

Some temporary new policies and some changes to our usual policies and procedures were previously needed in order for the playgroup to open during the Covid-19 pandemic. These changes were made to reflect further government advice on the handling of Covid-19 and with our own risk assessment for the playgroup.

We have since moved into the 'Living with Covid' phase. Our Covid-19 policy, along with our own risk assessment, will reflect this phase. We will also outline measures and changes in the event of a new outbreak, locally or nationally, or following new and updated guidance or from our own updated risk assessments.

Social Distancing

- At present there are no restrictions for social distancing, therefore this means that the children and staff at the playgroup will be in one group and we will be open at our usual capacity. If there were new restrictions put in place, and guidance changed, the playgroup will ensure that the number of children and adults within the setting at any one time do not exceed the government guidance.
- Drop offs and pick ups will be at the usual times with no timeslot allocation, unless we are given new guidance, or restrictions are put in place and a timeslot allocation is required. At the door only drop offs and pick ups may also be in operation during increased local or national Covid-19 case numbers, or if guidance requires it. If door only drop off/collections are in operation, but a parent/carer requests/is requested to enter the playgroup, they may need to provide a negative LFT from that morning, and wear a face covering at all times inside the playgroup (unless exempt). Social distancing between adults may be requested in order to minimise contact with other households or our staff. Face coverings for all adults may also be requested to be worn at drop off and collections (unless exempt).
- Staff and children within the clinically extremely vulnerable group are able to attend the playgroup. We will monitor and observe current government and local authority guidance and those in this group should not attend in the event of local measures requiring further shielding.
- Staff are no longer required to 'social distance', but if guidance is updated and they are again required to do so they will stay at least 1 metre away from each other wherever possible.
- We may allow children who attend another setting to also attend the playgroup, as we do currently, unless we are given guidance to restrict those who normally attend more than one setting. It may be a matter of parental discretion whether a child attends another form of childcare provision e.g. a childminder. We may need to restrict this further in the event of a local outbreak or updated guidance at a central government or local level.
- We will request that no maintenance work will be carried out by outside contractors during the playgroup opening hours wherever possible, except in the case of an emergency.

Cleaning, Handwashing and Restrictions on Items

We will continue with our enhanced cleaning wherever possible, and would implement further cleaning measures should guidance require it. These include:

- More frequent cleaning of 'high contact' surfaces will be carried out.
- Deep cleaning will be carried out as indicated by the government guidance.
- Staff and children will be asked to wash their hands upon entrance into the setting, before and after eating, and before and after spending time in the outdoor area.
- Staff and children are advised to wear fresh clothing daily wherever possible.

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

All staff remain alert to any signs that a child in their care is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. This includes signs of neglect that may be caused by extraordinary circumstances due to measures to curb the spread of the virus, if any are in place.

Student Placement

The playgroup will consider if we are able to offer student placements at the time, following any guidance. This does not include current staff members who are completing ongoing training and further education.

The Role of The Key Person and Settling-In

We currently have one Key Person per child and will continue with this unless we are unable to do so in an emergency or exceptional circumstances, or where guidance dictates a change. During a Covid-19 outbreak it is possible that some children may not have their usual Key Person. Where this is the case, the principles of the Key Person role would be followed as closely as possible. We would try to keep the Key Person with their Key children as much as possible.

All permanent staff are trained to proficiently and safely administer medication and medical procedures for individual

children. Staff will adhere to the guidelines and procedures on caring for the individual needs of children with SEND, as detailed in their Health Care Plans.

Staffing

During any Covid-19 outbreak, and if any change in restrictions, staff will be deployed as per the government guidance. Relaxation of the rules on ratios, determined by authorisation from Ofsted guidance and the Local Authority, may be implemented only in exceptional circumstances and only during the Covid-19 outbreak period. Any relaxation of ratios will also be based on a risk assessment approach and with the authorisation of the Pre-school Leader working within the Ofsted and Local Authority guidelines. For example, if a staff member presents with signs and symptoms of Coronavirus and needs to leave the playgroup immediately.

Managing Children Who Are Sick, Infectious, or With Allergies

Guidance states that you are no longer legally required to self isolate if you test positive for Covid-19, but that you are still advised to do so for 5 full days for adults and 3 full days for children, and in addition to a positive test, either have a temperature or don't feel well enough to go to work or do your normal activities. It adds that: "You can go back to your normal activities when you feel better or do not have a high temperature."

Current guidance for children states that a child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of Covid-19 and they either:

- have a high temperature
- do not feel well enough to go to school, college or childcare, or do their normal activities.

It adds that: "They can go back to school, college or childcare when they feel better or do not have a high temperature."

The guidance additionally clarifies that if a child "has mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat or mild cough, and they feel well enough, they can go to school, college or childcare".

