



Infection Control Policy

Policy Statement

It is the priority of **Riverside Childcare** to protect all children attending our service and all persons working in our service from the transmission of infections. The health and well-being of all children, staff and visitors to our service is paramount and our aim is to prevent and manage any infection which may be present in the service. This policy is available and communicated to all parents, children (in an age appropriate manner) and staff.

This policy has been updated in line with current guidance the HSPC Infection Prevention and Control guidance for services providing childcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the DCYA's Return to Work Safely Protocol and Tusla's Children Services Regulations Guidance Document for Early Years Services: COVID-19

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the Child Care Regulations (The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services)(Amendments) Regulations 2016. and the Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework.

Rationale

Infection can lead to serious ill-health among children. Infection control procedures seek to reduce the risk of children getting sick in a service by ensuring good hygiene is followed and the risk of infection is minimised. This will be communicated with parents, so good hygiene and infection control practices will be carried over from the service to home and vice versa.

Risk Assessments

- Risk assessments will always be undertaken by staff to assess if activities, actions or environments post risks from an infection control standpoint to the children and staff of Riverside Childcare.



Hand washing

- Riverside Childcare has a **hand washing policy** which all staff promote and model for children, after using the toilet, before eating/preparing food, after wiping noses, waste disposal and mopping up spills.
- Staff must wash their hands, before preparing or serving food, before eating or drinking, after going to the toilet, assisting children going to the toilet, dealing with bodily fluids, cleaning procedures, caring for sick children, handling soiled clothing, dealing with waste and after removing disposable gloves.
- A wash hand basin is provided in each room with a constant supply of hot (no greater than 43c) and cold running water, liquid antibacterial soap and paper towels. A wash hand basin is also available in all bathrooms, kitchens and activity rooms.
- Children are encouraged to wash their hands with warm water and liquid soap under supervision after visiting the toilet, before eating, after sneezing, coughing or blowing noses, after handling animals, after touching a cut or sore and after outside play and activities. Clear guidance on handwashing is outlined for children and staff alike in our service.
- Staff will supervise and assist children to encourage effective handwashing, appropriate to their age.
- Riverside Childcare has 4 hand washing stations, and 3 hand sanitiser stations – all staff are encouraged to use and to follow our handwashing policy.
- Children and staff are encouraged to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue before sneezing or coughing. Hands are washed after blowing noses, sneezing or coughing.
- Additional hand washing is required when caring for babies or children who are teething or dribbling.

Personal hygiene

- Particular attention should be paid to personal hygiene when caring for babies and young children who require close physical contact and comfort. Contact points such as the neck or arms may become contaminated with secretions or mucous, and these should be washed immediately. Visibly soiled clothing of staff or children should be changed, and hands washed. Children's faces, particularly infants and toddlers, must be kept clean of secretions by careful and gentle washing.
- Staff must ensure they have an adequate quantity of additional clean clothes to change into if required throughout the day. Each child should also have an adequate supply of additional clean clothes available to them in the service.



Respiratory etiquette

- Children should be taught the required steps for handwashing and respiratory etiquette appropriate to their stage of development

(see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mcpm-HCIW9Q>).

- Staff and children should avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Games, songs and rhymes can be used to make practices as messaging as child friendly as possible.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a clean tissue when coughing and sneezing and then promptly dispose of the tissue in a foot-operated pedal bin—hands to be washed or sanitised immediately after. A supply of tissues should be available in each care room. If tissues are not available, best practice is to cough or sneeze into the bend of the elbow, not into the hands.

Food preparation

- Staff **always wear gloves when preparing and serving food and wash hands after removing gloves.**
- Staff always wash their hands after prepping food and removing waste food and materials.
- Perishable food is kept in a refrigerator, between temperatures of 0 and 5 Celsius. Any perishable food left at room temperature for more than 2 hours will be discarded safely.
- **Staff involved in helping children with toileting are not involved in preparing food.**

Cleaning and the premises

- All staff are aware of their role in maintaining high standards of hygiene.
- Riverside Childcare reinforces good practice regarding keeping the environment and premises clean and safe.
- Spillages of blood, faeces, urine, vomit or other bodily fluids or excretions are cleaned immediately and with priority. **Mops are not to be used for these** and extreme caution is exercised at all times.
- **Daily, weekly and monthly cleaning schedules** are in place and records kept.
- A bin removal company has been contracted by the Aughrim Community Sports Centre which includes the removal and disposal of all waste at Riverside Childcare.



