



Covid-19 Policy

During the current Covid-19 Pandemic, it is our intention to keep our setting open as much as possible, and to keep things running as normally as possible. The care and safety of the children remains our top priority at all times.

Managing Covid within the setting.

Risk Assessment.

We update our risk assessment regularly as the Covid situation changes. We act upon the findings of the risk assessment to minimise the risk of staff or children being exposed to the virus whilst at pre-school and use our findings to inform our "Contingency Measures and Outbreak Management Plan".

Contingency Measures and Outbreak Management Plan.

This explains how we stay up to date with the most recent developments in the pandemic, how we keep relevant groups informed of developments and how we manage Covid cases within the setting.

Changes to Policies and Procedures.

The principles of all of our policies and procedures remain at all times throughout the pandemic. We remain committed to maintaining the quality of care, safety and security of all the children in our care. However, it is possible that during the pandemic we may encounter some exceptional circumstances in which it is not possible to operate in the optimum way outlined in our policies. It may be necessary to temporarily modify our practice in order to remain open and to ensure that the care and safety of the children continue to be ensured.

Where temporary changes are necessary, we will ensure they are as short term as possible and that normal practice is restored as quickly as it can reasonably be.

Some of the ways in which we foresee that Covid may affect our normal day-to-day practice are outlined below, however other unforeseen circumstances might also occur. In unforeseen circumstances, we will always act to maintain the quality of care, safety and security of the children to the best of our ability.

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

All staff remain alert to any signs that during the current COVID-19 outbreak a child in their care is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. This include signs of neglect that may be caused by extraordinary circumstances due to measures to curb the spread of the virus.

The role of the key person and settling-in

During the COVID-19 outbreak it is likely that there will be times when some children will not have their usual key person. Where this is the case, the principles of the key person role are followed as closely as possible. If it is necessary to use temporary staff who are not familiar with the setting, all roles involving medication or children with SEND will be fulfilled by the manager or deputy or by other permanent staff who remain within the setting (at the direction of the manager).

Staffing

During the COVID-19 outbreak, staff will be deployed as per the government guidance. Relaxation of the rules on ratios may be implemented in exceptional circumstances during the COVID-19 outbreak period. Any relaxation of ratios must be based on a risk assessment approach and with the authorisation of the manager. Otherwise the following procedure applies.

During the COVID-19 outbreak early years staff are themselves considered to be 'key workers'. If staff cannot source care for their own children then they are able to bring their child to the setting, ensuring that as far as possible, they adhere to the criteria below and ensure they are not breaching conditions of their insurance provider:

- where members of staff have their own children with them at the setting, the age of the child must fall within the stipulated ages of the setting's Ofsted registration
- where members of staff are likely to be working directly with their own children, this is subject to discussion before commencement with their line manager

Managing children who are sick, infectious, or with allergies

During the COVID-19 outbreak, any child showing symptoms, such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; loss or taste or smell, the following sequence of actions need to be taken:

1. Child presents with symptoms; parents are requested to collect child and carry out a Lateral Flow test.
2. Child's parents are requested to inform setting of outcome/diagnosis and keep child at home for the recommended exclusion period. For cases of suspected Coronavirus, staff and service users must adhere to current Government advice regarding self-exclusion even if no symptoms are present.
3. Staff are requested to test themselves twice weekly using Lateral Flow Tests and to report the test results to our Manager. Our Manager keeps a record of these results. Our manager also keeps a record of positive cases amongst staff which includes the date. These records are kept for one year.
4. Our manager informs Hampshire County Council of any positive cases as soon as reasonably possible, using their online form.

5. If the new case means that 10% of our staff and children are now testing positive for Coronavirus within a 10 day period, our manager must contact Public Health England for advice.
6. Our manager will inform the chair of the pre-school management committee and Ofsted, and will retain a copy of the report to Ofsted.
7. Acting on the advice of the local HPT, the setting will either:
 - close for a set period and undertake a deep clean
 - carry on as usual but also undertake a deep clean
8. A deep clean is undertaken at the soonest opportunity following any illness outbreak. Hand hygiene messages are reinforced and staff are vigilant to any further signs of infection.

Food and drink

The following procedures are followed:

- All children wash their hands prior to being given food or drink.
- All tables are wiped with antibacterial spray before and after being used for consumption of food or drink.
- Staff who are eating with the children must role-model hygiene best practice.
- Tables are not overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

This is an unsettling time for young children. Practitioners are alert to the emotional well-being of children who may be affected by the disruption to their normal routine. Where a child's behaviour gives cause for concern, practitioners take into consideration the many factors that may be affecting them. This is done in partnership with the child's parents/carers and the principles of this procedure are adhered to.

Supervision of children on outings and visits

Only local visits to nearby countryside or to St. Leonard's Church will be undertaken during the pandemic. It is rare to encounter members of the public on these visits. Where this does occur, we will ensure that interaction with members of the public is minimal and socially distanced wherever possible.

Provider records

During the COVID-19 outbreak there may be the need to keep additional records as part of outbreak management.

A central record of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 that affect any member of staff or service user is held. This record does not contain personal details about the individual (unless for a member of staff). Records are kept of individual cases of children/families who are self-isolating due to symptoms. In all cases the principles of data protection are maintained.

Further guidance on COVID-19 related matters, can be found at www.eyalliance.org.uk/coronavirus-early-years.