

New Horizons Montessori School Infection Control Policy (including Cleaning)

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A. Rationale/ Aims

This policy on Infection Control specifies the procedures to be followed to protect staff and children attending New Horizons Montessori School from the transmission of infections. This policy has been written with reference to HPSC 2012 guidelines, The Child Care Act 1991, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Regulations 2013. This policy must be observed by all managers and all staff members of New Horizons Montessori School.

The overall aims of this policy are:

- To ensure an environment is provided in which children and adults are kept safe and staff members may safely carry out their roles
- To promote and protect the health of all of the children and adults in the service and reduce the risk of infection
- To provide guidelines to parents/ guardians as users of the service about the attendance of sick children and to keep the incidence of infectious disease to a minimum
- To help differentiate between minor (can attend the service) and more significant infections (should not remain in school) and to give guidance on the prevention and management of infectious disease. For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply

Infectious disease:

An illness in which the symptoms and signs of illness are caused by germs

Contagious disease

Any illness caused by germs in an infectious illness but which can pass from one person to another is contagious. Not all infectious diseases are contagious

B. New Horizons Principles for Infection Prevention

In line with HPSC guidelines, New Horizons recognises the three basic principles of infection prevention as outlined in the HPSC guidance. These are:

1. Handwashing is the single most effective way of prevention the spread of infection and should be used at every opportunity
2. Immunisation: Children are encouraged to be immunised appropriately
3. Exclusion: Any unwell staff member or child should be excluded from school

Standard precautions are applied when anyone has contact with

- Blood
- Body fluids including nasal secretions, excretions (urine, faeces, vomit)
- Broken skin
- Mucous membranes (eyes or mouth)

The key elements of standard precautions taken in New Horizons Montessori School include: (See 'Procedures and Practices' later in this policy)

- Handwashing and skin care
- Use of protective clothing
- Coughing and sneeze etiquette
- Management of cuts or minor skin abrasions
- Environmental hygiene
- Disposal of waste

PPE

- **All adults in New Horizons Montessori will use a face mask and have the option of wearing a visor also during the day to protect themselves and reduce the risk of contracting any infectious disease or passing it on to children.**

PODS

- **Children will be arranged in Pods with a Teacher responsible for the delivery of the curriculum. Teachers will remain with a prescribed pod and must wear a mask when within 2m of another adult, in particular where social distancing is not possible.**

ILLNESS

When a child is unwell, parents/guardians are asked to keep them at home if they are unable to participate in all of the activities of the day and/or if there may be a risk of passing the illness to another child or adult in the service. We keep a sick child separate from well children.

Parents/guardians are required to keep their child away from New Horizons Montessori and to stay away until they have seen their GP if any of the following are evident:

- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- A temperature of 101 degrees F or 38 degrees C or above
- Eye discharge
- Rash or skin disorder
- Strep throat
- Earache or cough

Any ill child in the service who becomes ill with fever, headache and vomiting will be sent home as soon as their parents/ guardians can be contacted. In the event that the child's parents cannot be contacted their emergency contacts will be contacted to bring the child home immediately.

In line with our Covid Plan and protocols we will:

Isolate the sick child with an adult in the **'Isolation Area'** identified for New Horizons. This 'Isolation Area' is **under the canopy at the front of the house** thus providing safety to other children/adults along with the adult caring for the sick child (See further our 'Covid-19 Plan')

Children are excluded from New Horizons if they

- Are ill
- Have a temperature of 101 degrees F or 38 degrees C or above????
- Present a danger or a risk to others (children or adults)
- Are unable to benefit from the service's normal activities

Adults are excluded from New Horizons if they

- Are ill
- Have a temperature of 101 degrees F or 38 degrees C or above????
- Present a danger or a risk to others (children or adults)

EXCLUSION PERIODS FOR INFECTIOUS ILLNESSES

Ill children and staff should only return when they have recovered fully or when advised by their GP that it is now appropriate to return to school. If a child has contracted Covid19 the minimum period a child should remain out is 14 days after the child has stopped displaying symptoms.

PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING INFECTIOUS DISEASES

When the service is informed by the Department of Public Health of a diagnosis of a child attending the service or an employee, unpaid worker, contractor or other person working in the service, as suffering from an infectious disease, this will be notified to Tusla Early Years Inspectorate by Linda / Michael Rock using the Child Care Act (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 Part VIII, Article 31, [Notification of Incident Form](#)

OUTBREAK OF AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE

In the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease Linda/Michael Rock will contact the local Department of Public Health.

- If there is a concern about a communicable disease or infection, or advice is needed on controlling them.
- If there is a concern that the number of children who have developed similar symptoms is higher than normal.
- If there is an outbreak of infectious disease in the service.
- To check whether to exclude a child or member of staff

- Before sending letters to parents/guardians about an infectious disease.

Parents will be informed of the outbreak

C. New Horizons Procedures & Practices for Infection Prevention

The following are the practices and procedure that will be implemented to control the risk of infection.

Mornings - Arrivals

- ❖ School will be open to accept students from 8.45am
- ❖ Eileen will greet each child at the allocated Arrival spot while accepting children who queue with their parents on the socially distanced spots. These are 2m apart.
Parents/guardians are required to wear masks once they have entered the school grounds (driveway)
- ❖ Eileen will feed children into Room 1 or Room 2 as appropriate.
- ❖ Each class has a specially designated door to enter school for either Room 1 (side entrance) or Room 2 (front door)
- ❖ Parents will walk to the opposite side of the garden to exit, to avoid parents and children in the queue. They will follow the socially distanced tape as outlined on the paths
- ❖ No parents are permitted to enter the school building in the mornings unless they have arranged an appointment.
- ❖ Children will only be allowed to enter New Horizons one child at a time

Children's home time - Dismissals

- ❖ Parents/guardian or collectors will queue in the front garden on the socially distanced spots in a similar manner to arrival times.
- ❖ Parents are not permitted to enter down the side of the house to collect children
- ❖ Where a child must leave in an emergency Eileen must be contacted by phone to bring the child to the front of the school.
- ❖ Parents are required to strictly adhere to the 2m social distancing while on the premises of New Horizons.
- ❖ **Parents/guardians are required to wear masks once they have entered the school grounds (driveway)**
- ❖ Eileen will dismiss each child individually to their collector and each adult and child will again exit on the opposite side of the garden to avoid queuing adults
- ❖ Children from Room 1 will exit via the side entrance and children from room 2 will exit via the front door. There will be no mixing of children.
- ❖ Adults are urged not to congregate outside on the path or block exits to other houses/ gardens and to maintain social distancing at all time

Role of the New Horizons Team during arrival and dismissal

- ❖ To encourage safe, orderly and efficient dismissal of children
- ❖ To discourage socialisation on the school grounds

- ❖ To help keep 'pods' separate where possible

Social Distancing within New Horizons

- In line with HPSC guidelines, New Horizons will have separate pods within the school
- Room 1 represents one pod consisting of 16 children and 2 adults
- Within room 1 the tables will be organised to be separated from each other by at least 1m
- Teachers will be allocated to these tables and from week to week the Teachers will remain with that table.
- Resources from the 2 tables within the room will be separated to provide an extra layer of protection
- Children will only be directed to resources at one end of the room each week. The table of children and teacher will swap places each week so that children have access to all materials over the 2 week period.
- All materials will be cleaned in line with the 'Cleaning Policy' (See this policy also)
- Teachers will wear a mask when they cannot maintain a 2m distance from another teacher. All teachers are encouraged to wear the mask and visor provided by New Horizons

Room 2 represents another pod consisting of 6 children and 1 adult

- Within this pod children have access to all materials in that room. The teacher will be encouraged to wear the mask and visor provided by New Horizons.
- No mixing of children from Room 2 into Room 1 (or vice versa) will occur. Sharing of materials is prohibited unless cleaned in line with the Cleaning Policy.

