

Infectious Diseases Policy

Last Review: September 2023

Next Review: September 2027

In addition to this policy document – please refer to Public Health England Guidance on infection control in schools – updated March 2017 https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf

Purpose and Rationale

To provide a guide for action should an infectious disease surface in the school and/or community. The policy allows for two types of situations:

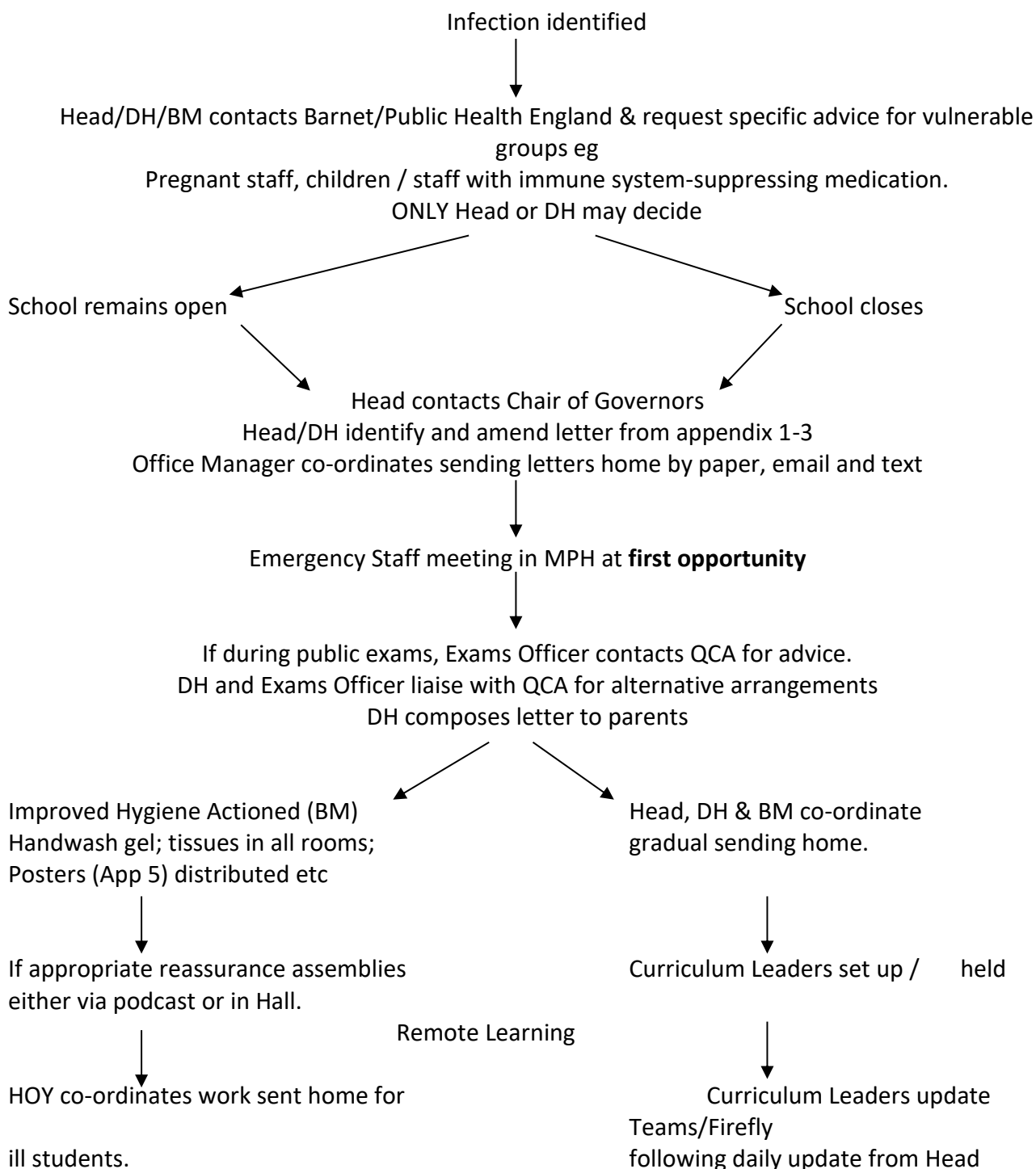
- A non-widespread disease that is, nevertheless, infectious and dangerous – e.g. chickenpox, meningitis.
- A widespread disease that is infectious and dangerous.

1. When a case(s) is confirmed at JCoSS

We will seek advice taken from Public Health England or the Local Authority as to whether we should close, partially close or remain open.

- We will notify parents by letter/email/text providing information agreed with PHE.
- If the advice is that JCoSS remains open, students or staff showing symptoms will be told to remain at home according to PHE guidance.
- Where a case is confirmed in a parent/carer they will be unable to come onto the school site and attendance of their child will depend on PHE advice.
- We will continue to keep our website updated with the latest information

2. Action Plan



Phone numbers:

Local Health Protection Team : [020 3837 7084](tel:02038377084)

Barnet LA: 02083592000

Non-Emergency NHS : 111

Appendix 1 – Sample letter if advice is that infected children stay at home, but if uninfected others may come in to school despite infection of family members:

Dear Parents

As you may well have heard, **DISEASE NAME** has been spreading quickly through Barnet along with other parts of London.

There have been several confirmed cases in Barnet schools. The advice that we have had from the local Health Protection Team is that **COMPLETE WITH ADVICE – eg the infection is not life-threatening although may involve unpleasant symptoms.**

Following a risk assessment carried out by Public Health England, the local NHS primary care trust and local authority, the school has been advised that no other actions are necessary and the school will remain open as usual.

DELETE THIS PARAGRAPH IF NOT APPLICABLE: **DISEASE NAME** is in the community and therefore, we have been advised that there is nothing to be gained from keeping healthy children away from school; they are as likely to catch **DISEASE NAME** outside of school as within.

