

CONTENTS

Foreword

Introduction

Chapter 1 Infection Control

What is infection control?
How does infection occur?
Roles and responsibilities

Chapter 2 Links to the Statutory Framework

Law and legislation
Early Years Foundation Stage
Policies and procedures

Chapter 3 Good Hygiene Practices

Hand hygiene for adults
When to wash
How to wash
Hand hygiene for children
Care of the hands
Personal Protective Clothing
Toilet, potty and nappy hygiene
Cleaning of equipment (including toys) and the environment
Pets
Farm and zoo visits
Outdoors
Waste

Chapter 4 Vulnerable Staff and Children

Vulnerable children
Female staff – pregnancy
Employers' responsibilities

Chapter 5 Outbreak Management

Defining an outbreak

Diagnosis and exclusion times

Notifiable diseases

Suspension of activities

Record keeping

Partnership with parents

Chapter 6 Further Considerations

Human bites

Vaccinations and immunisations

Pandemic flu and seasonal flu

MRSA

Chapter 7 Case Studies

Diarrhoea and vomiting

Shingles

Meningitis

Head lice

Appendix 1 Infection Control Checklist/Audit

Appendix 2 Draft Letters to Parents After a Biting Incident

Appendix 3 Nappy Changing Guidance for Staff

Appendix 4 Advisory Notices to Parents

References and Bibliography



FOREWORD

Anybody working with young children and their families understands the vital role they have in supporting the learning and development of children in their care. The health and well-being of those children is very important and must be nurtured and protected at all times.

As with most things, it is important to get the basics right. We know that in order for children to thrive and develop, their basic needs must first be met. These needs, as identified by Abraham Maslow, cited in Wiley (1998), begin with our physiological and biological needs, including air, food, drink, shelter and warmth, followed by our safety needs, which include protection from the elements and security. At the top are the higher order needs of self-actualisation, when a person is able to realise their full potential. If our basic

needs are not met for any reason, then our survival instinct focuses only on satisfying them, and our higher order needs cannot possibly be met because they become unimportant.

In both children and adults infection can severely compromise basic needs. From the air we breathe, to the food, drink and shelter that are vital for our very survival, infection is an unseen danger that can take many forms and, if left unchecked, can greatly harm our health. How early years practitioners manage infection and ensure its control in their settings is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life and support to achieve their full potential.