- Our premises are free from pests and rodents and the Aughrim Community Sports Centre has a contract with an external agent who checks our premises on a monthly basis.
- All staff receive regular support & supervision in relation to infection control and training is provided.
- We carry and maintain a good stock of cleaning products and tools to ensure that hygiene practices can be carried out at all times. Adequate supplies for cleaning are provided to be used, like clean cloths, gloves, aprons, mops, buckets and detergents.
- **Toys and play materials are cleaned daily**, with attention placed on especially soiled items. They are not brought into the toilet.
- **Toilets, floors, shelves storing bags, tables and chairs and other areas are cleaned daily** to help decrease the spread of infection, cleaning agents used are detailed on our cleaning schedules.
- Children have individual clothing. These items are not shared. Any soiled clothes are placed in a plastic bag, sealed and sent home with parents/guardians.
- Individual combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, personal clothing, bedding and towels are labelled and not shared.
- Sleeping mats and beds are at least 50cm apart.
- At least once a day, even in winter, all rooms in the service are aired out.
- Our cleaning schedules are located in the kitchen area.



Cleaning Schedule

General Environment Cleaning Program		
Area/Item	Method	Frequency/Comments
Tables/ window sills / door and cabinet handles	Clean with neutral detergent, warm water and clean cloth	Daily and immediately if soiled i.e. if soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfect, rinse and dry
High chairs/dining tables	Clean with neutral detergent, warm water and clean cloth and dry with disposable paper towels	Before and after use; if soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfect, rinse and dry
Washable floor covering	Wash with detergent, warm water and clean utensils Vacuum clean to remove dirt when children are not present.	Daily and immediately if soiled e.g. spillage Vacuum daily
Carpets	Clean with an approved carpet cleaning method Vacuum	Clean carpets only when children will not be present to ensure the carpet is dry before next use Clean carpets at least monthly in infant areas, at least every 3 months in other areas or immediately when soiled Daily
Small rugs	Launder	Weekly
Walls/ Ceilings	Clean with warm water and general purpose detergent. If soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfect	Routine cleaning not required except in areas of frequent hand contact, such as lower wall/door frames in areas occupied by toddlers
Waste bins	Empty	Daily



	Clean with neutral detergent and warm water	Weekly and immediately if soiled
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Mops and cleaning cloths	Mop heads should be washed in warm water and detergent, rinsed and air dried	After daily use
	Reusable cloths must be laundered daily on a hot wash cycle (at least 60oC) in a washing machine and then tumble dried	After daily use

Toilet Area Cleaning Program		
Area/Item	Method	Frequency / Comments
Wash hand basins, taps, surrounding counters, soap dispensers.	Clean with detergent and warm water.	At least daily and immediately if soiled. If soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfecting, rinse and dry.
Both sides of the toilet seat, toilet handles, door knobs or cubicle handles.	Clean with detergent and warm water.	At least daily and immediately if soiled. If soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfecting, rinse and dry.
Toilet bowls	Use toilet cleaner as per manufacturer's instructions.	At least daily and immediately if soiled.
Potties	Clean with detergent and warm water and if soiled, disinfect with a chlorine based disinfectant with 1000 ppm available chlorine.	Immediately after each use.

Toy Cleaning Program		
Item	Method	Frequency / Comments



Soft toys – if shared.	Machine washed in a hot cycle according to the manufacturer's instructions.	Daily. If soiled, take it out of use immediately.
Hard toys/items that go into the mouth or have been in contact with saliva or other body fluids.	Clean with warm water and detergent, rinsed and dried thoroughly. Alternatively, they may be washed in a dishwasher.	After each child's use.
Other hard toys e.g. dolls house, climbing frame.	Clean with warm water and detergent, rinsed and dried thoroughly.	Weekly or immediately if soiled.