PPE within New Horizons

Each adult within New Horizons is provided with an individual pack which includes

1. 3 reusable (washable) face masks
2. 3 surgical face masks
3. A Face visor which covers from above the eyes to below the mouth
4. Rubber gloves
5. Disposable surgical gloves
6. 2 bottles of hand sanitizer
7. 3 disposable aprons

Adults within New Horizons **will** use **a** face mask and **also have the option of wearing a visor** during the day. When cleaning any surface within New Horizons, gloves must be work

A full supply of all PPE is available in both Rooms and adults can replenish these items as required. Eileen will monitor the stocks of all items and will inform Linda/Michael if stocks are low

Handwashing:

- Children will be trained in proper handwashing by teachers in the service
- Hand sanitizer is freely available to adults within the school throughout the day and is encouraged to be used regularly
- Teachers should wash their hand every 30 minutes with liquid soap and warm water.
- Posters will be available at wash hand basins for children and adults
- Warm running water will be available for handwashing
- Liquid soap will be used when hand washing
- Paper towels will be available and used for hand drying. No cloth towels will be used. These paper towels will be placed in the bin beside the sink in both bathrooms and disposed of in line with proper waste disposal procedures
- Hands will be washed and dried
 - On arrival in New Horizons
 - After using the toilet, after sneezing, coughing, blowing nose or touching a cut or sore
 - Before eating
 - If hands are visibly dirty

Respiratory hygiene (coughing and sneezing)

All adults and children will cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. As required, we will notify the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate when the Department of Public Health has confirmed to us that there is a diagnosis of a child attending the service or any adult working in the service suffering from an infectious disease

We will contact the local Department of Public Health as outlined above

Other Standard Precautions

Cleaning Procedures and Rota (Methods and Frequency)

The following basic principles should be followed:

Responsibility: Eileen Condon will co-ordinate the cleaning of both rooms with other member of staff on a daily basis and will accommodate for job sharers and absenteeism. In Eileen's absence Fiona Mc Connell will take on this role.

PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS USED FOR CLEANING

- Separate cleaning cloths and cleaning equipment will be available and labelled appropriately for both Room 1 and 2 and their adjacent bathrooms. The new entrance for Room 1 (hall area) will also be cleaned daily.
- Kitchen paper with household cleaners / antibacterial sprays or antibacterial wipes will be used daily. These include :
 - CIF multipurpose cleaner/ Power Force All in 1 multipurpose cleaner.
 - Toilets will also be flushed with Domestos bleach or Power Force Bleach
 - An equivalent supermarket brand for the multipurpose cleaner and bleach may also be used following the manufacturer's guidelines
- Mop heads will be washed weekly at 60°C and washed daily in warm clean water with detergent, then rinsed and air dried before the next day's use. Mop heads used will be replaced each month.
- Buckets will be emptied after use, washed with detergent and warm water and stored dry.
- All cleaning equipment will be stored clean and dry with mop heads inverted.

See 'Cleaning Checklists' at the end of this policy

Room 1 Main (large) room and Room 2 (small room) and attached bathrooms

Daily cleaning of surfaces within Room 1 and Room 2 will take place.

Surfaces to be cleaned include: table tops, chair frames, door handles, fridge door, light switches, and equipment of large surfaces e.g. broad stair, pink tower, top of knobbed cylinders, bins, fridges.

- At the end of each day of school
- Prior to eating
- Where spillages or coughs/ sneezes or other bodily fluids occur

All cups or utensils used for eating/drinking will be washed daily in the dishwasher.

See 'Cleaning checklists' at end of this Policy

Bathrooms associated with each of the Rooms 1 and 2

Daily cleaning of surfaces include toilet, sinks, floor and handles in toilet

Montessori Equipment (Room 1 and 2) Hard surfaces

- All equipment with small parts will be cleaned with kitchen paper and disinfectant spray or disinfectant wipes on a weekly basis
- All other equipment will have their surfaces wiped with disinfectant wipes at the end of the day
- Children will have washed their hands, on arrival in school, prior to touching equipment.
- Children will be discouraged from putting any piece of equipment in their mouths. Where this occurs that piece of equipment will be washed immediately.

- No equipment will enter the toilet areas
- Equipment will not be shared between pods. Additional equipment has been purchased to facilitate this. Where materials are rotated this will happen at the start of a week, where the equipment has been cleaned on Friday and not touched over the weekend.

