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Health & Illness Policy

Illness and Administration of Medication Policy

It is the policy of Danu Community Special School (CSS) to provide a safe and healthy environment for all the students in our care. To maintain this status, we need the co-operation of all Parents. Given the nature of our students play and close contact, infection is easily spread therefore in order to protect the welfare of all our students we would ask Parents to adhere strictly to this policy. We would also like to say that we will only call Parents when we believe a student is unwell or may have an infection that is contagious i.e., tummy bug, impetigo, conjunctivitis, etc. We are not medically qualified to say if a student has a specific infection however we do have a duty of care to all of the students in the school, so we would ask you to work with us if we feel your student may have an illness that could be passed on to other students in the school. We are not in the position to administer medication to students in school.

1. We cannot accept a student if they are not well enough to participate in normal activities or require additional special attention because of ill health, which would impact on our supervision ratios. It is important that a sick student is kept at home to prevent the spread of infection. This is in the best interest of all the students. Likewise, if a student requires a level of attention which impacts on the level of supervision for remaining students in the school, we have a duty of care to all of our students in the school and this student will have to be collected promptly.

2. We will inform parents of any concerns we have about their students' health and well-being and would ask parents to discuss any concerns with us. If we have two or more students who all have the same symptoms of an infectious nature i.e., mouth blisters, sores, vomiting etc., any student with similar symptoms must remain out of the school. A letter from a Doctor or Pharmacy will not override this procedure as the symptoms may not be

serious but contagious and we have a duty of care to all of our students and staff.

3. Parents should advise the Principal if their child has been prescribed any type of medication by their G.P.
4. Parents must inform us if.
 - Their student is absent due to illness.
 - If a student is taking prescribed or over the counter medication given as a suspension, suppository, capsules / tablet form or any other prescribed route, for example Calpol, Neurofen or Paralink, that is used as a pain killer and /or for reducing temperatures before coming into school.
5. If we have any confirmed illness in the school, we will inform all Parents and give any literature that we may have on the condition.
6. Antibiotics will not be administered in school. If a student is put on an antibiotic the student needs to remain out of the school for a minimum of 48 hours or until the student is well enough to return to the school.
7. If a student develops an eye infection the student needs to stay out of the school until the infection has fully cleared, however on medical advice if a student is on an antibiotic lotion the student can return to the school after 48 hours on the antibiotic.
8. All persons who enter the school must inform the Principal or Teacher in Charge if they have come into contact with an infection or contagious disease. The rule applies to all visitors, parents, staff, and students.
 - If a student is absent due to a serious contagious disease i.e., whooping cough, meningitis, and measles the Principal must be informed so that the necessary steps are taken to safeguard the other students, staff, and parents. Adults and/ or students who are exposed to or who develop an infectious disease will not be allowed to return to school without a doctor's note stating that it is safe for them to do so.
 - Vomiting, Diarrhoea and High Temperature are the most common symptoms of infectious disease. Danu CSS recognizes the individuality of each student and acknowledges that these symptoms are not always a sign of infection (Loose stools can

be caused by several factors e.g., changes of diet).

- A virus, bacteria or parasite in the gastrointestinal tract causes infectious Diarrhoea. It may be associated with symptoms of fever, nausea, or Vomiting. Infectious Diarrhoea is readily transmittable from person to person. If staff observes such a stool, the detail will be noted. If similar stools are noted and/or are accompanied by vomiting, temperature or a student is out of sorts, Parents will be contacted and requested to collect the student from the school. A student must be free from Diarrhoea & Vomiting for 48 hours before they can return to the school. **If we have identified that there is a vomiting or diarrhoea bug within the school any student who displays symptoms of this bug must be kept out for 48 hours after the last vomiting or diarrhoea incident.**

9. If a student has been hospitalised due to infection the School must be informed as soon as possible (even if the student is not due to school). This is to protect all students in the school. A student must remain at home for 48 hours after release from hospital to allow your child time to build up their immune system.

10. The management of Danu CSS, having been informed by a medical source of an infectious outbreak may at times feel the need to override this policy in the best interest of all the students, to prevent the spread of infection. This will only come into action following consultation with the HSE.

11. Following the event of a student having any contagious infection, a medical cert from GP stating the child is fit and well to return to school may be sought.

