



Managing Sickness, Medication & Medical Conditions

For parents and carers

When should my child stay at home?

Children must not attend nursery if they are unwell, have an infectious condition, a high temperature, or are unable to participate in normal activities.

We follow UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) exclusion guidance to prevent the spread of infection. Examples include:

- Sickness or diarrhoea – keep at home for 48 hours after the last episode
- Chickenpox – keep at home for at least 5 days from the start of the rash and until blisters are crusted
- COVID-19 or respiratory infections – stay home if they have a high temperature or are unwell

If symptoms are not listed or we believe a child could pass illness to others, the Manager has the authority to exclude children to safeguard everyone's health.

Refunds or replacement sessions are not given for absence due to illness.

Why does the nursery make the final decision?

As part of our safeguarding and public health responsibilities, the nursery reserves the right to exclude children who are ill — even if parents believe they are well enough — including illnesses not listed in UKHSA guidance. The Nursery Managers decision regarding attendance is final in order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of all children and staff.

This ensures we protect:

- vulnerable children
- babies with developing immune systems
- our staff team and all families who attend

Why We Must Be Strict About Illness and Infection

Our illness rules are in place to protect all children, all families and our staff team.

Nursery environments are places where infections spread very quickly. When unwell children attend, this often leads to other children and staff becoming unwell.

If staff become unwell, this directly affects the number of staff available to safely care for children. The nursery must always follow strict legal staff-to-child ratios to keep children safe.

If safe ratios cannot be maintained, we may have to:

- Limit places
- Close rooms/ Areas or age groups temporarily
- Disrupt childcare for multiple families

We fully understand that families rely on childcare to work. However, bringing an unwell child into nursery can affect many other families and may result in disruption to the service for everyone.

Children must not attend nursery if they are unwell, have symptoms of infection, or require medication to mask symptoms.

The nursery may refuse entry or request immediate collection if a child is not well enough to attend or may pass illness to others.

Respiratory Infection Symptoms (Including Green Nasal Discharge)

Children must remain at home if they have:

- Thick green or coloured nasal discharge
- Persistent heavy cold symptoms
- Signs of infection such as temperature, lethargy or unwell behaviour

Green or coloured nasal discharge may indicate infection. In nursery environments this is treated as a potential infection risk.

Children should remain at home for at least 48 hours and until well enough to attend nursery.

Loose or Runny Nappies

If a child has:

- Loose stools-that are not normal for that child
- Runny nappies that are not normal for that child

This will be treated as diarrhoea for infection control purposes.

Children must remain at home for 48 hours after the last loose or runny stool.

Medication Given Before Nursery

If your child has needed Calpol, ibuprofen or other medication for fever or illness, they must remain at home until they are well enough to attend without medication masking symptoms.

Medication can reduce symptoms temporarily but does not stop infection being contagious.

Antibiotics – First 48 Hours

If your child is prescribed antibiotics for a current illness, they must remain at home for at least 48 hours after the first dose has been given.

This is because the first 48 hours are important to:

- Monitor for possible allergic or adverse reactions
- Allow time for the medication to begin working effectively
- Reduce the risk of passing infection to other children and staff

After 48 hours, children may return to nursery only if they are:

- Well enough to take part in normal nursery activities
- Free from fever (without medication)
- Not showing symptoms that would normally require exclusion

Antibiotics do not immediately stop a child being contagious. The first 48 hours are when infection risk is often still present.

In some cases, we may ask for children to remain at home longer if symptoms continue or if advised by a healthcare professional.

Drop-Off Medication Declaration

At drop off, parents/carers may be required to confirm that:

- No fever-reducing medication has been given before attendance
- All illness and medication information provided is accurate

This is essential for safety.

If a child becomes unwell at nursery and emergency medication is required in an emergency, staff must know what medication has already been given.

Undeclared medication could lead to accidental overdose, which can be serious and life-threatening.

Administering medication in nursery

If your child needs medication:

- Only prescribed medication can be given in nursery
- It must be labelled with your child's name and dosage (this must be the original label)
- A medication consent form must be completed beforehand
- Two trained staff will administer and record medication

When will the nursery contact parents?

We will contact you to collect your child immediately if they:

- become unwell during the session
- develop a fever
- show symptoms of a potentially infectious illness
- are too distressed or tired to take part normal activities.

In a medical emergency, we will call 999 and parents will be contacted immediately.

Working together

We ask parents to:

- Follow exclusion times and medical guidance
- Keep us updated on your child's health
- Inform us of new medication or diagnosed conditions

Working together helps us maintain a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for all.

If you have any questions about this guidance or when your child can return, please speak to the Nursery Manager.

A full copy of our Managing Sickness, Medication & Medical Conditions Policy and the UKHSA Exclusion Table is available on request