



The **Daffodil** Project CIC

Hygiene & Infection Control Policy

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1. Policy Statement

The Daffodil Project CIC is committed to maintaining the highest standards of hygiene and infection control across all areas of the setting, with particular consideration given to our therapeutic use of animals, outdoor learning, and sensory-based activities. We recognise our duty to protect the health of children, staff, volunteers, and visitors by preventing the spread of infectious diseases, including zoonotic infections. This policy outlines our procedures for hand hygiene, environmental cleanliness, food safety, and managing illness, and is designed to safeguard both vulnerable children and the animals in our care.

- Prevent illness and disease transmission through high hygiene standards
 - Protect children with SEND and vulnerable health conditions
 - Embed infection control across all routines, environments, and staff roles
 - Promote safe animal and food-related practices at all times
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2. Scope

This policy applies to all people on the premises, including children, staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors, and covers all operational areas: classrooms, therapy spaces, kitchens, bathrooms, gardens, and animal zones. It extends to off-site visits and outreach events, and to all activities involving food, animals, sensory play, and shared equipment.

- Applies to all persons on-site or at off-site activities
 - Includes all indoor, outdoor, and animal-related environments
 - Covers food handling, illness management, cleaning, and PPE
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3. Legal & Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**
- **The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002**
- **Public Health England Infection Prevention Guidance for Early Years (2023)**
- **Food Safety Act 1990 & Food Hygiene Regulations 2006**
- **Animal Welfare Act 2006**
- **SEND Code of Practice 2015**
- **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2022)**
- Comply with COSHH and food safety law
- Follow Public Health and DEFRA infection control guidance
- Maintain safe environments for vulnerable individuals and animals

4. Roles & Responsibilities

The Director is responsible for the overall implementation and review of infection control measures, ensuring compliance with health guidance and responding to outbreaks.

The Hygiene & Safety Coordinator will conduct hygiene audits, ensure staff are trained in procedures, and monitor the cleanliness and safety of facilities and animal zones.

All Staff are responsible for modelling and enforcing handwashing, using PPE correctly, reporting illness, and following cleaning routines.

Parents/Carers must inform the setting of any illness or infection and comply with exclusion periods for contagious conditions.

- Director leads compliance and outbreak response
- Coordinator oversees hygiene routines and audits
- All staff model good hygiene and report illness
- Parents inform and follow sickness procedures

5. Hand Hygiene Procedures

Proper hand hygiene is the single most effective method of preventing the spread of infections. All children and staff must wash their hands:

- Before eating or food preparation
- After using the toilet
- After touching animals or their bedding/feed
- After outdoor play or gardening
- After coughing, sneezing, or nose-blowing

Visual guides and supervised routines will ensure consistency among children. Hand sanitiser may be used where soap and water are unavailable but is not a substitute for proper washing after animal contact.

- Enforce handwashing at all key times
- Provide visual prompts and adult supervision
- Use hand sanitiser only as a temporary measure
- Ensure access to soap, warm water, and drying materials

6. Animal Hygiene & Biosecurity Measures

Animals are integral to our setting and require strict hygiene protocols to prevent zoonotic disease transmission. Animal zones will have designated handwashing stations and

restricted access as needed. Bedding will be changed regularly, and faeces removed promptly. Children will not clean animal waste unless part of a risk-assessed life skills activity under supervision.

All animals will be regularly health-checked and vaccinated, and any showing signs of illness will be isolated from children.

- Clean enclosures daily; dispose of waste hygienically
 - Isolate unwell animals; restrict access where needed
 - Supervise any child involvement in animal cleaning
 - Provide dedicated handwashing facilities in animal areas
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7. Food Safety & Hygiene

All staff involved in food preparation will complete food hygiene training. Children may participate in cooking activities under supervision, with hygiene standards embedded in the routine. Separate chopping boards, utensils, and preparation zones will be used. Food grown on-site will be washed thoroughly before use.

High-risk foods (e.g. raw eggs, unpasteurised dairy) will not be used with children. Allergens will be carefully monitored, and cross-contamination prevented.

- Ensure food prep staff are trained in hygiene
 - Maintain clean cooking environments and utensils
 - Avoid use of high-risk foods in children's cooking
 - Manage allergens and prevent cross-contamination
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8. Cleaning & Waste Disposal

All cleaning products will be COSHH assessed, stored safely, and used according to manufacturer guidelines. A daily and weekly cleaning schedule will be followed for all areas, with enhanced cleaning of high-contact surfaces. Waste will be disposed of safely, including clinical waste (e.g., soiled gloves or wipes) where applicable.

Animal waste will be disposed of using sealed bags and kept away from children.

- Use COSHH-approved cleaning products and PPE
 - Follow daily/weekly cleaning schedules
 - Dispose of waste hygienically and in sealed bags
 - Clean high-touch areas (e.g. door handles) multiple times daily
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9. Infection Control & Zoonotic Disease Prevention

We take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases between humans and animals. In the event of a suspected outbreak (e.g. norovirus, ringworm, flu, COVID-19), enhanced cleaning, isolation protocols, and local authority notification will be implemented. Children or staff with suspected zoonotic infections will be excluded until medically cleared.

Visitors will be made aware of hygiene expectations before entering animal zones.

- Monitor for symptoms of illness in children, staff, and animals
 - Isolate affected individuals and implement deep cleaning
 - Notify local Public Health England team in case of outbreaks
 - Enforce exclusion periods based on NHS guidelines
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10. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE will be available and used appropriately in the following situations:

- When cleaning bodily fluids, faeces, or animal waste
- During first aid or medical procedures
- While handling or grooming animals (as required)
- When administering medication or food to animals

PPE includes gloves, aprons, masks (where required), and eye protection for high-risk tasks. Staff will be trained in donning and doffing procedures to reduce contamination.

- Provide gloves, aprons, and other PPE for relevant tasks
 - Train staff in correct usage and disposal
 - Replace PPE after single use or when contaminated
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11. Management of Illness and Exclusion Periods

Children or staff displaying symptoms of contagious illness (e.g. diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, rashes) will be sent home and required to stay off site for the relevant exclusion period, as per NHS/Public Health England guidance. This includes:

- 48 hours after last episode of vomiting/diarrhoea
- 7 days after onset of COVID-19 or until negative test
- Until clinically assessed and cleared for other conditions (e.g. ringworm, impetigo)

All incidents will be recorded and monitored to identify potential outbreaks early.

- Follow NHS guidance for exclusion durations
- Send home children/staff with symptoms promptly
- Monitor illness trends and act early to contain spread

12. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following an outbreak or regulatory change. Cleaning records, illness logs, COSHH registers, and staff training files will be audited to ensure compliance. Feedback from staff, families, and environmental health professionals will inform continuous improvement.

- Review policy annually or after outbreak events
- Audit logs and records to ensure compliance
- Act on feedback to enhance infection control practices

Signed:

Magdalena Van De Voort



Director, The Daffodil Project CIC

Date: January 2025