Nappy Changing and Toileting

- The nappy changing room and toilets are adequately ventilated, by window ventilation.
- A wash basin is included in the nappy changing room and has hot and cold running water and access to liquid soap and paper towels. **Staff must wash and dry their hands before and after nappy changing.**
- Children's hands will be washed and dried after nappy changing.
- Staff that are changing nappies use disposable gloves that are removed **before re-dressing the child.**
- All nappy changing mats used are waterproof, in good condition i.e. no exposed stuffing or foam and have an easily cleanable cover. Nappy changing mats are wiped down by staff **after each nappy change.**
- Children are never left unattended while having their nappy changed.
- All nappies are **disposed of in a way which will not risk infection.** Soiled nappies are disposed of in a foot operated, lined and lidded bin. The bag with the soiled nappies is removed from the premises after all nappy changes are finished. Nappy disposal containers are kept away from children and out of their reach (at the back if it is not possible to remove the bag from the premises immediately). Nappy changing units are cleaned thoroughly after every nappy change and on a regular basis.
- All staff are fully trained and briefed in nappy changing and infection control.

Nappy changing should be a pleasant experience for the child and staff members should use this opportunity to interact with the child and provide one to one attention.



Immunisation

• Children's immunisation records are obtained when children begin in Riverside Childcare. Parents are asked to update Riverside Childcare when children receive additional immunisations.

• If a child is not immunised, for their own safety they may be excluded from Riverside Childcare if an infectious disease that they are not immunised against is circulating. Parents will always be consulted on this. We always work in the best interests of children's health.

• We provide information leaflets on immunisation schedules, oral hygiene and prevention of infection to parents.

Animals and pets

• Handwashing and drying procedures are followed before and after handling any animals and pets that are present in Riverside Childcare.

• All animals and pets are managed in accordance with required and appropriate instructions for their care.

• Children are supervised with animals at all times.

• All our animals are regularly checked with vets.

Zoo and Farm visits

• Handwashing and drying procedures are followed before and after handling any animals.

• Children are supervised at all times during their visit

• All guidance and information found in the "Open Farms and Pet Farms" document by the HPSC will be followed, paying special attention to the Appendix 6: Information Sheet for The Public, Education and Childcare Services and Community Organisations. This will be made available to parents also.

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/gastroenteric/pettingfarms/File,15817,en.pdf>

Procedure for Managing an infectious illness

• Children and staff are encouraged to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue before sneezing or coughing. Hands are washed after blowing noses, sneezing or coughing.

• Staff will report any illness to the manager/designated person in charge.

• Unwell children, with a temperature and/or specific signs and symptoms, will be excluded from the service until a diagnosis can be made. Staff can and will use their discretion when admitting a



child back into Riverside Childcare, if they believe the child is still ill and cannot take part in their usual activities.

- Any child displaying symptoms of respiratory illness or any symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the service and should follow guidance advised by HSE.
- Any child who has tested positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance advised by HSE.
- Children should remain at home if they are suffering from general diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 48 hours.
- A plan will be drawn up to help prevent the spread of the illness and the HSE guidelines: Managing an infectious disease in childcare settings will be followed.
- Communication will be issued to parents if there is an infectious disease circulating in Riverside Childcare.

Exclusion table:

The following exclusion periods are followed in Riverside Childcare. In certain instances, the exclusion period may be longer than outlined below:

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL/ CHILDCARE?				
Chicken Pox When scabs are dry	Conjunctivitis No need to stay out*	Diarrhoea or Vomiting 48 hours after the last episode	Flu 5 days after start of illness	Glandular Fever No need to stay out*
Hand, foot & mouth No need to stay out*	Head Lice No need to stay out*	Impetigo When scabs are dry or 24 hours after starting antibiotics	Measles 4 days after rash appears	Mumps 5 days after swelling appears
Scabies After first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after starting antibiotics	Stapped Cheek No need to stay out*	Threadworms No need to stay out*	Whooping Cough 5 days after starting antibiotics or 21 days after start of illness

This information is based on the Management of Infectious Diseases in Schools guidance document. *No need to stay out if child is well but school or childcare provider should be informed.