We will ask any person affected to follow any current guidance, and advise them to self isolate where possible.

During any new Covid-19 outbreak, the following in this particular policy may apply to both children and staff members within the playgroup.

If any person within the playgroup shows symptoms, which may include a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; loss of taste or smell, the following sequence of actions may be taken:

1. If a person presents with symptoms; parents/carers will be requested to collect child, affected staff member will be advised to go home. Current government guidance will need to be followed, which could include: parents/carers or affected staff member may need to book a PCR test using whichever booking system is in place, if any. Then follow any further government guidance or restrictions, if any.
2. The child's parents/carers, or affected staff member may be requested to inform the playgroup of the outcome/ diagnosis and where possible may be asked to keep the child at home/ remain at home themselves for the current recommended exclusion period, if any. For cases of suspected Coronavirus, staff and children of the playgroup, and if/where required their households, must adhere to any Government advice regarding self-isolation even if no symptoms are present.
3. For confirmed cases of a notifiable disease and Coronavirus the Pre-school Leader may be asked to contact their local Health Protection Team (HPT) as soon as possible if required, for further guidance. The Pre-school Leader will inform the committee and retain a confidential record if required.
4. Acting on the advice of the local HPT, the playgroup may:
 - close for a set period and undertake a deep clean;
 - continue to open but also undertake a deep clean;
 - send home any persons identified as close contacts who will need to immediately self-isolate; and/or
 - take any other action as advised by the HPT.
5. If a notifiable disease is confirmed, staff will inform the Pre-school Leader immediately and if required Ofsted will be informed as per their timescales. Cases of confirmed Covid-19 will be treated as a notifiable disease if required or under guidance.
6. A deep clean will be undertaken at the soonest opportunity following any illness outbreak. Hand hygiene messages will be reinforced and staff will be vigilant to any further signs of infection.
7. The Pre-school Leader will continue to liaise with the HPT as required and may keep a full record of children and staff affected, how long they are away from the setting and the date on which they return.
8. If and where required we would ask parents/carers and staff to provide details of their close contacts to any Test and Trace service, where a case of Covid-19 is confirmed if asked to do so. Where required we will keep details of the close contacts of children and staff within the playgroup (i.e. attendance dates and times of all children and staff) and would provide details to any Test and Trace service if and as required.

We are unable to allow into the playgroup any children who have been given any paracetamol or ibuprofen products (e.g. Calpol or Nurofen) within 12 hours prior to the start of the playgroup session. This is due to the possibility that these medications can mask symptoms of Coronavirus.

If any person shows symptoms or tests positive for Coronavirus then they must self-isolate as per the current Government guidance if any.

Food and Drink

We will provide children with a snack, unless given guidance not to do so. In that instance we will ask parents/carers to provide a snack for their children in a suitable container. The following procedures must then be followed:

- The children will wash their hands prior to being given food or drink.
- Staff who are eating with the children will role-model hygiene best practice.
- The outside of lunch boxes will be cleaned upon arrival at the playgroup.
- We ask parents/carers to ensure lunch boxes are cleaned both inside and outside between playgroup sessions.

Sun Safety

Staff will apply sun cream for the children using single use disposable gloves and will do so side-to-side rather than face-to-face where possible.

Supervision of Children on Outings And Visits

Where possible we will take the children on outings, or arrange visitors to the playgroup. Each outing/visit will be in line with the current guidance. During any rise in Covid-19 case numbers locally or nationally, or if new guidance is given, trips and outings may have to be suspended. Children will still have access to outdoor play and learning opportunities within the garden.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments will be carried out as normal or per guidance if the playgroup is open. In the event the playgroup is unable to open at any point, a full risk assessment for Covid-19 and the measures implemented will be carried out in advance, if the playgroup is re-opening, and this will be reviewed each day that the playgroup is open.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Any changes to routine or different unusual measures in place, can be an unsettling time for young children. Staff will be 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, staff will 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 our Promoting Positive Behaviour policy will be adhered to.

Provider Records

Early years providers are currently no longer required to notify Ofsted of cases of Covid-19 within their settings, regardless of whether the positive case is a child at the setting or a staff member. During any further Covid-19 outbreak there may be the need to keep additional records as part of outbreak management. If required to do so a central record of all confirmed cases of Covid-19 that affect any member of staff or child of the playgroup may be held. The record previously required did not contain personal details about the individual (unless for a member of staff). Records may be kept of individual cases of children/families who are self-isolating due to symptoms. In all cases the principles of data protection would be maintained.

Coronavirus Helpline

The Department for Education has a helpline for early years providers, schools and colleges – as well as parents, carers and young people – who have questions about coronavirus. If you have specific questions about the virus, you can contact the helpline on: **0800 046 8687** or Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Policy adopted: May 2020

Last reviewed: May 2024

Signed:

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Position: Chair