are unwell.
- School will isolate a child who is thought to have an infectious disease (has a fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhoea, or respiratory symptoms) until a parent can collect them.
- In cases of accidents the school will contact emergency services or the child's doctor.
- School will notify parents if their child has an accident or requires emergency treatment at the soonest possible opportunity.
- School will maintain an accident register.
- School will ensure there are always staff members on site with a current First Aid Certificate.
- School staff will sign a medication sheet whenever they give a child medication at school.
- Staff will not come to work if they have an infectious disease.
- Schools will have an emergency management plan (refer to MoE website)

Sick Bays

- Schools will maintain an area where sick children can rest if unwell and are waiting for a parent to take them home.
- This rest area/sick bay should be kept clean at all times to avoid spreading infectious diseases.
- It is recommended that the sickbay should be cleaned after use by a child with a suspected infectious disease.
- All staff will wear plastic gloves when dealing with body fluids.
- All body fluids including vomit, blood and diarrhoea will be disposed of according to MoE Health & Safety guidelines.
- A sick bay or health & safety register should be kept up to date.
- A school staff member who holds a current First Aid Certificate will observe children while in the sick bay area.

When to keep sick children home from school;

The Ministry of Health (1997) guidelines for Early Childhood Centres suggest the following; *“In general children should stay away from an early childhood service when they are ill and causing concern or; have no interest in activities or play, have little energy, want or need to sleep or rest for long periods, cry easily and are irritable or in pain, constantly want to be held and comforted, have a fever, and has diarrhoea or vomiting”* and that children should stay away until the symptoms cease and they are well enough to be at school.

In schools the above is still relevant. Parents should keep their children away from school if they have any of the following symptoms and should notify the school of this;

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Runny eyes
- Skin rashes
- Respiratory symptoms

Do not hesitate to contact your school for advice if you are unsure. Alternatively contact your primary health carer (GP), Public Health Nurse, Plunket or Practice Nurse for advice.

References

Ministry of Education. (2006). *Health conditions in education settings: Supporting children and young people*. Wellington: Ministry of Education

Ministry of Health. (1997). *Nga Kupu Oranga: Healthy Messages. A health and safety resource for early childhood services*. Wellington: Ministry of Health

The **Ministry of Education website** has information for schools and early childhood services on pandemic planning and health and safety guidelines

Supporting Document: Pandemic Action Plan

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