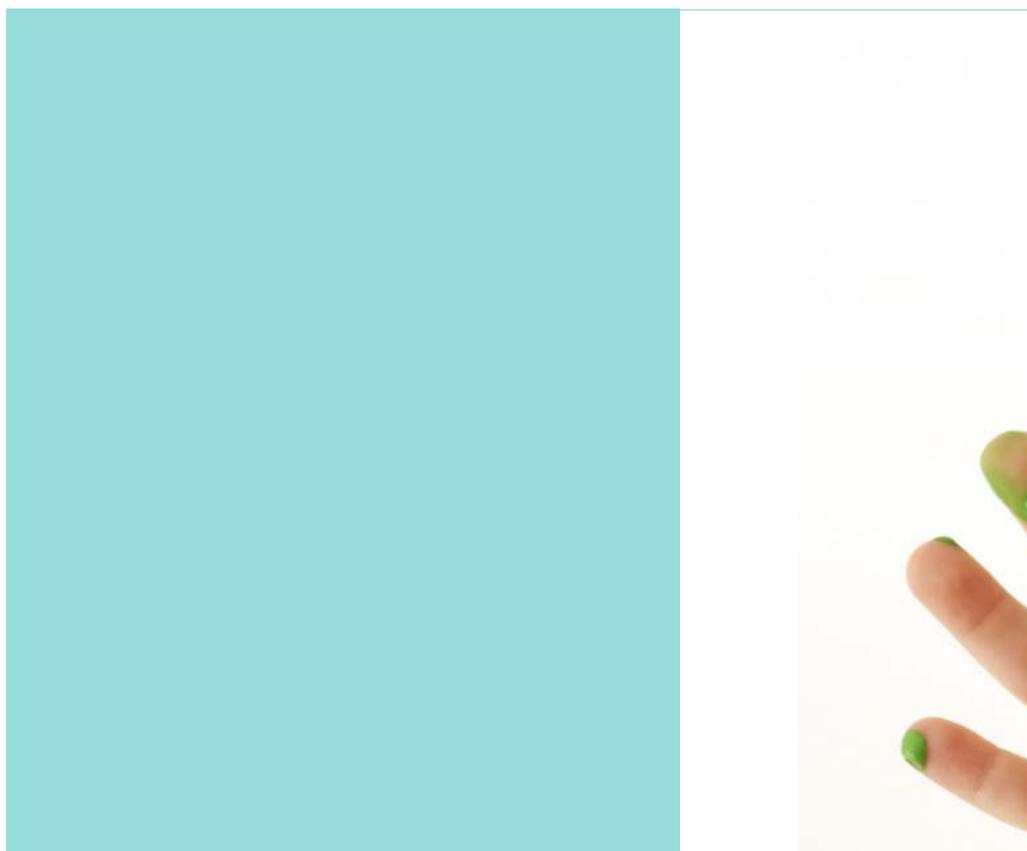


Key aims

Existing support and guidance is available for practitioners working in early years settings underpinned by the Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This details the legal requirements and statutory guidance for the learning and development, and welfare of children. However, this book is the first publication of its kind written specifically for the early years sector which focuses just on infection control.

This book aims to bring together existing guidance and highlights its relevance to the early years sector. It also gives practitioners the most recent guidance in important areas such as exclusion times. It also covers areas of good practice and opportunities to further improve the quality of practice in this essential aspect of protecting

children's health and welfare. Case studies are included to illustrate good practice. Food hygiene is not included as this is covered in mandatory food hygiene training and by the Food Standards Agency in their Safer Food Better Business (FSA 2007) publication. Similarly, first aid is not covered because, by law, practitioners are required to have paediatric first aid training.



INTRODUCTION

It is widely recognised that when children start going to an early years setting it marks their entry into communal life beyond that of their immediate family and home environment. With this comes exposure to various germs (micro-organisms) including childhood infections and other infectious illnesses. It is not unusual for children to go to more than one setting, therefore the number of germs they will come into contact with increases and it is easier for infections to spread from one area to another.

Babies and young children have a relatively low state of immunity as they have not necessarily had previous exposure to specific germs, making them more at risk of infections. It is estimated that 80 per cent of illnesses in under-fives are due to infections, most of which are self-limiting and followed by a complete recovery.

Any shared environment provides an opportunity for infections to spread and certain activities and relationships between children, staff and the environment increase the risk; this can be minimised if appropriate precautions are in place. Although early years settings aim to provide children with a safe environment for growth, development and learning, it is still possible for infections to occur and spread, this risk is increased by:

- Constant child-to-child interactions; being close together, time spent in shared areas, shared activities, equipment such as high chairs, play activities involving sand and water (amongst others); all of which can be potentially contaminated from previous use or contact with other children, through saliva, urine or faeces.



- Child-adult interactions; through nappy changing, feeding, toileting, wiping noses and holding or cuddling.

Lopez J et al (1998) stated that during the first five weeks of life in a childcare setting, children have a one in four chance of getting diarrhoea, which will require exclusion (as is the case for other infections). Ford-Jones E L et al (1987) estimated that parents might lose 4.7 working days a year because of diarrhoea in a child attending daycare and 15 working days due to other illnesses. This book aims to promote routine practices and measures that are essential to protect both staff and children from the risk of infection. To make sure that all staff are aware of these measures and precautions, awareness raising and education are recommended, and could include:

- Discussions about hygiene practices during staff induction and training.
- Making use of notices, posters and staff meetings to promote practices.
- Knowing whom to contact if staff are worried about infection.
- Undertaking reviews of equipment and the environment, using a checklist (see Appendix 1).

Ultimately, outbreaks of infection disrupt family routines and result in loss of earnings. The good name of the setting and confidence in it can also be affected if outbreaks are not managed competently or happen a lot.