



## **Pandemic Policy** **In response to the COVID-19 outbreak**

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**Next Review Date:** Oct 2022

Mulberry Pre-School 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.

### **Aim of Policy**

This Policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within the Pre-School that assures compliance to the Government and leading bodies requirements with relation to the outbreaks of a pandemic such as COVID-19. This information builds upon our current procedures for areas such as Safeguarding, Child Protection and Equality and Diversity, however new practices may emerge as the situation continues. The policy and considerations may evolve and be built upon as the situation deepens and new precautionary measures have been introduced and practices have been reflected upon.

### **Method**

As Early Years providers we ensure we offer a continuum of very high standards of practice in childcare and education. The fundamental principles to be outlined in this policy are set out to ensure reasonable social distancing are enabled and that good hygiene practices are implemented as well as avoiding coming into contact with infected children and adults or anyone displaying symptoms. It states that the protective measures put in place for children, parents, staff and students reduce the risk of transmission. We will continue to follow all our other policies as long as they do not conflict with this policy and be guided by the EYFS. 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
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE)
- Testing

## **Focus/ Areas of consideration/ Recommendations**

### **Children**

#### *Attendance*

- Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result should attend the setting.

#### *Wellbeing and Education*

- Children should be supported in age appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves safe including regular handwashing, coughing into the 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.
- Parents will be asked to provide children with a named water bottle.

### **Workforce**

#### *Attendance*

- Staff should only attend Pre-School if they are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result.
- Staff hours, days they work and length of the day may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy.

#### *Social distancing/ grouping/ safety*

- Staff will complete a risk assessment before opening to address any risks from the virus and ensure appropriate safe measures are in place to control risks.
- Staff have been advised by the government not to wear PPE such as facemask during their day, but should continue to wear PPE at the usual times such as intimate care which includes wearing disposable gloves and apron and a face covering. Also if a form requires signing by a parent/carer.
- PPE should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from any child or staff member displaying coronavirus symptoms.
  - Disposable gloves
  - Disposable apron
  - A fluid resistant surgical facemask.
  - If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example, coughing, spitting or vomiting, then eye protection should be worn (face visor for goggles).

#### **All staff will receive guidance on how to put PPE on and take it off safely in order to reduce self-contamination. All PPE will be provided.**

- Social distancing must be maintained during breaks. This may be achieved by staggering breaks.
- Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc.
- Staff to wear clean clothes for each session. If uniform is not able to be laundered in time for the next session they are in, the staff member should speak to the Manager and fresh suitable clothes should be worn instead.

#### *Training*

- All staff have completed online training (EDUCARE) on Infection Control.

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

## **Parents**

### *Social 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.
- We will advise and ensure that parents follow the social distancing guidelines and ensure that queues are avoided for families waiting to drop-off / collect their children from Pre-School.

### *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 Pre-School of their circumstances and if they are planning to keep their child away, this helps Pre-School to conform to our safeguarding policy.

### *Visitors*

- Visitors are permitted to enter the Pre-School, they are asked to use a hand sanitiser before entering.
- The Pre-School follows the 2 meter social distancing rule where possible so the number of visitors inside the Pre-School can be limited.

### *Travel*

- If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed.
- Parents are advised that they cannot leave any travel accessories including buggies, car sets, scooters in the setting premises or grounds.

## **Hygiene and Health and Safety**

### *Hand Washing*

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

- On arrival to Pre-School all staff, students, volunteers will wash their hands
- On arrival a member of staff will take all children to the washroom to wash their hands.
- During the day staff will wash their hands after assisting a child with their toileting needs or after nappy changing.
- Staff, students and volunteers will wash their hands before preparing food.
- Staff, students, volunteers and children will wash their hands before eating.
- Staff, students and volunteers and children should wash their hands after playing outside.
- Staff, students and volunteers should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser after handling toys.

### *Cleaning*

- An enhanced cleaning schedule must be implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children's toys and equipment and all staff are responsible in their area of work.

- Communal areas, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly and cleaned thoroughly at the end of the session.
- A deep clean may be needed after a child has become ill in the area they were waiting to be collected.

#### *Waste disposal*

- All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner following government guidelines.
- Tissues etc that have been used by a child or staff member with suspected COVID 19 must be disposed of following the government guidelines.
- Tissues must be immediately disposed of and placed in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal.
- Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal.

#### *Laundry*

- If staff are unable to launder their uniform before their next session then they may request to borrow spare uniform or wear appropriate clothing.

#### *Risk assessment*

- A risk assessment is in place to address the risks from the virus and due consideration given to adaptations to usual practice. Sensible measures should be in place and policies and procedures followed.