If you have any queries regarding our health/illness policy outlined above, please do not hesitate to contact the Principal. Please note that there will be no exceptions made to the policy under any circumstances. Please refrain from asking us to make exceptions as refusal often offends. However, this policy may be changed or over-ruled under Medical Directive, and confidentiality will always be maintained.

School Obligations

1. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the students coming into their room are well. If a teacher has a concern about a student, they will speak to the Principal/second teacher and parent/guardian.
2. We would ask parents to understand that we do not have medical training, we follow our guidelines, and we may be wrong, however we always have a duty to act in the best interests of all the students.
3. To ensure high standards of hygiene are maintained.
4. Washing hands practices are strictly maintained.
5. To be extra vigilant during an outbreak to prevent the spread of infection.
6. To communicate clearly with parents and the leadership team.

PROCEDURE 1: High Temperature

A Student becomes ill and/or develops a high temperature (above 37.5) while in the care of the school.

1. The student's temperature is taken, if the student temperature is above 37.5, heavy clothing the student is wearing will be removed. Please note we cannot use tepid water to sponge down as a student with a high temperature who is sponged down with water that is not tepid but cold can cause the temperature to soar even higher, there is no way of monitoring everyone's definition of tepid.
2. The parent/guardian is informed.
3. If the student is also presenting with other symptoms i.e., Pale colour, lethargy or is unable to participate in the normal activities, the parent/guardian will be asked to collect their child. If you are more than an hour away during a normal day, we would ask that you have arrangements in place to have a family member or friend to collect your child.
4. The student will be monitored until the parent/guardian arrives to collect them.

PROCEDURE 2: Requiring Urgent Medical Attention

A student becoming very unwell and needs to be brought to Hospital immediately.

1. The student's class teacher or SNA informs the Principal or second teacher if the principal is not available or a student becomes very unwell.
2. The Principal or second teacher makes the decision to call the emergency services and necessary arrangements made where the class teacher or SNA accompanies the child in the Ambulance and remains with the child until the parents/guardian's arrival.
3. The Principal or second teacher calls the student's parents/guardians to inform them of the situation. If the parents are unavailable their emergency contact will be informed.
4. The parents pay all Medical fees.

PROCEDURE 3: Vomiting/Diarrhoea

A student presents with vomiting and or diarrhoea.

1. The student's temperature is taken, this is noted, and Procedure 1 for High Temperature is followed.
2. If a temperature is present or the student is displaying other symptoms indicating risk of infection (lethargy, inability to participate in class activities, out of sorts, distress, and loss of appetite) the parent/guardian will be requested to immediately collect their child.
3. If no other symptoms are present and the class teacher is satisfied the student is well, the incident will be considered to be isolated. The student's parent/guardian are contacted and informed about their condition; at this point, the student will be monitored to see how their condition progresses. If the student has one further episodes of vomiting and or diarrhoea the student will have to be collected by parents/guardian.
4. If a student has projectile vomiting, they will have to be collected by parents/guardians immediately.
5. 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea, the student can return to school.

PROCEDURE 3b: Contagious Infections – Outbreak

A student presents with Gastroenteritis or Campylobacter, Salmonella and Escherichia Coli

1. If a student is diagnosed with Gastroenteritis or Campylobacter, Salmonella and Escherichia Coli (usually shortened to E. Coli), they need to remain out of school until their Doctor confirms in writing it is safe to return. It is imperative that parents inform us if their student is diagnosed with any of the above as they directly impact on other students in our care.
2. Other parents/guardians will be informed by email/text informing them of potential outbreak.
3. Any parent whose child displays symptoms at home or during the night must keep their student at home for 48 hours to help prevent the spread of infection to other students.
4. **The Rota Virus** is quite a common bug that usually occurs from October to January. If we are aware in school, we have a confirmed case the following procedure will apply for students in our care to prevent the spread of infection.

- a. The student's class teacher or SNA informs the Principal or second teacher.
- b. The student's temperature is taken, this is noted and procedure for High Temperature followed if required.
- c. If the student appears well and there is no temperature, the student will be monitored.
- d. If the student appears unwell and has an episode of vomiting or diarrhoea the parents will be asked to collect their child. The student will remain at home for 48 hours from their last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.

PROCEDURE 4: General Unwell, unable to determine cause.

