

## Information for guardians

In association with [Smittskydd Västra Götaland](#)

# Preventing contagion in preschool

Preschool is a place where many children spend time together which makes it easy for infections to spread. This information is intended to help limit the spread of infections and make preschools healthier.

Every child becomes ill occasionally and it is common for small children to have several infections every year. The most frequent are respiratory tract infections such as colds. Other infectious illnesses common among preschool children are stomach infections, chickenpox and impetigo (swinepox).

A child's general state of health, i.e. how they eat, sleep and are able to participate in preschool activities (indoors as well as outdoors), is what determines whether a child should be at preschool. A child may sometimes be energetic and active at home, but still not manage to participate in the group of children. An ill child who is out of sorts needs peace and quiet and time to recover. Sometimes a child also needs to stay at home due to the risk of infecting others.

In order to reduce the spread of infections, guardians and preschools need to collaborate. It is therefore important that you tell the staff what symptoms your child has or why your child is ill. That way the preschool can apply measures to prevent other children from becoming ill.

## Your child must stay at home

- when they have a fever. Your child can return to preschool when they have not had a fever for 24 hours (without medication to reduce fever) and their general state of health is good.
- when they are ill with cold symptoms such as a sore throat, runny nose/nasal catarrh, fever or cough. Your child can return to preschool when their general state of health is good and the symptoms have subsided. Remaining symptoms such as a cough and nasal catarrh are not problematic, even if the mucus is thick and green or yellow.
- when they are vomiting and/or have diarrhoea. Your child can return to preschool when they are healthy, have eaten normally and have not vomited or had diarrhoea/loose stool for at least 48 hours. When there are several children at preschool with stomach infections, contagion can be reduced by keeping preschool-age siblings of ill children at home as well.

- when they have sores/eczemas that ooze fluid. Your child can return to preschool once the sore/eczema has dried out and no longer oozes fluid. If your child has impetigo (swinepox), the sore has to have healed and be without a scab before they can return to preschool.
- when they have tonsillitis or scarlet fever. Your child can return to preschool when the symptoms are gone, or after two days of a course of antibiotics if their general state of health is good.
- if they are so tired and listless, even without a fever, that they lack the energy to participate in the group of children.

Other guidelines may apply in the event of other infections, or if several children are ill at the same time.

### **Should a child with respiratory problems stay at home?**

A child with a mild runny nose or cough can attend preschool if the general condition is good.

### **Advice for guardians**

Infections can spread via bodily fluids such as droplets from coughing and sneezing and from vomit and excrement. Infections spread via our hands and from objects such as fabric towels, handles and toys. Good hygiene practice helps reduce the spread of infection.

- Wash your own and your child's hands with soap and water frequently. This is particularly important after toilet visits/nappy changes, after blowing your/your child's nose and before meals.
- Teach your child to cough and sneeze into the crook of their arm.
- Keep fingernails short as dirt and bacteria easily accumulate there.
- Wash comfort blankets and cuddly toys and clean or replace pacifiers and toothbrushes once your child has recovered.
- It is a good idea for each member of the family to have their own hand towel.

## How to wash your hands



## Handtvättssången

(The handwashing song)

*Melodi: Blinka lilla stjärna*

(Melody: Twinkle, twinkle, little star)

Tvätta, tvätta  
liten hand  
Bort med smuts och  
bort med sand  
Mellan, i och  
ovanpå  
Gnugga tummen,  
båda två  
Tvätta, tvätta  
liten hand  
Bort med smuts och  
bort med sand!