



Epidemic or Pandemic policy

Kids Club Ely intend to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the setting during an epidemic or pandemic. It also states ideas for continuity of business if allowed.

Legislation and leading authorities which have guided and influenced this policy are: Coronavirus Act 2020, Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Government Briefings, Public Health England (PHE) and World Health Organisation (WHO). Advice from but not limited to, The Secretary of State, The Chief Medical Officer, Local Authority (LA) and Department for Education (DfE). The policy also has regard to Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance where appropriate.

Aims of policy

This policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within the setting that assures compliance with the government and leading bodies requirements with relation to the outbreak of a pandemic such as Covid-19. This information builds upon our current policies and procedures such as Safeguarding, Child Protection and Equality and Diversity, however new practices may emerge as the situation continues. It also follows the risk assessments in place in relation to any outbreak such as Covid-19.

Method

As early years providers we ensure to offer a continuum of very high standards of practice of childcare and education. The fundamental principles to be outlined in this policy are set out to ensure good hygiene practices as well as avoiding coming into contact with infected children and adults or anyone displaying symptoms. It states the protective measures put in place for children, parents and staff as best as possible to ensure the risk of transmission is reduced. We will continue to follow our other policies as long as they do not conflict with this policy and be guided by the EYFS as best as we can.

The main areas we will be considering are:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell
- Maintaining personal and respiratory hygiene (handwashing, catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Ensuring cleanliness of the environment (especially frequently touched surfaces)
- Minimising general contact and mixing (creating bubbles and limiting numbers)
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE)
- Testing

*The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, it is unlikely that they have been infected. The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- Cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever (37.8 degrees or above) • Loss of sense of smell/taste

Children's Attendance

Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting.

Extremely vulnerable children should continue under government advice (to shield).

Families who attend at least two settings should choose only one for the remainder of the term to ensure their 'bubble' remains small.

Physical Distancing/grouping

Children in small groups should have the same staff team caring for them wherever possible to limit the amount of people coming into contact with each other.

Smaller amounts of children in the whole setting may be advised or preferable. As we usually run to capacity most days this could be achieved by, but not limited to:

- A temporary cap on the amount of children in the setting at anyone time.
- Temporarily limiting funded hours to only 15 hours per child, ensuring all children have access to some preschool time.
- Only allowing the older children or those moving to Primary school to attend.
- Grouping children to certain days, such as in groups of children moving to next school, this would help with transitions.
- Changing the preschool open hours to all children so the days are longer so the parents are able to work a longer day.
- Prioritising children such as those who are vulnerable, those with special educational needs, those from households where both parents work (or work full time)
- The take up on places may be small so there may be no need to change children's hours.

The use of communal internal spaces should be restricted as much as possible and outdoor spaces should be utilised as much as possible and used by 'bubbles' in different areas during the day.

A phased return may be best to ease their transition back into preschool if the preschool has been closed for quite a while or only open for critical workers.

Sunscreen should be applied by the parents / carers before the child arrives at the preschool. T shirts covering shoulders and leggings would be preferable.

Wellbeing and education

Children should be supported in age appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves safe including regular hand washing, coughing into an elbow, using a tissue and adopting a catch it, kill it, bin it regime.

Children should be supported to understand the changes and challenges they may be encountering as a result of Covid-19 and staff need to ensure they are aware of children's attachments and their need for emotional support at this time.

EYFS framework will continue to be delivered through play and adult led activities following any changes or updates.

Workforce Attendance

Staff should only attend the setting if they are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result. All staff and their household are eligible for testing if they display symptoms.

Consideration should be given to limiting the number of staff in the preschool at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day

Staff hours, days they work and length of day may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy.

Staff should also adhere to government guidelines when they are out of the setting and not working, not mixing bubbles to reduce cross contamination and socially distancing at all times.

Physical distancing/ grouping /safety

Staff will complete a risk assessment before opening to address any risks from the virus, ensure sensible measures are in place to control risks.

Staff to be informed of measures in place and sign a disclaimer to state they have read and understood the preschool policies and procedures.

Wherever possible staff should remain with the small group of children, the 'bubble' of children who they are allocated to and not come into contact with other groups.

Emergency revisions to the EYFS may have been implemented which provides some flexibility on ratios and qualifications to make this feasible.

Staff have been advised by the government not to wear PPE such as facemasks during their day, but should continue to wear PPE at the usual times such as intimate care and wear disposable gloves and apron if completing one to one care. If supporting an ill child or a child showing symptoms the correct PPE should be worn, a face mask, gloves and apron and the correct donning and doffing should be followed. A face mask should also be worn if a 2 meter distance cannot be maintained.

After dealing with an ill child who displayed symptoms the staff member should continue to wear the PPE supplied by the Local Authority and clean the affected area with disinfectant.

All PPE should be removed and disposed of following current government guidelines, the staff member should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.

The staff member who supported the unwell child does not need to go home unless they are developing symptoms themselves.

Social distancing must be maintained during breaks. This may be achieved through a range of strategies including the staggering of breaks and subdivision of spaces allocated to team breaks where possible.

