



Infectious Disease Policy

Revision History

Version	Date	Author/ Owner	Summary of change
V1.0	2017-11-01	First Aid Department (Operations Manager)	First Version
V2.0	2020-12-14	First Aid Department (Operations Manager)	Updated to the new template on 2020-11-04 Reviewed by the compliance Manager on 2020-11-09 Approved by the SDSC on 2020-12-10 Approved by the Board on 2020-12-04
V3.0	2022-03-28	First Aid Department (Operations Manager) in consultation with the Pandemic Manager	Review cycle - Updated to include all Infectious diseases Approved by the SDSC on 2022-03-10 Approved by the Board of Governors on 2022-03-28



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1 Introduction / Purpose

It is GESS's main priority to safeguard the welling of our students, staff members, and the school community. GESS will take proactive steps in the presence of any infectious disease within the school community or, if necessary, nationally or globally. Our goal is to minimise the spread of infection to ensure that all essential services are continuously provided and that students, staff members, and the school community are safe within the school during any such period.

This policy is in place to prevent an outbreak of any infectious disease in our school community. It outlines the strategies and actions that GESS is required to prevent the transmission of an infectious disease or control transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

2 Scope / Applicability

This policy sets out the responsibilities in responding to infectious diseases and applies to all staff, students, and parents.

3 Policy

The success of dealing with infectious disease outbreaks depends upon early recognition and prompt action, which requires effective communication between the school community and GESS.

The school closely monitors the following infectious diseases:

- Chickenpox
- Hand Foot and Mouth
- Fifth Disease
- Viral gastroenteritis (Stomach flu, caused by Norovirus)
- Head Lice
- Mumps
- Measles
- Rubella
- Diphtheria
- Poliomyelitis
- Meningitis
- Tuberculosis
- Other (as determined by the First Aid Department in consultation with the school management)

3.1 Responsibilities of the School and First Aid Department

- Closely monitor all related advisories or guidelines from the Ministry of Health or any other relevant authorities in case of a national or globally infectious disease outbreak
- Clearly communicate the procedures in case of an infectious disease outbreak
- To liaise and, if necessary, report cases to the Ministry of Health (MOH) of infectious diseases based on MOH guidelines.
- To inform students, staff members, and the school community of the Importance of personal hygiene during an infectious disease outbreak and to encourage students to cover their mouth and nose when coughing or wear masks where necessary. Dispose of tissues soiled with nose/throat discharges properly, frequent hand washing and good personal hygiene. Do not share eating utensils, food, or drinks.
- The first aid department will instruct cleaners to clean the classroom thoroughly in case of an infectious disease outbreak. Toys or appliances that nasal or oral secretions might contaminate must be cleaned with germicide. Carpets should be taken out to be cleaned. The first aid department officer will also be responsible for informing the bus department, CCA, music, canteen, and other departments, as necessary.
- In case of a confirmed HFMD or chickenpox, the first aid officer will check all siblings in school and the child's classmates every morning for 7 Days.
- During a global pandemic, GESS will appoint a dedicated crisis management team (including a pandemic manager) who will be responsible for:
 - Maintain effective communication with the school community
 - Develop and maintain a medical surveillance plan (Action Matrix) based on national guidelines.
 - Set up temperature screening and isolation room where necessary and advised by MOH.
 - Ensure a sufficient stockpile of masks available in case of an outbreak
 - Coordinating the implementation of safe management measures (SMM) which are based on national guidelines or advisories from respective Singaporean authorities.
 - Ensure students and teachers adhere to the school set SMM.
- GESS is not expected to provide expert advice or treat students, which is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities.

3.2 Responsibilities of Parents

- A student with any of the mentioned infectious diseases must stay at home until a medical practitioner determines the condition is non-infectious (a medical certificate is required). Students with typical symptoms must be sent home and checked by a medical practitioner.

- Parents who have diagnosed their child with any of the mentioned infectious diseases at home must immediately inform the school. The school will inform the parents of the child's classmates by sending out the parent information via email. Students should avoid contact with other children until they have fully recovered.
- Parents have to follow the published procedures when students are unwell, which will be available on the [Parent Portal](#).
- Parents have to adhere to all instructions from the school regarding temperature taking, children's attendance, or any other SMM of the school in case of an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic.

