UNOW ILLNESS POLICY AND MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A copy of this policy is provided to new families at the new family orientation and additional copies may be provided upon request. This policy is effective April 26, 2024 and supersedes any illness policy prior.

UNOW Day Nursery promotes the protection of children by preventing illness and promoting safety and general wellbeing. We encourage children to develop good health practices including daily handwashing, encouraging good nutrition, exercise and proper rest for the development of healthy bodies. In addition, all staff practice proper hand washing, sanitation and safe food service throughout all daily routines. All staff maintain certification in Infant/Child/Adult CPR and First Aid. Health and Safety policies are reviewed and shared with all staff and families annually.

Immunizations and Health Records are required to ensure the safety of staff and children:

In accordance with the State of New Jersey health regulations, families are required to provide a copy of their up-to-date immunization record, including an annual flu shot for children over 6 months of age to be given between the months of September 1 and December 1. Along with a copy of the immunization records, families must provide a copy of a completed Universal Health Record prior to enrollment and then annually. Universal Health Records may be based on the child’s most recent physical if it is within the previous year from point of the first day of attendance. New families enrolling from different states or from out of the country have up to 30 days to submit immunizations records.

All Staff prior to working must provide current TB test results and a Staff Health Record completed by a licensed physician and indicating good health and pose no health risk to persons at the center. Staff Health Records may be completed by a physician based on a previous health wellness exam from no more than one year of hire date.

Procedures at the onset of illness symptoms at home or at school:

AT HOME: If your child exhibits signs of being unwell at home, please follow the policy below as it pertains to the symptoms you are observing. The amount of time your child must be excluded from care is based on the particular symptoms your child is exhibiting. Please reach out to your child’s teacher to let them know of your child’s absence as well as the symptoms you are seeing. It is important for teachers to know as it allows them to notify families and monitor the other children for symptoms. While we recognize the difficulties inherent in keeping a sick child home, it is our strongest line of defense in keeping the rest of the group as healthy as possible.

AT SCHOOL: If teachers observe any of the symptoms below at school, the following guidelines will be followed and the family will be called to come pick up their child. If a parent/guardian is not reached within 30 minutes, the emergency contact person will be notified and expected to pick-up. It is important the parent/guardian/emergency contact respond and pick up their child within an hour. Immediate pick up ensures the continued care needed for the ill child and the prevention of infection to other children and staff. If it is safer to the other children in the group for the sick child to be isolated immediately, they will be brought to the front of the school, given a quiet place to rest and supervised by the administration. Upon picking up your child, an Illness Report with the specific symptoms observed will be signed by the parent and teacher. This Illness Report will also give the date the child can return to school after taking into consideration best practices for limiting contagiousness for specific symptoms as well as the teacher’s discretion about when the schedule of the classroom can best support a child arriving for the day (for instance, it can be very disruptive for a child to arrive for the day during naptime).

THE FOLLOWING SERVES AS A FRAMEWORK OF SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS FOR WHICH A CHILD MAY BE EXCLUDED:

- **FEVER** – If your child exhibits a fever of 100.4°F or higher he or she will be removed from the group and kept comfortable until you are notified and take your child home. They can return to school when they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. A child sent home with a fever can not return to school until one full day of school has passed.

- **Gastro-Intestinal Illness (e.g. Diarrhea and/or Vomiting)** - If a child vomits or has diarrhea that is excessively watery or outside what is considered normal for them and no other explanation (such as the introduction of a new food or medication) seems clear, the teacher will contact the parent to pick up their child. The child should not return to school the
full next day or for 24 hours from the last incidence of vomiting or diarrhea unless there is a doctor’s note indicating the child is not contagious.

- **Respiratory Virus Guidance (such as COVID, RSV, etc):** For any respiratory virus, adults and children must be fever free and able to participate fully and comfortably in normal activities with all symptoms improving for 24 hours before returning to UNOW. If symptoms are not improving even as the fever has subsided, there still must be 24 hours after the symptoms have improved before returning. Upon return, additional precautions should be taken for 5 days such as masking (as developmentally appropriate), social distancing when possible, as well as increased ventilation and sanitization procedures. During times of high transmission of serious pediatric respiratory viruses such as RSV, even more vigilant attention will be paid to the youngest members of our community.

- **Cold/Allergy Symptoms:** If cold/allergy symptoms such as runny nose, cough and sneezing are worsening to the point of interfering with normal daily behaviors or cause concern of contagion for other children, teachers will ask a family to come pick up their child and/or provide a doctor’s note saying they are not contagious to others.

- **Unidentified Rash** – If a child is sent home with an unidentified skin condition or rash, the child may not return without a physician’s note stating they are not contagious to others.

- **Conjunctivitis** – Unless the symptoms are due to a known allergy or irritant, children exhibiting a discharge around the eye or redness and itchiness the child should be seen by a doctor. They can return to school with a doctor’s note indicating they are not contagious.

- **Unexplained Change in Behavior/Unable to Participate in Normal Daily Activities** – Teachers know children can often tell when there has been a change in a child’s behavior that means they are not well. If a child is unable to participate in the day’s activities because of persistent symptoms, it is good for a family to be aware of how they are doing. Often, a teacher will call a family to update them on what they are observing, even if it is not yet at the level of needing to be sent home. If the listlessness, malaise or changes in behavior worsen, new symptoms emerge or teachers are unable to tend to the needs of a single child while also caring for the rest of the group, the family will be asked to come pick up their child.

- **Head Lice:** In a child care setting where children are in such close proximity, the chances of lice spreading increase even though it is not an illness. For that reason, **UNOW is a nit free environment. Children who contract head lice should not return to UNOW until they are free of nits.** If there is an incident of head lice; information will be distributed to all families with the necessary next steps.

- **Coxsackie (Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease):** If a child is diagnosed with this common childhood virus, they must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and have no open or oozing sores anywhere on their body. If the sores have blistered but not yet burst and dried, they must remain at home until the blisters have crusted over.

- **Impetigo:** Impetigo is a highly contagious rash that starts with reddish sores around the mouth and nose of infants and toddlers. When sores are observed, children can return with a doctor’s note saying when they can return to school and no longer contagious.

**POLICY ON MASKING:** Masking is recommended for anyone over the age of 2 for the 5 days after returning from a respiratory virus or when they have been exposed to a respiratory virus. Additionally, anyone who is immunocompromised/at risk for serious complications (or has family at home under the same circumstances) is encouraged to mask at any time they feel it necessary to further protect themselves from the risk of transmission. At any time, the Department of Licensing or Princeton Health Department may require community masking as a preventive measure in response to an outbreak or marked increase in cases. UNOW values a community culture around masking that recognizes some will be masked and some unmasked at any time, for a variety of personal as well as communal reasons.

**POLICY ON NOTES FROM A DOCTOR:** UNOW may ask at any time for a note from a doctor attesting to a child’s ability to be in group care and lack of contagiousness. Doctor’s notes must be the result of an in-person examination and come on stationary from the practice and/or imprinted with the doctor’s stamp. Notes from family members that are physicians will not be accepted.

**NOTIFICATION OF EXPOSURE TO CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS:** Classroom families will receive a health alert notice any time their child may have been exposed to a communicable illness. The health alert notice will include the name of the diagnosed illness along with possible symptoms and remedies. The names of children with the diagnosed illness will remain confidential. Any health information that pertains to the whole community will be communicated in the weekly newsletter from the administration that is distributed on Fridays.