Bright Starts
Co-operative Early Learning Centre Inc.

Child Care Policy and Procedure Manual	
Section 1: Health and Safety	**Policy:** Health and Illness
Date Approved by P&P Cmte: March 7, 2014 **Date Approved by BofD:** April 28, 2014	**Policy #** 1.4

PURPOSE

To provide for the health and well-being of all those who participate at Bright Starts CELC through maintaining guidelines for exclusion which promote a healthy environment, reduce the spread of infections, and prevent outbreaks.

POLICY

Parents/guardians are required to complete and submit medical information prior to their child's admission into the program, including up-to-date immunization records and any pertinent medical information such as allergies and other medical conditions.

Communication is very important. Educators and parents need to share health information daily to minimize illnesses, germs, and diseases. Educators will make general observations about the child's health and well-being upon arrival and record it on their daily attendance sheet and log book.

Educators will monitor children throughout the day for any signs of ill health. Temperatures will be taken of children who display symptoms of ill health, and documentation of children who display symptoms of ill health will be recorded in the program's daily logbook including the child's temperature reading, regardless of whether a fever is present. If a child is found to be ill, the Educator will notify the parents/guardians to pick up their child immediately.

ILLNESS PROCEDURES

The following information is consistent with the Ministry of Education's School and Child Care Screening Tool and the requirements of the Waterloo Regional Public Health Department as outlined in the Safe Health Children Resource Manual for Child Care Providers**.** Bright Starts CELC also develops and implements our own policies and procedures for certain ailments in order to further reduce the spread of germs and infections to the children in our care.

A child will be excluded from care at Bright Starts CELC for 24 hours (48 for vomiting/diarrhea) and until symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours if nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea) if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever and/or chills
    - If a child still has a fever, they may not attend daycare

- Cough
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Shortness of breath
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic heart failure)
- Decrease or loss of taste or smell
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, nasal polyps, allergies, neurological disorders)
- Muscle aches or joint pain
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, getting a COVID-19 vaccine and/or flu shot in the last 48 hours, osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia)
- Extreme tiredness
    - General feeling of being unwell, lack of energy and not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, getting a COVID-19 vaccine and/or flu shot in the last 48 hours, depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, anemia, malignancy)
- Sore throat
    - Painful swallowing or difficulty swallowing, not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, post-nasal drip, acid)
- Runny or stuffy/congested nose.
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, chronic sinusitis)
- Headache
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, getting a COVID-19 vaccine and/or flu shot in the last 48 hours, tension-type headaches, chronic migraines)
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, transient vomiting due to anxiety in children, chronic vestibular dysfunction, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, side effects of medication)
- Abdominal pain
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, menstrual cramps, gastroesophageal reflux disease)
- Pink eye (eye discharge - yellow or white)
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, blepharitis, recurrent styes)
- Decreased or no appetite (young children only)
    - Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, anxiety, constipation)
- Nausea, Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Yellowish skin or eyes, or jaundice.
- Child presents signs of ongoing irritability, displays continuous crying, or requires more attention than can be provided (accompanied by other health related symptoms).

A child will not be excluded from care at Bright Starts CELC who has the following illnesses or conditions:

- Cold Sores
- Body rash (unless accompanied by a second symptom above)
- Diaper rash/Thrush (Candidiasis)
- Ear infection

- Hand, Foot and Mouth disease
- Pinworm
- Chickenpox (with some exceptions)

DIARRHEA and VOMITING: If a child has an episode of diarrhea or vomiting while in attendance at Bright Starts CELC, the child will be separated from his/her group and the parents will be contacted and asked to come pick up their child. Parents are required to keep their child at home until they are 48 hrs symptom free. When assessing to exclude a child experiencing diarrhea staff will reference the Bristol Stool Chart to support determining if the stool is consistent with diarrhea. As well, staff will assess whether gastro/enteric symptoms are new and unexplained before sending a child home for exclusion (food intolerances, antibiotics, irritable bowel, unregulated emotions), parents will be referenced.

