When a Child is ill

In partnership with parents and carers, Pomfret Woodland Community Nursery has a duty of care to maintain safety and welfare of all children who access its provision. Effective response to childhood illnesses is a responsibility for all nursery settings. We will always follow medical guidance when fulfilling that responsibility.

At Pomfret Woodland Community Nursery we promote the good health of all children attending including oral health by:

- Asking parents* to keep children at home if they are unwell. If a child is unwell, it is in their best interest to be in a home environment rather than at nursery with their peers. This also includes if you feel they need liquid paracetamol before attending nursery, with the exception of teething, we ask you keep your child at home.
- If a child is sent home from nursery with a fever, we ask the parents to keep their child off nursery for at least 24 hours.
- Asking staff and other visitors not to attend the setting if they are unwell
- Helping children to keep healthy by providing balanced and nutritious snacks, meals and drinks
- Minimising infection through our rigorous cleaning and hand washing processes **(see infection control policy)** Ensuring children have regular access to the outdoors and having good ventilation inside
- Sharing information with parents about the importance of the vaccination programme for young children to help protect them and the wider society from communicable diseases
- Having areas for rest and sleep, where required and sharing information about the importance of sleep and how many hours young children should be having.
- We promote oral health through a range of activities and sharing information with parents and providing healthy meals and snacks.

Our procedures

In order to take appropriate action of children who become ill and to minimise the spread of infection we implement the following procedures:

- If a child becomes ill during the nursery day, we contact their parent(s) and ask them to pick up their child as soon as possible. During this time we care for the child in a quiet, calm area with their key person (wearing PPE), wherever possible. If the child has been sent home with a temperature we ask parents to keep their child at home for 24 hours.
- Should a child be unwell when they are due to attend a nursery session, parents/carer's must let the setting know as soon as possible. If a child becomes ill at home having recently attended nursery, parents are asked to inform nursery staff who will be vigilant in observing for symptom of the

illness in other children attending the setting. It is the nursery policy to monitor children for signs and symptoms of communicable diseases such as chickenpox, measles, mumps, rubella, meningitis, hepatitis, diarrhoea, vomiting and fevers of 101°F/38°C or over.

- We follow the guidance published by Public Health England (Health Protection in Schools and other childcare facilities) and advice from our local health protection unit on exclusion times for specific illnesses, e.g. sickness and diarrhoea, measles and chicken pox, to protect other children in the nursery[1]
- Should a child have an infectious disease, such as sickness and diarrhoea, they must not return to nursery until they have been clear for at least 48 hours
- We inform all parents if there is a contagious infection identified in the nursery, to enable them to spot the early signs of this illness. We thoroughly clean and sterilise all equipment and resources that may have come into contact with a contagious child to reduce the spread of infection. If necessary we take steps to minimise cross contamination by limiting sensory play such as sand, water and playdough.
- We notify Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practical, but in any event within 14 days of the incident of any food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises.
- Parents and carers are asked to keep their child at home for the first 24 hours after starting any antibiotics or newly prescribed medication. The only exception is when the medication forms part of an ongoing care plan for an existing medical condition (for example, asthma) and the child is otherwise well. We recognise that some antibiotic courses are supplied in two bottles. In some cases, the second bottle may be prepared using powder from a different manufacturer, which may increase the possibility of a reaction. For this reason, we ask parents and carers to keep their child at home for the first 24 hours after starting each bottle. This precaution allows time to monitor for any potential side effects. Even if a child has taken the same antibiotic previously, we still ask that this procedure is followed.
- We have the right to refuse admission to a child who is unwell. This decision will be taken by the manager on duty and is non-negotiable
- We make information and posters about head lice readily available and all parents are requested to regularly check their children's hair. If a parent finds that their child has head lice, we would be grateful if they could inform the nursery so that other parents can be alerted to check their child's hair.

Meningitis procedure

If a parent informs the nursery that their child has meningitis, the nursery manager will contact the Local Area Infection Control (IC) Nurse. The IC Nurse will give guidance and support in each individual case. If parents do not inform the nursery, we may be contacted directly by the IC Nurse and the appropriate support given. We will follow all guidance given and notify any of the appropriate authorities including Ofsted where necessary.

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[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities

We will follow the transporting children to hospital procedure in any cases where children may need hospital treatment.

The nursery manager/staff member must:

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  - Parents must have agreed for nursery to take necessary steps to ensure that their child receives appropriately care and attention should there be an emergency or incident whilst in the care of the nursery. Nursery will make every effort to contact a parent but may have to accompany the child to hospital in case of a serious incident.
  - Inform a member of the management team immediately
  - Call 999 for an ambulance immediately if the illness is severe. DO NOT attempt to transport the unwell child in your own vehicle
  - Follow the instructions from the 999 call handler
  - Whilst waiting for the ambulance, a member of staff must contact the parent(s) and arrange to meet them at the hospital
  - Redeploy staff if necessary to ensure there is adequate staff deployment to care for the remaining children. This may mean temporarily grouping the children together
  - Arrange for the most appropriate member of staff to accompany the child taking with them any relevant information such as registration forms, relevant medication sheets, medication and the child's comforter
  - Remain calm at all times. Children who witness an incident may well be affected by it and may need lots of cuddles and reassurance. Staff may also require additional support following the accident.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually in consultation with staff and parents and/or after a significant incident, e.g. serious illness/hospital visit required.

* For the purpose of this publication the term 'parents' will be used to describe all types of primary caregivers, such as biological and adoptive parents, foster carers and guardians.

Exclusion Procedure for Illness/Communicable Disease

Minimum Periods of Exclusion from Nursery

Disease/Illness	**Minimal Exclusion Period**
Antibiotics prescribed	Child to remain at home for 24 hours following first dose of medication
Temperature	If sent home ill, child must be off for 24 hours
Vomiting	Child must remain at home for 48 hours following last episode

Conjunctivitis	Child have had a full days treatment before returning.
Diarrhoea	48 hours or two days following last episode of diarrhoea
Chickenpox	5 days from appearance of the rash of until spots have crusted over
Gastro-enteritis, food poisoning, salmonellosis and dysentery	Until authorised by District Community Physician
Infective hepatitis	7 days from onset of jaundice
Measles	4 days from appearance of the rash
Meningococcal infection	Until recovered from the illness
Mumps	Until the swelling has subsided and in no case less than 5 days from onset of illness
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	21 days from the onset of paroxysmal cough
Poliomyelitis	Until declared free from infection by District Community Physician
Scarlet fever and streptococcal infection of the throat	Child can return 24 hours after commencing appropriate antibiotic treatment
Tuberculosis	Until declared free from infection by the District Community Physician
Typhoid fever	Until declared free from infection by the District Community Physician
Impetigo	Until the skin is healed or 48 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment
Pediculosis (lice)	None
Plantar warts	No exclusion. Should be treated and covered
Ringworm of scalp	None
Ringworm of body	Seldom necessary to exclude provided treatment is being given
Scabies	Child can return after administration of first treatment

In the event of a Pandemic, nursery will follow the advised guidelines of the government and Public Health England in relation to symptoms and exclusion periods.

This policy was adopted on	**Signed on behalf of the nursery**	**Date for review**
18.02.2026	*A Barrett*	*18.02.2027*