Staff may be required to be in charge of specific areas including the outdoors to minimise their contact with surfaces etc. This includes potentially working from one particular table if table top toys are available. Staff will be responsible to ensure appropriate cleaning takes place and enough ventilation is in the room such as opening windows. If doors are open ensure the safety of the children is maintained.

Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc.

Staff to wear fresh, clean clothes for each session.

Advise staff to remove their work clothes before they enter their home and take a shower immediately to remove any germs they may have picked up.

Training

Where possible, meetings and training sessions should be conducted through virtual conferencing.

All staff members must receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating.

Online training may be available to allow their training levels to be maintained if appropriate.

Hygiene, Health and Safety

Cleaning Routines

Daily cleaning routines will largely remain the same, as high standards of good hygiene are currently in place. However, in areas where there are hard surfaces that are infrequently cleaned or not cleaned to a high enough standard the following will be put in place:

- All frequently used hard surfaces will be cleaned with a hard surface cleaning and sanitising solution each day, this includes all door handles, number pads on doors, door release buttons, light switches, key boards, telephones, office desk, printers, children's chairs.
- Disposable cleaning cloths will be used throughout the nursery, for example blue roll for cleaning hard surfaces.
- Toys will be rotated each day and sterilised between uses to prevent cross contamination between children. The toys available will be toys that can be cleaned effectively, and resources will be limited to enable rotation. Toys that are difficult to clean, such as toys with lots of fiddly parts, soft toys etc will not be available at this time.
- Sand, water and sensory play such as playdough will also be removed from the play to further prevent the possible spread of infection.
- Children should not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Anything that is brought in from home should remain in the child's bag on their peg.

Responding to a suspected case:

- In the event of a child developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the setting, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with the current NHS guidance.
- Whilst waiting for the child to be collected they should be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area (The foyer). If possible, a window or door should be opened for ventilation.
- The staff member responsible for the child during this time should be a staff member from their 'bubble'. The provider may consider suitable PPE for this staff member such as the addition of face mask, disposable gloves and apron.

- The area should be thoroughly cleaned, immediately if the area cannot be left unvisited, and if the area can be left unvisited then cleaned after 72 hours.
- The person responsible for cleaning ideally should be the person dealing with the unwell child and should continue to wear their PPE. This should then be disposed of according to current government guidelines.
- In the event of a staff member developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst working at the nursery, they should return home immediately and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance. They should also follow current testing advice for themselves and their household.

There is no need to close the setting or send the other children or staff home. But we can advise parents there has been a suspected case. Once the results arrive, those who test negative for COVID-19 will be advised individually about return to the setting.

If a case of COVID-19 is confirmed at the setting:

We will need to contact the local Public Health England Health Protection Team to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. Advice on cleaning of communal areas such as the playroom and toilets will be given by the Health Protection Team. If there is a confirmed case, a risk assessment will be undertaken by us with advice from the local Health Protection Team.

Hand Washing Routines

To ensure the staff and children are washing their hands in line with the current guidelines the following will be put in place:

- On arrival to the setting all adults will sanitise their hands in the foyer.
- On arrival all children will be taken to the sink to wash their hands by a team member.
- Staff should wash their own hands before supporting a child to wash theirs.
- During the day children and staff will wash their hands after going to the toilet or coming inside after playing outside, before eating or preparing any food, after coughing or blowing nose.
- Staff should wash hands before putting on any PPE.
- Children's guides on handwashing will be visible

Parents

Physical distancing

- Only parents who are symptom free and or have completed the required isolation periods will be able to drop off or collect their child.

- Aim to minimise the 'pinch points' during the day and limit drop off and pick up to one parent per family.
- Stagger the drop off and collection timings where possible will avoid a queue of families waiting to enter preschool.
- Arrange drop off and pick up at the setting entrance gate to avoid parents entering the preschool unnecessarily.
- When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained in a safe area sticking to government social distancing policies.
- Consider allowing some parents to enter the preschool for the purpose of a settling in session if not doing so would cause a child distress, this could take place in the outdoor environment. The provider should consider measures to minimise contact between the parent and other children and staff members.
- If the child is too distressed perhaps a delayed start to their preschool entry may be preferred or half hour settling in sessions without their parent.

Communications

- Parents should receive clear communication regarding the role they play in the safe operating procedure and all measures being taken to ensure the safety of their children and themselves.
- Parents should inform preschool of their circumstances and if they plan to keep their child away, this helps preschool to conform to our safeguarding policy.

Visitors

- Attendance to the setting should be restricted to only children and staff as far as practically possible and visitors should not be permitted to the preschool unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance).
- Where essential visits are required these should be made outside of the usual preschool operational hours where possible.
- As far as possible parents and carers should not enter the premises.

Travel

- Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to preschool alone, using their own transport or if possible walk.
- If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed.
- Parents should be encouraged to ensure they do not leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, scooters in the setting premises or grounds.
- Outings from the preschool into the local community should be restricted to ensure mixing with members of the general public does not happen.

Guidance to assist professionals

*As COVID-19 has only been recently identified, guidance to support professionals is regularly being updated or published. Up-to-date advice can be found through the following links

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-Information-for-parents-and-carers>