A student becomes tearful, fretful, irritable and or appears unwell with no temperature. Given the nature of our school and the complex needs of our students it is not always possible for the students to communicate how they feel. If the student requires one to one attention to remain calm lasting over one hour or if the student is not able to participate in their usual activities even when a change of activity is offered, the steps below are followed.

1. The student's temperature is taken; if above 37.5, the Procedure for High Temperature follows.
2. Determine possible causes of the student being unwell, each cause will be looked at in determining the outcome for the student. Parents/guardians are called if the child cannot be pacified, engage in usual activities or they continue to express distress.
3. However, we must stress that if a student is requiring a level attention which impacts on the level of supervision for remaining students in the school, we have a duty of care to all of our students in the school and this student will have to be collected promptly.

Conjunctivitis

If your child is suspected of having conjunctivitis the parents/guardians will be immediately contacted. When the symptoms are clear, and the student's condition is no longer contagious, the student can return to the school. Symptoms are similar for both infective and allergic conjunctivitis and include:

- Redness of the eye/eyes (engorgement of the blood vessels of the conjunctiva)
- Itchy eyes
- Gritty sensation in the eyes
- Watering eyes
- Sensitivity to light
- Swelling of the eyelids
- Discharge of pus. Pus tends to clump together on the eyelashes making the eyes sticky and hard to open in the morning.
- In allergic conjunctivitis, both eyes are usually affected at the same time. In

infective conjunctivitis, the infection starts in one eye, but usually spreads to both.

Vaccinations

All students attending the school should have all vaccinations relative to their age. A careful record will be kept of these, and parents will be requested to verify these for our records if required.

Head Lice

Head Lice are most common among students as the head-to-head activities of the students at play facilitate transmission. It does not reflect standards of hygiene in the home or in the school as they are just as willing to live in clean hair as in unclean. Parents will be notified of any case of head lice in the school and requested to treat their child's hair with the appropriate lotions available.

To Determine Cause

<u>Cause Symptoms</u>	<u>Action Required</u>	<u>Action Required after Monitoring for 1 – 2 hours.</u>
Teething Drooling, Red Cheeks, Loose Nappies and/or Sore Bottom Chewing, Parents informing us that student are teething/cutting teeth at home	Monitoring, comfort offered by staff, demands will be kept to minimum, and rests offered if required.	If after 1 hour of monitoring the students, the condition is alleviating, we will continue to monitor. If after 1 hour of continuous monitoring the students condition is worsening or the student is in significant distress and the supervision required impacts on the level of supervision for remaining students in the school, there is a duty of care to all of our students in the school and this student will have to be collected promptly.
Tiredness/Lethargy Parents informing school that student did not sleep well the previous night. Appearing tired	Demands will be reduced, and student is given the opportunity to go for quiet time.	If their condition has not changed or has worsened after 1-hour parents will be requested to come and collect
Hunger/Thirst Student may not have eaten or drank sufficiently at snack or mealtimes	If a student has not eaten, their food/drink is offered at different periods of the day.	Once food and drinks have been given and the student has eaten sufficiently – observation between 1 – 2 hrs. With no change the parents will be requested to collect them if the condition has not improved.
Other possible causes Changes in staff, routine, other students can all have an effect on a student.	If a student in our school is in significant distress and we are unable to ascertain the cause the student will be comforted to the best of our ability and parents informed that their child is distressed.	We will monitor the student continuously however we must stress that if a student is requiring a level of attention due to illness which impacts on the level of supervision for remaining students in the school, we have a duty of care to all of our students.

Roles and Responsibilities

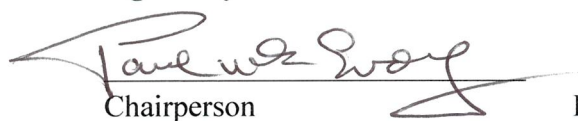
The school teaching staff and SNAs, under the direction of the Principal will implement and monitor this policy.

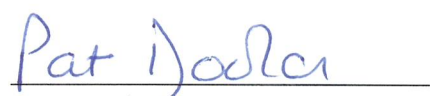
Review and Ratification

This Health & Illness Policy was ratified and communicated by the Board of Management on 06.12.24.

It is envisaged that the school will review this Policy during April 2025 or earlier if necessary.

Signed By


Chairperson


Principal/Secretary Board of Management

Next review date: April 2025