#### *PPE*

- Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in Early Years settings to protect against COVID-19 transmission.
- PPE should continue to be worn and disposed of as normal for nappy changing, one to one care and the administration of first aid.
- If a child shows symptoms, staff should wear a face masks, visor, disposable gloves and apron if a 2-meter distance cannot be maintained at all times. PPE should be disposed of following government guidelines.

#### *Premises*

- Windows are to be kept open where possible to ensure good levels of ventilation. If doors are opened ensure the children's safety is maintained with locked gates.

#### *Resources*

- Children are not permitted to bring in items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their well-being. Any comforters that are bought in from home should be clean and hygienic.
- Parents are asked to provide a named bag containing spare clothes which should stay in the setting until used.

#### *Supplies Procurement & monitoring*

- The Pre-School should ensure an adequate supply of essential supplies and contingency plans such as additional suppliers are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies. (Anti-bacterial sprays, gloves, hand sanitiser, hand soap, paper towels).
- The Pre-School will not be able to operate without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control.

- A monitoring system for the usage of PPE is essential to ensure a supply of stock is available to all who require it as and when required to meet the operational needs of the setting. When stocks are low, other options may be considered, such as the use of washable tabards and facemasks. These items will be washed at a high temperature in accordance with relevant guidelines and separate to any other preschool washing.

*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 guidelines.
- Whilst waiting for the child to be collected they should be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation.
- The staff member responsible for the child during this time should be a staff member from their group. The provider will provide suitable PPE for the staff member caring for the child such as a face mask, visor, 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 it should be 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 Pre-School, they should return home immediately and isolate at home in line with the current government guidelines. They should also follow current testing advice.
- The manager will notify DfE and OFSTED should a staff member or child receive a positive test.

*Engaging with the NHS Test and Trace process*

The setting must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process. The setting must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they must:

- Book a test if they are displaying symptoms. Staff and children must not come into the setting if they have symptoms and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in the setting.
- Self –isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, if instructed by track and trace.

The setting must ask parents/carers and staff to inform them immediately of the result of the test:

- If someone begins to self-isolate because they have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19) and they get a test which delivers a negative result. If they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to Coronavirus (COVID 19), they can stop isolating.
- If someone tests positive they should follow [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#). They must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to the setting only if they do not have symptoms and then return to the setting only if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10 day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal.

## **Managing confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID 19) in the setting**

If anyone who has attended the setting tests positive for coronavirus (COVID -19) then we must contact the DfE helpline **0800 046 8687** (option 1) for advice on what action is required.

The advice service (or PHE local health protection team if escalated) will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home.

A template letter will be provided to send to parents, carers and staff if needed. The names and details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) will not be printed unless essential to protect others.

The PHE local health protection team will also contact the setting directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the setting – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

Household members of those who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 10-day isolation period, should follow [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#). **They must get a test.**

If someone who is self-isolating because they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) starts to feel unwell and gets a test for coronavirus themselves, and the test delivers a negative result, they do not have to self-isolate (follow updated government guidelines).

If the test is positive, they should inform the setting immediately, and should isolate for 10 days from the onset of their symptoms.

**The setting will not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.**

In the vast majority of cases, the setting and parents and carers will be in agreement that a child with symptoms should not attend the setting, given the potential risk to others. **In the event that a parent or carer insists on a child attending the setting, the setting can take the decision to refuse the child if in our judgement it is necessary to protect children and staff from possible infection with coronavirus (COVID-19). Any such decision would be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and the current public health advice.**

## **Containing an outbreak by following health protection team advice**

If the setting has 2 or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID -19) is suspected, the setting may have an outbreak and will work with the local health protection team who will advise if additional action is required. The Pre-School will follow the Outbreak policy.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of children self-isolate at home or possibly the setting to close.

## **Notifying OFSTED**

The Manager/Deputy Manager will notify OFSTED when:

- There are any confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the setting, either in children or staff
- If the setting is advised to close as a result

**This should be reported as an 'Event likely to impact on the smooth running of the setting'.**

*Information required*

- the date when cases were first suspected
- the date when cases were confirmed as positive
- the total number of children attending the setting at the time of the suspected case
- the total number of staff working at the setting at the time of the suspected case.
- The date the setting is closing from, and when you intend to re-open (if applicable)
- If you have notified the case to Public Health England via the DfE helpline.
- The advice provided by the DfE helpline, if applicable.
- If you have advised the local authority (yes or no).
- Any other action taken.

Signed Chair person \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Print) & date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Name (print) & date \_\_\_\_\_