**MUNTERCONNAUGHT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**ASSOCIATION CLG**

**SUPERKIDS**

**ILLNESS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Children & Staff**

**February 2024**

At SuperKids preschool we recognise our responsibility to promote a culture in which the health and wellbeing of children is of paramount importance in order to enable them to learn. In order to maintain a clean and healthy environment for all children we ask that you refrain from bringing your child to the childcare service if he/she is sick and/or displaying any signs of illness.

**Purpose of Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to:

* ensure sick children are identified while attending this service;
* ensure sick children are cared for appropriately;
* protect all children and adults from preventable infection;
* enable staff and parents to be clear about the requirements and procedures when children are unwell; and
* prevent the spread of infection within this early years’ service.

**Guidelines**

If a child is thought to be unwell, the staff will assess his/her condition. This will be done in a kind and caring manner. The child may be distressed, so it is important for staff to remain calm and reassure the child. The Manager will be informed of any child displaying signs and symptoms of sickness or if the child is sick. If the Manager is not present the person in charge will be informed.

If the child presents to the service on arrival with a bang to the head and staff have concerns that the child may experience a concussion and will need extensive supervision, the decision of the Childcare Service Manager is final when requesting the exclusion of a child for the recommended supervision time set out by the HSE. Please find more information on head injuries in children at <http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/az/h/head-injury,-minor/>

Parents have a responsibility to notify the Manager or person in charge on arrival of any sickness or injury that has occurred to the child that may be a threat to the child’s health and safety or cause the spread of infection to other children/adults.

SuperKids understands the needs of working parents and does not aim to exclude children from the childcare service unnecessarily. However, the decision of the Manager or person in charge is final when requesting the exclusion of a child because of illness or infection.

Decisions will take into consideration the needs of the child and those of the group as well as the staff of the service.

If the Manager or person in charge consider the illness/situation to warrant immediate medical attention, the emergency services will be contacted to take the child directly to hospital and the parent / guardian will be notified at this time.

Munterconnaught Community Development Association CLG/SuperKids is committed to providing the highest standards of care for your child.

If you have any further enquiries or concerns, please feel free to request more information from our staff.

Our service prioritises the health and wellbeing of the children, and believes the child needs to be fit and well, to benefit from attending the service. In order to maintain a clean and healthy environment for all children, we ask that you refrain from bringing your child to the childcare service if he/she is sick and/or displaying signs of illness.

**Procedures**

If a child has a high temperature, the following measures will be taken to reduce the child’s temperature, before administering Calpol or any another temperature reducing medicine. (See administration of medicine policy)

The following will apply:

* loosen and remove the child’s clothing;
* check that the temperature of the room is not too warm;
* if a child is thought to be unwell within the setting it is important to assess the condition of the child. This will be done in a kind and caring manner. The child will/may be distressed, so it is important to be calm and reassuring;
* the Manager will be informed of any sick child;
* SuperKids understands the needs of working parents and does not aim to exclude children from the childcare service unnecessarily. However, the decision of the Manager is final when requesting the exclusion of a child for illness or infection in line with policies and procedures;
* children with infectious diseases will be excluded for certain periods. If staff suspects that a child has an infectious disease, they will request that parents consult a doctor before returning the child to SuperKids;
* if a parent informs the service that their child has an infectious disease, the service will need confirmation from the child’s doctor;
* should a child become ill whilst at SuperKids, the service will contact the parent or an emergency contact;
* while awaiting the arrival of parents, the staff will ensure the comfort of the child, taking appropriate action, which would include seeking medical advice if necessary;
* if the child is at risk or is in any danger, the staff will seek medical advice immediately;
* staff will report any worries about a child's health to the parents/guardians immediately;
* parents are responsible for keeping SuperKids informed about the child's health; and
* SuperKids recommends that no child should attend the childcare service while suffering from one of the communicable diseases and they should be excluded for the minimum periods recommended.

