

Yarrabah School

GASTROENTERITIS

POLICY

Rationale:

- Children are at a particularly high risk for gastroenteritis. They appear to be highly susceptible to gastroenteritis and are more likely to experience uncontrolled repeated vomiting and/or diarrhoea so enhancing the spread of illness to others.
- Given the high susceptibility of young children it is essential that outbreaks of gastroenteritis are contained (keeping the number to a minimum) as quickly as possible by implementing the infection control procedures.

Aims:

To reduce the possibility of cross infection of gastroenteritis.

To respond to reports of gastroenteritis quickly and effectively.

To ensure that an effective process for controlling the infection is well known and consistently followed.

To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about gastroenteritis and infection control.

Implementation:

- For all gastrointestinal outbreaks, the following cleaning procedures must be carried out to ensure that all areas in the facility are effectively cleaned and sanitised.
 - Spills and accidents should be cleaned immediately, and a full clean-up should be conducted when there are no children present.
 - Chlorine based sanitisers must be used for cleaning in outbreak situations, as other disinfectants (such as quaternary ammonium compounds) can be ineffective.
 - All kitchen areas should be cleaned using chlorine based sanitisers at the start of every outbreak investigation.
 - Cleaning cross infection should be conducted at least twice a day until the outbreak is over.
 - A final clean-up of all areas needs to be completed at the end of every outbreak.
 - Toys should be washed regularly throughout the day with detergent and hot water and sanitised.
 - Disposable gloves must be worn when cleaning up after ill students. Place used gloves, soiled disposable nappies and wiping cloths into a plastic bag for disposal and soiled clothing into a plastic bag for laundering by parents. Change tables should be cleaned after each nappy change.
- Always wear disposable gloves when handling soiled linen, soft furnishings and toys. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
- Ensure all staff observe strict hand washing procedures, followed by bactisan and then ensure that student's hands are washed thoroughly and often.
- Always wash children's hands after every nappy change.
- School Staff will contact the Assistant Principal / Principal when they suspect a student is presenting with symptoms of Gastroenteritis. Leadership will make an informed decision taking into account the symptoms student is displaying as identified in appendix 1.
- All students suspected of having gastroenteritis symptoms should be isolated and parents contacted immediately and requested to take the child home as soon as possible.

- All children are required to remain at home until 48 hours after symptoms have ceased or return to school cleared of gastroenteritis with a doctor certificate within 24hours.
- Parents are to be given a note explaining the “quarantine” period for students sent home with gastroenteritis and/or diarrhoea.
- Students who return within 48 hours must have a doctor’s certificate clearing them of any infections.
- Any staff member that has been ill with symptoms of gastroenteritis is sent home and does not return to work until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.
- Inform parents of all children in the classroom of the outbreak, the symptoms they need to be aware of and that ill children must be kept at home for 48 hours after symptoms have ceased.
- The Principal will ensure that details of the outbreak and the control measures are in place and are conveyed to ALL staff and that staff remain updated as the outbreak progresses.

Evaluation:

To be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review process.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

March 2019

Appendix 1.

Symptoms of Gastroenteritis

- Nausea
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal cramps
- Headache
- Chills
- Low grade fever
- Muscle aches
- Tiredness

The illness often begins suddenly and symptoms can last between 1 – 10 days.