



# **SICKNESS POLICY**



## Sickness Policy Jonah Special School

### Introduction

All children will experience some level of sickness from time to time. Sickness in settings where there is a group of people together can be problematic as it can result in the sickness being passed from person to person. Such situations can often mean the sickness lingers within a setting for much longer than it should. While sickness is a part of growing up it can create special concerns for parents of children and for the staff that work with them. In order to attempt to control sickness, among both students and staff within Jonah Special School, the school has drawn up the following policy for sickness among students.

### Health/Illness

Please notify the Principal at Jonah Special School if your child is unwell and unable to attend if possible before 9:30am.

***If you are in doubt whether your child is well enough to attend, please let him/her have a day at home. Jonah Special School is not equipped to cope with sick children.***

Jonah Special School seeks to promote and encourage good health and hygiene for all the children in our care. This includes monitoring the children for signs and symptoms of communicable illnesses, for example, diarrhea, vomiting, eye infections, chickenpox, measles, head lice etc. If your child has an infectious illness please inform us. Exclusion periods for childhood illnesses vary and this information is available from your GP. However if there is an outbreak of an illness that is highly contagious the exclusion periods will be extended.

In the school setting, there is always the possibility of cross infection between children, from children to staff, and from staff to children. Should a child become ill while in our care, and if the school feels there is cause for concern, the parents will be notified. If the school feels the child should be sent home parents will be asked to collect their child. In the case of severe illness or accident and where a first-aid individual recommends, the school will ring an ambulance and inform parents of this course of action.

### Symptoms to be Aware Of

**In the case that your child presents with any of the following symptoms please *do not* bring them to school –**

### Sticky Eye (Conjunctivitis)

This is an infectious condition. Close contact between children necessitates rapid treatment. If your child possibly has sticky eye the school will request parents to seek treatment. If it is confirmed, the child can return 48 hours after treatment is commenced. Parents should ask their doctor to prescribe drops rather than ointment for continued use on return to the School.



## **Diarrhea and/or Vomiting**

Where an infection is suspected or confirmed, the child should be excluded from contact with others at the school. In cases of non-contagion, the child should also be excluded from contact with others at the school until this is confirmed. The child should not be returned for at least 48 hours after diarrhea and/or vomiting have completely stopped. Returning earlier than this may spread infection to other children, which could re-infect your child. Exemptions will be made where children may be taking medication for pre-existing conditions which may result in loose bowel motions, or where bowels are loose as the norm.

## **Rash**

In the absence of a temperature, a rash may be nothing to worry about. Where a rash exists medical advice should be sought and the rash should be confirmed non-contagious or non-infectious before the child is brought into school.

## **Chicken Pox**

Once the lesions have scabbed over, it is all right for the child to return. This is usually between 7 and 10 days from the commencement of the illness. Anyone who is pregnant or who thinks they may be pregnant should see their doctor if contact with chicken pox or rubella was possible.

## **High Temperature (37.5C and above)**

When a child develops a temperature while in our care, as long as the child is not significantly ill, first aid measures will be taken to cool the child such as removing excess clothing and giving cool drinks. Should these measures not result in a temperature reduction, or if the child's condition deteriorates, the parents will be informed and the child will need to go home.

## **Colds and Flus**

Colds are the most common infections in children. If there is a high fever or if the child is more ill than would be anticipated with a cold then they should be evaluated by their GP to rule out any bacterial infection. Children should be excluded from school if they are too ill to participate in regular activities.

## **Medication**

Children taking antibiotics should not attend until 48 hours after the treatment began and then only if they are actually getting better. Where a child is taking a prescribed medicine as treatment from their doctor, the medication will be administered at the school, only with written permission from parents, consent from staff to administer and with directions for administration. Parents must supply said medications in labeled containers with instructions for delivery clearly printed on them. Alternatively, the school will facilitate parents coming to administer medications during the day as required. Patient medicines, not prescribed by a doctor, such as cough mixtures and throat lozenges will not be given to the children by the staff.

***The guidelines apply to ALL the children at the School.***



## Accidents

In the case of a minor accident, the Principal or class teacher will inform parents of the incident when they are collected. Accidents may occur despite the close monitoring of a staff member. When deemed necessary by a qualified first aider first aid will be administered to the student. Current members of staff who hold an up to date first aid certificate include:

1. Caitríona Barry
2. Carol Deane
3. Niamh McEvoy
4. Miriam Keogh
5. Robert Cody
6. Yasmin Kirk
7. Ciara Laffan
8. Áine Kinsella
9. Bernie Stubs
10. Grace Mooney
11. Gemma Levear
12. Sue Foley

Only when there is cause for concern, and as recommended by a first aider, is an ambulance called or the child taken to Accident and Emergency. If a serious accident or illness occurs the parent is contacted immediately and the appropriate action taken. In the event of the parent not being available a senior member of staff will take any necessary action, which may include taking the child to hospital along with all the relevant details. All accidents are recorded.

## Jonah Special School

### Sickness Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Jonah Special School at its meeting held on:

**Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

**Next Review Period: *September 2025***