**Infection control Policy**

**COVID 19 version**

**Statement of intent**

Here at Greenfields Childcare it is our aim to minimise the spread of infection for staff and children through the implementation of controls which reduce the transmission and spread of germs. We aim to promote and maintain the health of children and staff through the control of infectious illnesses.

**What is an infectious disease/illness?**

*Infectious diseases are disorders caused by organisms — such as bacteria, viruses (COVID 19), fungi or parasites. Some infectious diseases can be passed from person to person. Some are transmitted by bites from insects or animals. And others are acquired by ingesting contaminated food or water or being exposed to organisms in the environment.*

**Reporting/recording of illness**

* Staff will report any infectious illness to the childcare manager
* COVID 19 is a reportable infection. The childcare manager will report an outbreak of any infectious disease to the HSE Preschool Environmental Health Officer (EHO) and the Public Health Department. A list of all notifiable diseases is kept in the manager’s office for reference.
* The manager must record all details of illness reported to them by staff or reported by parents of a child attending the service. These details will include the name, symptoms, dates and duration of the illness.

**Exclusion**

* Unwell children, i.e. those with a forehead temperature of 38 degrees and or other specific signs and symptoms, should be excluded from the centre until a diagnosis is made and the appropriate exclusion period for that illness is served.
* COVID Protocol: If COVID 19 is suspected the child will be isolated in a room set aside for this purpose, with a member of staff until the child is collected. A doctor’s letter to confirm this is not the case will be required before the child can return to the service or the child will be excluded for a 14 day period.
* A doctor’s certificate may be required for certain conditions to ensure they are no longer contagious before children return to the service.
* Children should remain at home if they are suffering from general diarrhoea or vomiting until 24 hours after being symptom free.

**Hand Hygiene**

* Staff and children must wash their hands on arrival into the service
* Hand washing facilities are always available for children and include hot (not exceeding 43 degrees) and cold water, liquid soap and paper hand towels.
* Hand washing facilities are available in all toilets, nappy changing areas, kitchens, baby, toddler, pre-school rooms and after-school room.
* COVID Protocol: Children are required to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after playing outside. And, once an hour throughout their attendance at Greenfields.
* COVID Protocol: Staff must wash their hands: before preparing or serving food, before feeding children, before eating or drinking , after going to the toilet, after assisting children at the toilet, after nappy changing, after dealing with any body fluids, after cleaning procedures, after caring for sick children, after handling soiled clothing or items and after dealing with waste. Staff must also sanitise their hands regularly throughout the day and after contact with a child.
* COVID Protocol: Hand washing technique: Wet hands under hot water (not exceeding 430 C for children to prevent scalding), apply liquid soap, rub vigorously paying particular attention to palms, backs, wrists, fingernails and fingers and rubbing between each finger and around the thumbs, rinse, dry thoroughly using disposable paper towels and turn off taps using the paper towel.
* COVID Protocol: Please remember, hand sanitising does not replace washing hands regularly

**Respiratory Etiquette**

* Safe practices are followed for coughing, sneezing and wiping of noses.
* Tissues are single use
* Tissues are disposed of promptly after use
* Hands are washed or sanitised immediately afterwards by both the child and the staff member.

**Soothers:**

* COVID Protocol: To minimise contamination from home, parents will be asked to supply new soothers – still in their packaging, which will be kept at Greenfields and used only by their child. These soothers will not go home.

**Toilets and potties**

* Toilet areas, including toilet handles, doors, toilet seats and wash hand basins are cleaned frequently throughout the day in accordance with the cleaning schedule and immediately if soiled.
* Potties are emptied into the toilet, cleaned (with hot water and detergent) and disinfected.
* Trainer seats are thoroughly cleaned after each use.

**Nappy Changing**

* Nappy changing is only carried out in the designated nappy changing areas.
* Parents will provide creams, wipes or lotions for their child, these will not be shared.
* The changing mat and area will be cleaned (with hot water and detergent) and disinfected and dried thoroughly after use.
* Disposable gloves are worn by staff when changing a nappy. A new pair of gloves is required for each nappy change.
* Soiled nappies are placed in a nappy bag which is tied and disposed of in a bin outside the building. Wet nappies are disposed of in the nappy bin which is emptied each day.
* The nappy changing area is cleaned in accordance with the cleaning schedule.
* Changing mats are regularly checked to ensure the cover is not cracked or torn. Changing mats will be discarded of in such an event.

