



**NORTH STAR NURSERY AND HOLIDAY CLUB**  
**HIV AND AIDS AWARENESS POLICY**

**Definition**

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. This is a condition in which the body's natural defences are severely damaged by infection with a virus called HIV-Human Immunodeficiency Virus. You can only have AIDS if you are already HIV positive. AIDS is not one illness; it is a syndrome of about 30 different conditions including certain rare serious infections and cancers, some of which may together indicate a diagnosis of AIDS. Some people may be infected with the HIV virus for many years and not develop AIDS; others will develop AIDS fairly quickly after infection. It is not yet possible to state what percentage of those who are infected with the HIV virus will develop AIDS.

**How do people get HIV or Aids?**

- HIV lives in white blood cells and can be detected in other body fluids such as, semen and vaginal fluids.
- It lives only very briefly outside the body.
- It is spread by an infected person through sexual intercourse, sharing needles and/or syringes used to inject drugs and from a pregnant mother to her baby during or before birth or, very rarely, through breast feeding.
- Tears, sweat and saliva contain only tiny traces of the virus, and no one has been infected by these body fluids.
- The HIV virus cannot be passed on by using the same lavatory, sharing cups or cutlery, touching or even kissing an infected person.
- Nor can it be transmitted through swimming or paddling pools.

**How can you tell if someone carries the HIV virus?**

YOU CAN'T. Many people may live their lives completely ignorant that they carry the HIV virus. There is a test which will detect the presence of antibodies (the HIV Antibody Test) but it takes time for antibodies to develop and the virus will not show up until around three months after infection. Babies born to mothers with HIV will react positively to the test: this simply shows their mother's infection. Only 1 in 5 babies remain HIV positive once they have shed their mother's antibodies and developed their own at around 18 months to 2 years old.

**How can we stop the virus spreading?**

The virus is relatively weak and can live outside the body only for a short period of time. It is killed by the use of diluted bleach or other disinfectant. Normal hygiene practice and precautions should eliminate any risk there may be.

The virus needs to get into the bloodstream to be effective and is therefore only transmitted in very specific circumstances. The two main ways this happens are from the practice of unprotected sex with an HIV infected partner and from the shared use of needles for drug use.

**Is there a known cure for a child who is HIV positive?**

The virus cannot be eliminated completely from their system if they are HIV infected. Access to the most up-to-date treatments allows suppression of the virus and control of symptoms

### **Should we exclude individuals from our group if they are HIV positive or have AIDS?**

Children and adults living with or who are affected by HIV are offered protection under the Equality Act 2010 which means it is unlawful to discriminate against them.

This applies to children, employed staff, supply and agency staff, volunteers, students, parents and carers, visitors, maintenance personnel and other early years professionals.

There is no reason to believe that Children's Services or Ofsted will require knowing the HIV status of a registered person to be registered or to help in the setting.

There is no logical reason whatsoever to exclude anyone from the group on the grounds of HIV infection.

Firstly, you can never be certain you'll know if anyone has the HIV virus.

Secondly, if you did know, there is no reason why it should make any difference to the hygiene procedures in place.

Thirdly, and most importantly of all, adults with HIV and AIDS need your help and understanding and the opportunities your group will give them, together with the security of knowing they will not be discriminated against. Those who are HIV positive may have a desperate need to talk to someone-they can not talk to you if they think doing so will lead to rejection from the group.

### **Should we exclude children who are HIV positive?**

It is, of course, possible that such a child already attends the group without us being aware of it.

We have good, well established hygiene procedures that are followed by the staff, this and good relationships with the parents attending the nursery, that they need to understand the need for children to be protected from *ANY* illness or infection. Therefore there is no reason whatsoever why we cannot offer the benefits and support to help the development of a HIV child and his/her family.

Such a child may be an irregular attendee as he or she is more likely to succumb to some infections - but the benefits to the child of being part of a group and accepted by their peers far outweigh the risks to him/her.

There is no reason to curtail any nursery activity to accommodate an HIV child.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Children with HIV infection may also have special educational needs. They can show delay in their developmental milestones and a range of physical disabilities including cerebral palsy, microcephaly and some degree of mental handicap. Epilepsy is not uncommon. It is important that, as with all children with special educational needs, we seek advice and support from the Early Years team to ensure the required resources to handle and promote the development of the child positively are available.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Policy.

### **Are you HIV prejudiced?**

Please consider the following statements and decide whether you agree or disagree with them.

I would feel comfortable living next door to somebody who is HIV positive or who has AIDS.

Agree  Disagree

If I was introduced to someone at work who I knew was living with HIV or who has AIDS, I would feel comfortable to greet them with a handshake.

Agree  Disagree

People who are HIV positive only have themselves to blame.

Agree  Disagree

People who are living with HIV are treated like second class citizens in the UK.

Agree  Disagree

### **What are the social issues for children living with HIV?**

- Secrecy: children often have to keep HIV status a secret at school (fear of stigma).
- Older children may be caring for sick relatives at home.
- Become responsible for themselves at an earlier age: often dressing themselves and walking themselves to school.
- May find that their parent is less able to play games that are physically demanding.
- May find that their parent is less able to attend events at school to watch them perform due to ill health.
- May have a stressful home life.
- May be on medication themselves.
- Younger children may face more than one bereavement.
- Issues of adoption or fostering may be on the horizon.
- Their family may have little money, perhaps because a parent is too ill to work.
- Children may feel powerless/not involved in decision making.
- For infected siblings, the uninfected child may feel jealous for not receiving all the attention.

### **Confidentiality**

Children and staff living with HIV or who are affected by it are offered protection under the Data Protection Act 1998. The Nursery/Holiday Club Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation of confidentiality within the work place. Information will be passed on to staff on a need to know basis for the safety and well being of the children and their families.

