**COVID-19 POLICY & PROCEDURE**

Our first separate written COVID-19 policy was introduced in May 2020, in response to the pandemic. This document has evolved and been changed a number of times based on feedback from staff, parents and children, as well as new guidance from the government

We do not currently know how long these measures will be in place. We will update parents as the situation develops.

Last Updated: 21th August 2021

**Children**

**Attendance**

* Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting.
* Any child with a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss/change of smell or taste must not attend for 10 days or until they test negative for COVID-19 using a PCR test.

**Education and Wellbeing**

* Children will be supported in age-appropriate ways to understand the steps they need to take to keep themselves safe including regular handwashing and sneezing into a tissue and throwing it away.
* Children will be supported to understand the changes and challenges they may encounter as a result of COVID-19 and staff will be aware of children’s attachments and their need for emotional support at the moment.

**Staff**

**Attendance**

* Only staff who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting.
* Any staff member with a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss/change of smell or taste must not attend for 10 days or until they test negative for COVID-19 using a PCR test.
* For any staff member living in a household where another person has a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss/change of smell or taste, the staff member must not attend Preschool for at least 10 days or until they test negative for COVID-19 using a PCR test. This requirement to self-isolate does not apply if the staff member has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and does not have any symptoms.
* Any staff member contacted by Track & Trace and instructed to self-isolate is expected to self-isolate in accordance with the law and Public Health guidelines.
* Staff will be risk assessed if returning to work after a period of isolation or having had COVID-19.

**Physical distancing and Face coverings**

* Staff may wear face coverings if they wish.
* Staff are no longer required to wear face coverings.
* Staff members will avoid all close contact with each other. Staff will follow social distancing guidelines and remain 2 metres apart from each other or from parents/visitors where possible.

**Training**

* All staff members will receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control and the relevant operating procedure and risk assessments.

**All staff members are responsible for ensuring that children, parents/carers and staff members follow this policy in full.**

**Parents and Carers**

**Physical distancing and drop off/ collection times**

* Only parents/carers who are symptom free and/or have completed the required isolation periods will be able to drop off and collect their child.
* All children must enter via the front door.
* Parents will leave their children at the main door with staff and they will then be taken to hang their belongings up before washing their hands and entering the hall.
* Parents/carers no longer need to wear face masks when on Preschool grounds but may do if they wish.
* Parents/carers must stay 2 metres away from staff.
* Parents/carers have been requested to stay 2 metres apart when waiting to drop off or pick up children.
* Parents will not be able to enter the Preschool hall except for limited reasons, such as settling a child who may become distressed.
* Preschool doors open at 2.45pm – 3.00pm at the end of the day to allow more time and space for parents to collect their children

**Visitors**

* All visitors must confirm that they are not displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 and will be reminded of National Institute for Health Protection guidance prior to entering the building.
* All visitors to remain strictly 2 metres away from staff.
* All visitors must wear a face covering while in areas of the nursery with children in them, or where they cannot stay 2m away from staff. This includes any person taking a tour of the nursery while it is open.
* Visits will be kept to a minimum quantity and length of time, and will take place, as much as possible, when there are minimal numbers of children in the Preschool. This includes prospective family visits.

**Travel to Preschool**

* It is better not to share transport and to travel by car, bike or walk. Face coverings have been advised by the Government for use on public transport.

**Travel out of the area**

* If you travel internationally to a country not on the green list or to an area of the UK under local COVID restrictions, and are displaying symptoms, then you must follow current isolating and testing rules on the government website before returning to Preschool. This is to ensure every possible protection factor is in place for the staff and children in our care.
* We ask that you are aware of the restrictions in place of any area that you are visiting and follow government guidelines for any travel in and out of your local area.
* If you have travelled to a country or area of the UK under local COVID restrictions you can opt in to pay for a private ‘early release’ COVID-19 test.
* If you are travelling from a destination not on the green or travel corridor list, do not have a job that qualifies you for a travel exception, do not want to opt in to test to release or have not been double vaccinated you will need to self-isolate for 10 full days after you were last in the destination not listed.
* Children (persons under the age of 18 years, 4 months) do not ned to isolate following travel.

**Hygiene, Health and Safety**

**Hand washing and Personal Hygiene**

* Staff will wash their hands more frequently, such as after wiping children’s noses, after cuddling children, after supporting toileting or nappy changing, after handling items brought in from outside the Preschool, before and after eating, before touching their faces, and before leaving the Preschool.
* All children and staff must wash their hands on arrival at the Preschool and before they leave to go home.
Children will be encouraged to wash their hands more frequently during the day, such as after wiping their nose, before and after eating, when coming in from the forest, before touching their faces.

**Cleaning**

* All frequently used surfaces (tables, counter tops, toilets, sinks, door handles and light switches) will be cleaned and disinfected at set times daily or when needed
* Floors will be steam cleaned or disinfected daily.
* Procedures for cleaning resources are explained in the sections below.

**Waste**

* All waste will continue to be disposed of in a safe and hygienic way.

**Laundry**

* Bedding and flannels will continue to be washed between use by different children and will not be shared.

**PPE**

* Current Government guidance is that PPE [**should not be required**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#personal-protective-equipment-ppe-including-face-coverings-and-face-masks)in general practice in nurseries to protect against COVID-19 transmission. PPE, such as aprons and gloves, will continue to be worn as usual for nappy changing and the administration of first aid.
* PPE can be worn when supervising a child with symptoms of COVID if it is not possible for the staff member to remain distanced from that child.

**Premises and Resources**

**Building**

* As we are unable to open any windows in the hall, the children will spend a large portion of their day in our outdoor area.

**Resources**

* Children are not permitted to bring items from home into the setting, such as toys, unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. When this is the case items must be cleaned on arrival.
* All resources will be cleaned regularly.
* Soft furnishings and dressing up clothes will gradually be introduced back into the setting and these will be deep cleaned regularly.
* Equipment used by staff, such as tablets and stationery will be allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned at least daily.

**Responding to a Suspected Case**

* If anyone becomes ill with a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss/change of smell or taste in the Preschool they must be sent home and advised to follow the “Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection”.
* If a child is waiting to go home, they should be isolated in the Relaxation room with the door closed with appropriate adult supervision.
* Staff will call 999 if they become seriously ill or their life is at risk.
* The staff member responsible for the child during this time should if possible be someone who was already working with that child.
* The staff member caring for the child will wear appropriate PPE if it is not possible to remain distanced from that child.
* If the child needs to use the bathroom whilst waiting to be collected they should use a separate bathroom. This should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.
* The member of staff who has cared for the child who was taken unwell does not need to go home unless they develop symptoms. The staff member should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds.
* The area where the child was isolated should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by the same staff member.