The following guidelines apply to illness / communicable diseases:

1. Your child must remain at home for 48 hours after the diarrhoea/vomiting/ high temperature has cleared.
2. All parents are informed if a child attending the service has a communicable illness

* For further information and direction on responding to outbreaks of infectious diseases we will refer to the HSE document “Management of Infectious Diseases in Childcare Facilities” – see [*https://www.hpsc.ie/az/lifestages/schoolhealth/File,13445,en.pdf*](https://www.hpsc.ie/az/lifestages/schoolhealth/File,13445,en.pdf)
* Coughs and colds do not normally require the child to be excluded but this depends on the severity and how the child is able to cope with the childcare service routine. A child who is, or who appears to be unwell may be excluded.

**Illness Policy for Adults**

Our service prioritises the health and wellbeing of the staff and children and believes that the staff need to be fit and well to perform their duties. In order to maintain a clean and healthy environment for all, we ask you to refrain from work if you are sick or displaying signs of sickness.

**Procedure:**

* Adults with a communicable illness should not attend the service.
* All parents are informed, where appropriate if a member of staff has a communicable illness.
* Arrangements are in place to provide relief cover while staff are on sick leave.
* For further information and direction on responding to outbreaks of infectious diseases we will refer to the HSE document Management of Infectious Diseases in Childcare Facilities
* Staff may be asked to provide a return to work note from their doctor stating they are well enough to resume work.
* Coughs and colds do not normally require the adult to be excluded, but this depends on the severity and how the staff member is able to cope with the childcare service routine.
* If an adult is suffering from diarrhoea or vomiting the service requests that they remain at home for 48 hours, once the diarrhoea and/or vomiting has cleared.

**NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS ILLNESSES**

The Department of Public Health should be notified;

• if there is a concern about a communicable disease or infection, or if there is need advice on controlling them;

• if there is a concern that the number of children who have developed similar symptoms is higher than normal;

• if you there is a concern that there may be an outbreak of infectious disease in the service;

• if there is uncertainty as to whether or not to exclude a child or member of staff: and/or

• before sending letters to parents about an infectious disease.

Although the child’s doctor is legally responsible for reporting serious illness, you should phone your local Department of Public Health if you become aware that a child or member of staff has a serious or unusual illness, (for example meningitis), or if a number of children or staff have the same symptoms suggesting an outbreak.

Notification should be made by a medical practitioner “as soon as she/ he becomes aware or suspects that a person on whom he is in professional attendance is suffering from or is the carrier of an infectious disease” (Infectious Diseases Regulations). Notification should be made by a clinical director of a diagnostic laboratory “as soon as an infectious disease is identified in that laboratory” (Infectious Diseases (Amendment) Regulations). Prompt notification is necessary to facilitate timely public health action. In addition to the above, there is a requirement to give “immediate preliminary notification” to a meningococcal disease) or if there is a serious outbreak of infectious disease in the locality.

Parents are asked to notify SuperKids, if their child has been exposed to a Notifiable Infectious Disease. (See link enclosed of Notifiable Infectious Diseases). [*https://www.hpsc.ie/az/lifestages/schoolhealth/File,13445,en.pdf*](https://www.hpsc.ie/az/lifestages/schoolhealth/File,13445,en.pdf)

Public Health Doctors are responsible for the prevention and control of Notifiable Infectious Diseases.

On being notified of a Notifiable Infectious Diseases, SuperKids will contact Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate.

Parents/guardians/carers will be informed of any outbreak of infectious disease within the service. This will be done by one or more of the following methods:

* Verbally
* Notice Displayed on door of service
* Notice Displayed on notice Board
* Written note to all parents
* Text

SuperKids will refer to the Guidelines designed by Túsla to support early childhood care and education services in the prevention and control for Childcare Facilities and Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings available at:

<http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/lifestages/childcare/File,13444,en.pdf>