Should an enteric outbreak occur, the following extra measures will be put into place:

- Report the outbreak to Public Health
- Create a line listing to record cases to share with Public Health daily
- Cease communal activities including sensory play activities such as water tables, sand tables, etc
- Extra sanitizing of equipment and toys
- Children using cloth diapers will be required to switch to disposable diapers for the duration of the outbreak period
- Cancel any outings including field trips for the duration of the outbreak period
- Dedicate staff to assigned rooms and not move between rooms during the outbreak period
- Request all staff not to work at other facilities during the outbreak period

Parents/guardians are expected to notify staff if their child has experienced diarrhea or vomiting within the 48 hour period prior to their attendance.

FEVER: A fever is a sign of underlying illness, not an illness itself. How a child acts is the best indicator as to how they are feeling. If the child is showing signs of irritability, listlessness, drowsiness, or not able to fully participate in the program, the parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. A child will be separated from his/her group when the fever is accompanied by other symptoms (e.g., nausea, vomiting, rash).

Bright Starts CELC uses the axillary (armpit) method to check for fever in children while in attendance. This method is not as accurate as a rectal temperature. If a temperature does not show a fever but a child feels warm and seems unwell, parents will be informed (Caring for Kids website, Canadian Pediatric Society). The above information combined with the following degrees show the procedure staff will follow when determining if a child should remain in care at Bright Starts CELC.

- 36.5°C to 37.5°C (97.8°F to 99.5°F) - Normal using the axillary method
- 38.3°C (101°F) Low grade temperature - Call parents so they are aware their child has a fever and to prepare for a pick up or come now (parents' choice)
- 38.9°C (102°F) Call parents for pick up
- **39.4°C (103°F) Pick up IMMEDIATELY** - Call emergency contacts if not able to get a hold of parents Parents should not send their child to Bright Starts CELC if they have a fever greater than 38.3°C (101°F) prior to their attendance, nor should they administer medications to mask a fever/illness in order for their child to attend.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES: Bright Starts CELC is required to post for 7 days and report to the local Public Health Department if a "person has or may have a reportable disease or may be infected with an agent of a communicable disease." Each communicable disease has its own guidelines for exclusion/treatment; parents are encouraged to ask if they are unsure whether or not their child should be excluded from the program.

In addition, Bright Starts CELC implements the following practices and exclusion periods for the below:

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINKEYE) – When Bacterial Conjunctivitis (pinkeye) has been diagnosed and antibiotic drops are started a child is to remain out of the Centre for 24 hours after starting treatment. A child who displays signs/symptoms of Pinkeye (runny, teary red eyes and/or pus like discharge) while in attendance will be asked to be picked up from the Centre to seek medical diagnosis. If discharge is still present after the 24 hour treatment period a child may return to care unless there is an outbreak (3 or more cases). If a child has viral pinkeye, they can return to child care once seen by a doctor (a doctor's note will be required).

CHICKENPOX – Children with mild Chickenpox may return to the Centre as soon as they feel well enough to participate in normal activities, regardless of the stage of the rash. They do not need to stay home. Children with more severe cases or those who have a fever or infected lesions must stay home. Research shows that by the time the rash appears, it is too late to stop the spread of the disease. Chickenpox is most infectious one to two days before the onset of the rash and when the child feels most ill.

HEAD LICE – Once evidence of head lice has been found on a child's head, the child will be excluded from child care until appropriate head lice treatment has been applied. Parents of uninfected children within the group will be given a form to complete confirming that they have checked their child's head thoroughly for any evidence of head lice, and if necessary an appropriate treatment has been applied.

Bright Starts CELC Educators, staff, educational placement students and volunteers are required to follow all of the above procedures. In addition, for 10 days after symptoms of either cough, fever, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell or 2 of the above listed symptoms wear a well-fitted mask as a prevention against the spread of other respiratory viruses circulating.

Anyone who is feeling sick or has any new or worsening symptoms of illness, including those not listed in this policy, should stay home until their symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea) and they do not have a fever, and seek assessment from their health care provider if needed.

Training and Policy Review

Training and/or review of this policy will be provided as revisions are made such that all Bright Starts CELC staff receive information on the current health and safety measures in place per our regulatory bodies and the guiding documents that inform our practice.

Date of Issue/Revision	Description of Change	Approved By
April 28, 2014	Initial release	Board of Directors
April 28, 2015	Revision - Public Health update	Board of Directors
October 18, 2022	Revision - Public Health Update, transition from COVID Pandemic Plan Policies	Board of Directors
February 19, 2025	Revision - Public Health Update; exclusion for gastro non-outbreak	Board of Directors