With so many cases being reported, it is quite possible that a majority of schools in Barnet will report cases within the next two weeks. All schools in Barnet are also being advised to behave as they would with any similar illness. Schools will remain open unless we cannot guarantee that there will be enough adults to ensure safe supervision of children.

Parents are advised to manage common childhood symptoms e.g. treat fever with medication, ensure sufficient fluid intake etc. If the child is *ill with **DISEASE-NAME** like symptoms* they should be kept away from school to avoid infecting other children and staff. Siblings of children who have either been diagnosed with **DISEASE NAME** or who have **DISEASE NAME**-like symptoms should attend school as normal as long as they remain symptom-free. Similarly, if any other member of the household displays symptoms, we ask that they do not come onto the school site.

If parents are concerned that their child is unwell and is displaying some of the symptoms of the infection, they should call the non emergency NHS contact number: 111 or their GP practice for more information.

For general information, please call the national **DISEASE NAME** information line **CONTACT NUMBER**. Information can also be found at www.nhs.uk and **DISEASE-SPECIFIC WEBSITE**.

Thank you for your co-operation at this difficult time. Please contact the school office should you have further concerns.

Yours sincerely

Dr M Lee
Headteacher

Appendix 2 – sample letter in the case of a meningococcal disease outbreak

Dear Parents

I am writing to inform you that a JCoSS student has recently been admitted to hospital with suspected meningococcal infection. The school has taken advice from Barnet and no further action is necessary at the present time. There is no reason to make any changes in the school's routine and no reason for children to be kept at home.

Meningococcal bacteria are carried in the back of the throat of about one in ten people at any one time, but only very rarely cause illness. Most people who carry the bacteria become immune to them. The bacteria do not spread easily and those who have had prolonged, close contact with the person with meningitis/septicaemia are at a slightly greater risk of getting ill. These people have been identified and given antibiotics to stop the bacteria spreading.

Although the risk of another case in the school is very small, it is sensible to be aware of the signs and symptoms: fever, vomiting, bruising rash, severe headache, rapid breathing, stiff neck, dislike of bright light, cold hands and feet, joint/muscle pain.

Not all of these signs and symptoms may show at once, but someone with this illness may become very ill. The illness may progress over one or two days but it can develop very rapidly, sometimes in a matter of hours.

Diagnosis in the early stages can sometimes be difficult. The early signs can be similar to bad 'flu symptoms but be watchful and use your judgement. If someone becomes ill with some of these signs or symptoms, contact the doctor urgently and ask for advice.

If you have individual worries about this case, you can speak to a member of the Health Protection Team on **INSERT NUMBER HERE** during normal working hours. Further information is available 24 hours a day from The Meningitis Research Foundation www.meningitis.org 0808 800 3344 **CHECK NUMBER**, The National Meningitis Trust www.meningitis-trust.org 0845 6000 800 **CHECK NUMBER** and the non emergency NHS contact number: 111.

I will keep you informed should the situation change.

Yours sincerely

Dr M Lee
Headteacher

Appendix 3 – sample letter in the event of the school closing

Dear Parents

Public Health England has informed the school that some of its students have been diagnosed with **INSERT DISEASE NAME**.

The **student is / students are** receiving the appropriate medical care. **Close contacts of the student(s) are receiving antimicrobial drugs as a precaution – delete if inappropriate.**

Following a risk assessment carried out by Public Health England, the local NHS primary care trust and local authority, as a precaution the school has been advised to close temporarily with immediate effect for a period of **INSERT NUMBER** days. We *plan to* reopen on **_____**.

The school is working closely with the Public Health England, NHS colleagues and local authorities to monitor the situation.

If you or your child develops symptoms of **DISEASE-NAME-like** illness the advice of the Health Protection Agency is to stay at home and contact your GP or the non emergency NHS line: 111.. Each case will be assessed and, if necessary, testing and treatment will be provided. Similarly, if any other member of the household displays symptoms, we ask that they do not come onto the school site.

Good basic hygiene can help to reduce transmission of most infections, including **DISEASE NAME**. This includes:

- Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.
- Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.
- Washing your hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to your face or to other people.
- Cleaning hard surfaces (such as door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.
- Making sure your children follow this advice.

For more information on **DISEASE NAME** call the national information line on **INSERT NUMBER**.

Alternatively, visit the Public Health England website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england> **check this**, Your child will be able to continue with school work online via Insight.

Yours sincerely

Dr M Lee
Headteacher

Appendix 4: WHO threat levels

Inter-pandemic Period		
1	No new influenza virus subtypes detected in humans	UK not affected
2	Animal influenza virus subtype poses substantial risk	UK has strong travel/trade connections with affected country UK affected
Pandemic Alert Period		
3	Human infection(s) with a new subtype, but no new human to human spread to a close contact	UK not affected
4	Small cluster(s) with limited human-to human transmission but spread is highly localised, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans	UK has strong travel/trade connections with affected country
5	Large cluster(s) but human-to-human spread still localised, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans	UK affected
Pandemic Period		
6	Increased and sustained transmission in general population	UK Alert level 1 Virus/cases only outside the UK 2 Virus isolated in the UK 3 Outbreak(s) in the UK 4 Widespread activity across the UK
Post Pandemic Period		
	End of pandemic Return to inter-pandemic period	

Appendix 5 – sample posters



 **Wet**

 **Soap**


 **Wash**

 **Rinse**


 **Dry**

**Stop germs spreading.
The power is in your hands.**


Have you washed your germs away? Wash your hands.




Coughs and sneezes spread diseases




always carry tissues



cover your coughs and sneezes



throw used tissues in a bin



always clean your hands

Stop germs spreading