Notifiable disease:

- A list of notifiable diseases is available from the HSE. In the case of notified diseases or if the illness spreads **the manager will notify the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate by filling out the Notification of Incidents Form and the HSE Public Health Department.**

- When we have been contacted by the Department of Public Health, HSE, in our area and have been advised that we have a confirmed case as listed we will contact Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate. The Department of Public Health Medicine will advise as to the next steps regarding precautions to be taken in our premises and follow up of contacts and procedures.

- **Parents will be informed verbally and in writing if an outbreak has occurred** – all reasonable information on the outbreak will be provided to them.

COVID-19 Infection Control Guidelines in Riverside Childcare



- To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Riverside Childcare, Riverside Childcare implements a “play pod” system.
- Play pods are organised across 1 room in Riverside Childcare, A record of play pods and their makeup is recorded and will be shared with the HSE and Public Health teams in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19.
- Pods, as much as practical, do not mix, share toys, play materials or equipment. Each pod also has different break and meal times. Outdoor time is separate for each play pod.
- We follow the 2m physical distancing recommendation by the National Public Health Emergency Team for adults
- Riverside Childcare has 3 hand washing stations, and 3 hand sanitiser stations – all staff are encouraged to use and to follow our handwashing policy above.
- The National Public Health Emergency Team recommends the use of cloth face coverings in certain indoor settings, however it is not mandatory in Riverside Childcare. We have masks available as needed.

Dealing with Suspected COVID-19 Cases in Riverside Childcare

If a child or staff member in Riverside Childcare feels unwell and develops symptoms:

- If a child develops any symptoms of acute respiratory infection including cough, fever, or shortness of breath while in Riverside Childcare, a staff member will take the child to [area marked for isolation]. This should be a room if possible but if that is not possible it should be in a place 2m away from others in the room.
 - Parents/guardians will be called and asked to collect their child as soon as possible.
 - A staff member will remain with the child at all times until parent/guardian arrives. Due to the nature of COVID-19 physical distance will need to be retained as much as possible, and the staff member will need to wear a facemask and gloves.
- If a staff member develops symptoms of acute respiratory infection including cough, fever or shortness of breath while in the care facility, ask them to go home without delay and contact their GP by telephone.
- They will be located 2 m away from others as much as possible.
 - They will be asked to avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin. .
 - They will be asked to wear a mask.
- If there is an emergency, staff will call an ambulance, and explain that the child or staff member is unwell with symptoms of COVID-19.



- Any rooms where children or staff need to be isolated are cleaned and contact surfaces disinfected once they leave.

What we do when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in Riverside Childcare

- We advise all individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 to contact their GP for further advice.
- Riverside Childcare will liaise with local Public Health staff of the HSE to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken.
- Riverside Childcare will notify Tusla Early Years Inspectorate of any confirmed case of COVID-19 in the service.
- An assessment of each childcare setting where this may occur will be undertaken by HSE public health staff.
- Advice on the management of children and staff who came into contact with the case will be based on this assessment.
- The HSE Public Health staff will also be in contact individually with anyone who has been in contact with the case to provide them with appropriate advice.
- Cleaning of Riverside Childcare will commence following HPSC advice and guidance.
- Symptoms are advised to self-isolate and arrange to get tested for COVID-19.
- We will advise confirmed COVID-19 cases to continue to self-isolate at home for a minimum of 14 days and not return to Riverside Childcare until they are advised that it is safe to do so.
- Close contacts of a confirmed case will be advised to go home and restrict their movements for 14 days. Riverside Childcare will ask them to not come to Riverside Childcare for 14 days.



This policy links with our -

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Hand Washing Policy
- Immunisation Policy
- Illness and Exclusion Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff absence Policy
- Risk management Policy
- Staff training and supervision Policy

Person Responsible:

This policy was adopted by Riverside Childcare on Date: 23/07/22 Updated on: 11/11/22

Signed by: Michael Dunster On behalf of Management (Manager, Owner, Chairperson)

Review Date: 23/07/23

Relevant links:

Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018

Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings (2012) and Appendices

Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings (2016) Public Health England produced with the assistance of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings) October 2016 Health Protection Scotland NHS National Services Scotland

A Guide to The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 Health and Safety Authority

A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements (updated 2016) Health and Safety Authority