Information given by parents/carers on a confidential basis to a member of staff will not be passed on to other adults, other than the Nursery/Holiday Club Manager, without permission.

North Star Nursery and Holiday Club seeks to provide a safe, secure environment in which each and every child in our care can reach their full potential.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Confidentiality Policy and the Data Protection Act Statement. North Star Nursery and Holiday Club is bound by its Confidentiality Policy to provide disclosure of information regarding HIV or AIDS and the treatment of children and families in our care on a need to know basis only and with the parents/carers permission.

North Star Nursery and Holiday Club is required by The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to have an Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens. This is outlined below.

### **Exposure Determination:-**

The duties within North Star Nursery and Holiday Club, which might put an individual in contact with blood or blood containing fluids, are:

- First Aid Administration (e.g. cuts, grazes etc)
- Haemorrhaging (e.g. nose bleeds)
- Nose blowing and wiping
- Nappy changes
- Potty training and toileting
- Menstruation
- Breastmilk
- Vomit
- Diarrhoea
- Life saving medication (e.g. Epipens, adrenaline injections and other drug administration)
- Any other situation brought to our attention by a medical practitioner.
- Application of prescribed creams to broken skin areas (e.g. eczema)

(Terrence Higgins Trust says "none of the activities listed would put a health/care worker at risk of HIV).

### **Methods of compliance:-**

- Wear latex disposable gloves at all times when dealing with the above listed exposures.
- Spills of body fluids: blood, faeces, nasal and eye discharge, saliva and vomit, must be cleaned up immediately.
- Wear disposable gloves. Be careful not to get any of the fluid you are cleaning up in your eyes, nose, mouth or open sores you may have.
- Clean and disinfect any surfaces on which body fluids have been spilled. An effective disinfectant solution is household bleach solution diluted 1 in 10 parts but it must be carefully used.
- Discard fluid contaminated material in a plastic bag along with the disposable gloves. The bag must be securely sealed and disposed of according to local guidance.
- Mops used to clean up body fluids should be cleaned in a cleaning equipment sink (not in the kitchen sink, bathroom basins or playroom sinks), rinsed with a disinfecting solution and dried.
- Ensure contaminated clothing is double bagged and sent home or laundered separately from other items on a hot wash (minimum 60c).
- Items used for procedures on children with special needs (such as lancets for finger sticks, or syringes for injections) will require safe disposal. Parents will be expected to provide what is called a "sharps container" which safely stores the lancets or needles until the parent can take them home.
- All breast milk will need to be brought into nursery in the bottles ready for feeding to the baby/child (not frozen in bags for staff to defrost). The temperature of the milk will no longer be tested on the wrist of staff and so it will be served at room temperature. Staff will not rinse or wash-up the bottles, but bag them up and send them home for washing and sterilisation. This ensures that all families are treated equally, that staff are not put at risk and that there would be no way to detect an HIV or AIDS family from any other using the setting, even if they chose to disclose such information to us.
- **Remember: wearing gloves does not mean that you don't have to wash your hands!**

## **Why are Universal Precautions needed in a Childcare setting?**

Germs that are spread through blood and body fluids can come at any time from any person. You may not know if someone is infected with a bacteria or virus such as hepatitis or HIV; the infected person may not even know.

This is why we must behave as if **every** individual might be infected with **any** germ in **all** situations that place you in contact with blood or body fluids.

## **Staffing and Recruitment**

People who are living with HIV are covered by the Equality Act 2010 – an anti-discrimination law - from the day they are diagnosed.

The Data Protection Act 1998 also states that records of an employee's HIV status must be kept confidential.

As an equal opportunities employer, North Star Nursery commits to making 'reasonable adjustments' should a member of staff be diagnosed with HIV, such as reducing their workload or allowing them extra time off work for medical appointments.

Since the introduction of the Equality Act 2010, employers are restricted on the questions they can ask about candidates' health when applying for jobs and during the early stages of the recruitment process.

North Star Nursery will not ask candidates to fill in a questionnaire about their health before an offer of a position has been made. After an offer of a job has been made, North Star Nursery may make the offer conditional on health requirements being met.

North Star Nursery may ask questions about a potential employee's health if it is relevant to the job they have been offered.

If a potential employee is asked to complete a health questionnaire after being offered a job, and they are dishonest about their HIV status and North Star Nursery later found out, this would be called a breach of mutual trust and the employee could lose the job.

National AIDS Trust's publication *Advice for Job Applicants Living With HIV* outlines the Equality Act 2010 and explains how it relates to people living with HIV.

## **Useful contacts**

Terrence Higgins Trust                      0808 802 1221 (free)      10 am-8pm Monday to Friday

[www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk)

Terrence Higgins Trust,  
314 – 320 Gray's Inn Road,  
London WC1X 8DP

NHS 111

## References

Pre-School Learning Alliance  
Department of Health  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
Switch Training Tutors  
Terrence Higgins Trust

This policy links to:	Equality and Diversity Policy Accessibility Plan and Table Health and Safety Policy Allocations Policy Special Educational Needs Policy Confidentiality Policy Data Protection Act Statement – clients and staff First Aid Policy Medications Policy Nappy Changing Procedures Procedures for Preparing Babies Bottles Parent Partnership Staff Induction Staff Training Staff Handbook Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure
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<b>Policy Review History</b>	
June 2003	Policy written
May 2008	Revised
October 2011	v.1
August 2015	v.2
September 2016	v.3

**This policy will be reviewed in September 2017 unless a review of events, legislation or guidance from health professionals or Ofsted indicates that a review should take place sooner.**