

Bright Beginnings Preschool

Health & Medicine Policy

We would like all parents to note the following points regarding the school's policy on sick children:

1. It is the school's policy that all sick children should be kept at home. The school does not have the equipment and the staff are not trained to tend to sick children.
2. When children are brought to school sick, they are not themselves, tend to need more one-on-one attention and are generally more irritable and unhappy. Although we strive to give all the little ones at Bright Beginnings all the care and attention they need, it is not possible for staff members to exclusively look after sick children.
3. Sick children are often contagious; particularly when they start getting sick and they can then make other children and the staff members sick.
4. The school will administer medication where necessary, but it is important to note that the nature, quantity and dosage of the medicine remain the responsibility of the parents or guardians. No medication will be given without written instruction from the parent or guardian **on a daily basis**. Please refer to our Medicine Policy below for detailed information.
5. Should the staff feel that a child is too sick to be at school, we will request the parent or guardian to collect the child as soon as possible and to keep the child at home until she/he has recovered.
6. The staff have all undergone First Aid training and will handle medical emergencies to the best of their abilities. Should the emergency be of a severe nature, we will request paramedic back-up if needed. If the injury is mild and the child can be stabilised and just needs to see a doctor, we will request the parent or guardian to collect the child and take him/her to the doctor.
7. Please read the guidelines below regarding when children should be kept at home. It is for the benefit of everyone associated with Bright Beginnings (children, teachers and family members) that children are kept home until they have recovered.

Fever

Fever is the body's natural way of fighting infection, so if the child has a fever, it is an indication that s/he is ill. Fevers can cause complications such as convulsions and therefore children with fever should be watched constantly and medicated timeously. It is the school's policy that children with fever, for whatever reason should NOT be at school. Should a child develop a fever during the day, the parents will be informed when the child's temperature is between 37.5 and 38.0°C and the parents should then collect the child as soon as possible. Giving the child medication in the morning to reduce the temperature and sending him/her to school is dangerous, as the staff are not aware that the child has a fever and could miss warning signs or complications.

Colds / Flu / Coughing / Runny Noses

Children with cold or flu symptoms such as fevers, runny noses, coughing, sneezing and nasal congestion, should please be kept at home. These viruses are spread very easily in a nursery school environment as the children do not know to cover their mouths when coughing and often wipe their noses on clothing. Children are also feeling sick and are more irritable or tired. Children do sometimes cough from a post nasal drip, but children with wet, productive coughs can spread germs to others.

Illnesses treated with antibiotics

When children are diagnosed with tonsillitis, ear infection and bronchitis doctors usually prescribe antibiotics. Children on antibiotic treatment should be kept home for at least 48 hours after the start of the treatment and until the child has a normal temperature again.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea

Small children who vomit or have diarrhoea, are susceptible to dehydration and can often not cope with the normal food provided at school. Children who vomit at school or have diarrhoea, will be sent home as the presence of sick children at school could cause tummy bugs to spread very quickly.

Eye infections

Eye infections could be viral or bacterial and are extremely contagious. With small children especially, the infections can spread quickly through a class as the children scratch their eyes because of itchiness and then handle the toys. Children should be kept at home until all discharge from the eyes has cleared.

Hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD)

This disease should not be confused with foot and mouth disease, which infects cattle but is extremely rare in humans. HFMD is caused by the Coxsackie virus and is very common in schools and nursery schools. Children with HFMD usually get a fever first, then red spots with blisters in the middle. HFMD blisters may form in the mouth and on the tongue, hands, feet, or buttocks. HFMD lasts about 10 days. Treatment is symptomatic and the child usually only feels sick if s/he has a fever or if the blisters in the mouth cause pain. It is however very contagious as the virus spreads through saliva and faeces and as the little ones often put toys in their mouths it is difficult stopping further infection. Children with HFMD should please be kept home until all the blisters have become scabs.

Measles, baby measles (roseola), German measles (rubella), Mumps and Chicken Pox

These illnesses are mostly controlled by immunisation nowadays, but should a child contract any of these illnesses, please let the school know. The child should please be kept home until they are feeling better and all signs of a rash have disappeared. In the case of chicken pox, the child should be kept home until all blisters have formed scabs.

Head lice

Unfortunately we do get outbreaks of head lice from time to time. When this happens the school will clean hats, mattress covers and any other materials that may have been infected. Should you notice that your child has head lice, please let the school know as soon as possible in order for us to start cleaning the above mentioned items. Children should be kept home while you treat the hair and remove lice and nits (eggs) with a fine tooth comb. Children should only return to school once all lice and nits have been removed.

Medicine Policy

The school will administer medication to children in the case of a dosage being due while the child is at school. We cannot however, give medication prophylactically, especially not pain and fever medication. The nature of the medication (e.g. is it suitable for small children) and dosage of medication remains the responsibility of the parent at all times. Herewith the school's guidelines regarding the administration of medication:

- No medication will be given without written instruction from the parent or guardian **on a daily basis** in the child's communication book. This means we cannot accept an instruction on a Monday stating the child should be given medicine "for three days" or "for the whole week".
- The following information should be clearly written out in the child's book: name of medication, dosage (i.e. how much should be given), time that it must be given and special storage instructions (e.g. store in the fridge).
- All medicines should be handed to the teacher or assistant as soon as the child arrives at school. Should a child make use of a transport provider, the parent must please inform the school by telephone that there is medicine in the child's bag, before the child arrives at school.
- In the case of liquid medications (syrups and suspensions) the correct dosage should be drawn up in a syringe and packed in a sealed plastic container with the name, dosage and time written clearly on the container. We have in the past had problems with expensive medication leaking into bags, or breaking while in transit. Drawing up the correct dosage in a syringe, also ensures accuracy and eliminates accidental over dosage.
- The school reserves the right not to administer medications should the above guidelines not be followed, or should we feel that a child could be harmed by giving them the medication the parent has requested. Should we be in doubt about any information regarding the medication, we will contact the parent to verify details before we administer any medication.