4 Definition

Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) is a common childhood illness. A person with HFMD often has the following symptoms: fever, poor appetite, malaise, sore throat, and the appearance of small blistering sores in the mouth, on the palms of the hands, and on the soles of the feet. The sores fade without treatment in 7 to 10 days. Since several different types of viruses can cause HFMD, people can develop the disease more than once if exposed to a different virus type. HFMD is most common in children under 10 years of age. Infection is spread from person to person through contact with nose/throat discharges or blister secret or stool of infected person. An infected person is most contagious during the first week of the illness. However, the virus can be present in the stool for 4 to 6 weeks.

Chickenpox is an infection caused by the varicella-zoster virus. It causes an itchy rash with small, fluid-filled blisters. The itchy blister rash caused by chickenpox infection appears 10 to 21 days after exposure to the virus and usually lasts about five to 10 days. Other signs and symptoms, which may appear one to two days before the rash, include Fever, Loss of appetite, Headache or Tiredness, and a general feeling of being unwell (malaise).

Fifth Disease is a viral disease that often results in a red rash on the arms, legs, and cheeks. The fifth disease begins with a low fever, headache, and mild cold-like symptoms (like a stuffy or runny nose). These symptoms pass and the illness seems to be gone until the rash appears a few days later. Kids younger than 10 are most likely to get the rash.

Gastric Flu (Viral gastroenteritis) is a highly contagious intestinal infection commonly known as stomach flu. Symptoms include watery diarrhoea, stomach cramps, and vomiting.

Head Lice are tiny insects that feed on blood from the human scalp. An infestation of head lice most often affects children and usually results from the direct transfer of lice from one person's hair to the hair of another. Common signs and symptoms of a lice infestation can include Itching, Lice on the scalp, Lice eggs (nits) on hair shafts or Sores on the scalp, neck and shoulders.

Mumps is a viral infection that primarily affects saliva-producing (salivary) glands that are located near your ears. Mumps can cause swelling in one or both of these glands.

Measles is an acute viral respiratory illness. It is characterised by a prodrome of fever and malaise, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis -the three "C" s -, pathognomonic enanthema (Koplik spots) followed by a maculopapular rash. The rash usually appears about 14 days after a person is exposed.

Rubella is a contagious disease caused by a virus. Most people who get rubella usually have a mild illness, with symptoms that can include a low-grade fever, sore throat, and a rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body.

Diphtheria is a serious infection caused by strains of bacteria called *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* that make a toxin (poison). It can lead to difficulty breathing, heart failure, paralysis, and even death.

Poliomyelitis is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the poliovirus. The virus spreads from person to person and can infect a person's spinal cord, causing paralysis.

Meningitis is an inflammation (swelling) of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord. A bacterial or viral infection of the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord usually causes swelling.

Tuberculosis is a potentially serious infectious disease that mainly affects the lungs. The bacteria that cause tuberculosis are spread from person to person through tiny droplets released into the air via coughs and sneezes.

A **pandemic** is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread through human populations across geographical regions globally. Pandemics occur when the general population has no or little immunity against an emerging or re-emerging pathogen. Over the centuries, infectious diseases with different modes of transmission have resulted in pandemics, including influenza (respiratory spread), cholera (water- and food-borne) and bubonic plague (vector-borne). An epidemic occurs when new cases of a certain disease in a given human population and during a given period substantially exceed what is expected based on recent experience.

5 Policy authority

Policy Owner:	First Aid Department (Operations Manager) in consultation with the Pandemic Manager
Implementation Body:	First Aid Department (in case of a pandemic, the crisis management team)
Governing school subcommittee:	School Development Sub Committee
Next required review date:	March 2024
Final Approver:	Board of Governors



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6 Related policies/references/processes

[First Aid Policy](#)

[First Aid Guidelines](#)

[Accident and Incident Procedure](#)

[Administration of Medication Procedure](#)

[Infectious Diseases Procedures](#)

[Record Keeping Procedure](#)

[Storage of Medication Procedures](#)

[Students absent due to illness Procedure](#)

[Isolation Room set up](#)

[MOH PANDEMIC READINESS AND RESPONSE PLAN FOR INFLUENZA AND OTHER ACUTE RESPIRATORY DISEASES](#)