Montessori Equipment (Room 1 and 2) Soft surfaces

- Equipment with cloth surfaces will be limited within each room and avoided where possible
- Floor work will now take place on table tops where possible
- Dressing frames will be sprayed with a disinfectant spray at the end of each day and washed monthly.
- Felt Mats for Montessori activities will be washed and replaced on a daily basis.
- Any other soft materials will only be used by Teachers and washed when used. (Mr Face, Calendar, Puppets)
- All washing of materials will take place with detergent and will follow manufacturer's instructions
- Each child will have their own supply of playdough for use in New Horizons which will be labelled. Children will wash their hands prior to using playdough and will not be allowed to share it. The table surface will also be cleaned prior to using playdough

Cleaning During an Outbreak of Covid 19

While household cleaners with warm water are used for cleaning, these procedures will change during an outbreak of Covid 19. A chlorine-based disinfectant at a concentration of 1000ppm will be used. Items will be rinsed and dried thoroughly following the manufacturer's instructions. The item or room cleaned with chlorine will be aired afterwards.

Personal Protective Clothing

Staff will wear the following protective equipment while cleaning both during the day and at the end of the day/week

1. Rubber gloves
2. Apron (optional to protect clothing)

Laundry

- Children's plastic aprons will be washed in the washing machine after each use following manufacturer's guidelines
- Children's soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag, sealed and sent home with parents/guardians
- All gloves will be washed in warm water with detergent after use

Disposal of waste

All waste products will be double bagged before disposal in the external bins.

F. Immunisation

- Parents/ guardians must inform New Horizons Montessori of any known infectious illness in their child e.g. chickenpox, measles, mumps, slapped cheek, covid 19. All other parents/guardians will be informed if there are any outbreaks of infection in the service
- Children do not require to have full immunisation to gain admission to New Horizons. We respect parent's choice on accessing the National Immunisation Programme and recognise that medical conditions and religious beliefs may impact on this decision.
- Parents will keep New Horizons informed of updated vaccines

D. Communication Plan

- All parents/guardians will be informed of the policy and procedures regarding Infection Control on enrolment and made aware that it is applied equally to all children, aimed at maintaining a healthy environment for all children and adults.
- Staff members will check with parents/guardians that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed. Parents/guardians will sign a declaration that they have read it.
- A summary of this policy will be included in the Parent's Policies and Procedures document. This policy will also be reviewed with staff at induction and annual staff training.
- Handouts on infection may be given to parents/guardians/carers as a guide.
- A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents/guardians in the Policies and Procedures Document displayed on the noticeboard in both classrooms
- Parents/guardians may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request. Parents/ guardians and all staff members will receive written notification of any updates.

In the event of a case of Covid 19 or any other infectious disease, New Horizons will follow HSE guidelines. Where closure is not necessarily advised by the HSE, but New Horizons considers this to be a necessary precaution, New Horizons may temporarily close to protect all children and adults attending each day out of an abundance of caution.

Date of Policy:

Signature and Date:

Review date: September 2022

Checklist: Room 1 (Daily)

Cleaned by: _____

Date: _____

Surfaces and equipment washed with household detergent and paper towels

Floors mopped with mop and bucket for the individual room

Table tops	
Chair frames	
Door handles	
Fridge door and shelves	
Light switches	
Equipment with flat surfaces <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Broad stair➤ pink tower➤ Top of knobbed cylinders	
Floor washed Room 1 Clean mop head	
Floor entrance from hall door to Room 2 washed with clean mop head	

Checklist: Bathroom 1 (Daily)

Cleaned by: _____

Date: _____

Surfaces and equipment

Washed with household detergent and paper towels, toilet flushed with bleach

Toilets	
Sinks	
Door handles	
Light switches	
Floor washed Bathroom 1 Clean mop head	
Floor entrance Bathroom 2 Clean mop head	
Toilet bleached	

Checklist: Room 2 (Daily)**Cleaned by:** _____**Date:** _____**Surfaces and equipment washed with household detergent and paper towels****Floors mopped with mop and bucket for the individual room**

Table tops	
Chair frames	
Door handles	
Fridge door and shelves	
Light switches	
Equipment with flat surfaces <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Broad stair➤ pink tower➤ Top of knobbed cylinders	
Floor washed Room 1 Clean mop head	
Floor entrance from hall door to Room 2 washed with clean mop head	

Checklist: Bathroom 2 (Daily)

Cleaned by: _____

Date: _____

Surfaces and equipment

Washed with household detergent and paper towels, toilet flushed with bleach

Toilets	
Sinks	
Door handles	
Light switches	
Floor washed Bathroom 1 Clean mop head	
Floor entrance Bathroom 2 Clean mop head	
Toilet bleached	