**Bodily Fluid Spillage**

* Spills of blood, vomit, urine or excreta will be cleaned up as immediately. The area will be sectioned off if possible until the spill has been dealt with.
* Disposable plastic gloves are worn when cleaning up any bodily fluid spillage. Paper towels are used to clean up spillages and placed directly into a plastic bag for disposal.
* Ordinary household bleach freshly diluted (1 to 10 parts water), is used for cleaning and disinfection of bodily fluid spillages
* If possible and safe to do so, diluted bleach will be poured directly over the spill, it will then be covered and mopped up with disposable paper towels.
* Disposable paper towels and gloves, are disposed of in a plastic bag and sealed.

**Waste Management:**

* COVID Protocol: All wastepaper bins should be pedal operated and emptied and lunchtime and at the end of the day
* COVID Protocol: Nappies and items used during the nappy change need to be bagged and removed from the building immediately
* COVID Protocol: Bodily Fluid and items used during the clean up process need to be bagged and removed from the building immediately

**Food and Kitchen Hygiene**

* Staff involved in toileting children or nappy changing are not involved in food handling.
* Staff will not engage in any aspects of minding children while preparing food.
* COVID Protocol: Until further notice, all snacks and drinks will be provided by Greenfields to eliminate lunch bags, drinks bottles etc coming in from home. Staff in the rooms will be provided with snacks by the kitchen
* COVID Protocol: Kitchen staff will bring hot meals to the classrooms. The Hall will not be in service for lunchtime until further notice.
* Any food delivery person should have limited access to the kitchen and surfaces, door handles etc wiped with a sterilising solution immediately after the shopping has been delivered.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (COVID Protocol)**

* **Visors:** Each staff member will have their own visor. Visors are not to be shared. The visor should be used when greeting parents, caring for a sick child or during prolonged contact with a child (eg nappy changing)
* **Disposable Face Masks**: Masks should be used when caring for a sick child or during prolonged contact with a child
* **Disposable Apron**: Aprons to be used as normal
* **Disposable Gloves:** Gloves to be used as normal

**Cleaning & Sanitising Products to be used**

* Hand Sanitiser: To be used regularly throughout the day
* Soap & Hot Water: Hands to be washed at regular intervals throughout the day
* Washing Up Liquid & Hot Water: Toys, dishes etc can still be washed as normal
* Milton: Should be used in addition to normal cleaning for sterilising all surfaces and toys
  + High contact areas such as tables, counters, door handles, backs of chairs, stair gates and handrails are to be cleaned hourly throughout the day.

**Personal Property**

* COVID Protocol: until further notice, children are not allowed to bring items from home other than a change of clothes and their own soothers in a new, unopened box
* COVID Protocol: Toys, blankets, lunch bags, drinks cups, lunch boxes etc are not allowed – drinks, food, snacks etc will be provided by the Service.

**Social Distancing**

* COVID Protocol: To facilitate social distancing the staff room will be closed. Tea and coffee facilities will be available in the kitchen. Breaks to be taken outside or in your car, maintaining social distancing or remain in your room.
* COVID Protocol: The Hall will be closed for serving Dinners. Kitchen staff to bring meals to the individual rooms.
* COVID Protocol: Where possible, remain 2 meters apart from other staff in your room

**Ventilation**

* COVID Protocol: When weather allows, windows should remain open. When this is not possible, windows should be opened during ‘outside play’

**Laundry:**

* Clean laundry should be kept separate from other rooms to avoid cross contamination
* Dirty laundry should be kept away from clean laundry to avoid cross contamination
* Dirty laundry should be washed at the highest temperature the item will allow.
* 60degree wash is preferable.

***To ensure the highest standard of cleanliness – this service operates on a clean as you go policy***

***Related Policies: Fitness to Handle Food Policy***