

Outbreak management plan

COVID-19 Nursery Operating Procedures

The safety of our staff, children and parents is paramount, we urge all staff and parents to follow these guidelines strictly to ensure everyone is protected.

The government’s [roadmap guidance on moving to Step 4](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-summer-2021-roadmap/moving-to-step-4-of-the-roadmap) set out how restrictions have been eased across society, including in education and childcare settings. We need to continue to proceed with caution and find the right balance between protecting public health and living with COVID-19 as more of the population is vaccinated.

Wherever additional measures are considered, the objective is to maximise the number of children and young people in face-to-face teaching and minimise control measures that disrupt education, balanced against the risks of COVID-19 transmission.

There is strong [evidence](https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19-in-children-and-the-role-of-school-settings-in-transmission-first-update_1.pdf) that children and young people are much less susceptible to severe clinical disease than older people and that there are significant disadvantages to children and young people associated with missed education.

It is of course acknowledged that this evidence may change with the emergence of new variants of concern (VoCs). The government will continue to advise baseline measures and provide thresholds at which help can be sought and extra measures may be introduced. Local spikes in COVID-19 will usually be best managed through a dynamic risk assessment approach. Attendance restrictions are unlikely to be a proportionate response to the level of risk that COVID-19 currently poses to children and young people, and public health authorities would only consider them as a last resort if all other risk mitigations proved insufficient to break chains of transmission.

These guidelines are intended to assist in implementing precautionary measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 disease they are based on Public Health England and Department for Education guidance for educational settings and their key workers.

The fundamental principle of this guidance is to ensure physical distancing between identified groups and to implement good hygiene practices. The nursery has been deep cleaned. However research shows that the virus does not live on surfaces for more than 72 hours and nursery will be empty for this period of time before opening.

The design of settings as relatively small communities for day care on non-domestic premises and further subdivided rooms, greatly assists our ability to create physical distance between groups and cluster children into specific cohorts or ‘bubbles’.

Staff are responsible for following the procedures in their own rooms for their own children. Senior staff are responsible for all communal areas.

Staff are not required to wear uniform but required to wear different clothing each day to prevent contamination and the spread of the virus. Clothing must be appropriate for work and not be jeans. Staff must always wear a badge while at work. Staff must consider safety precautions when arriving home also - take off clothing and shower immediately upon retuning home from work as a precaution.

Focus Area of consideration Recommendations

Children

Arrival and Departure

* Drop off times will be as normal, Staff will be disinfecting nursery prior to opening.
* Collection times will be at normal time. If you wish to collect at a different time, this is absolutely fine too, please let the arrival and departure co-ordinator know this will be a member of the senior team.
* A sanitizing unit has been placed next to the entrance. Staff and parents must sanitize their hands-on arrival before touching the gate.
* At drop off times a member of the senior team will co-ordinate arrival and departure. Your child’s key worker will collect your child from you and bring your child back to you to make sure our bubbles remain intact. Parents must sanitize their hands before touching the gate.
* Once collected/dropped off staff must welcome the child inside to their correct room and sign the child in on famly.
* If absolutely necessary only, parents may enter the porch area (going no further than the front door) and remain a safe distance from staff members at all times. Parents must not enter the nursery premises at any point.
* One family may drop off at any one time. If there is a drop off taking place, then families must wait in the car until the drop off has been completed and it is safe to exit the car to begin a second drop off.
* This will be signalled by the member of staff co-ordinating arrival and departure. Social distancing rules must be observed at all times.
* In the event that a child becomes distressed or upset a parent may be asked to walk up to the door area and drop the child from there – being mindful of social distancing from staff.
* They must not enter the building. This will only be allowed in extreme circumstances or for babies or children for whom the altered drop off regulations would cause distress.
* Upon collection parents must follow the same procedure as drop off. A member of staff will get children ready for home and bring children to the gate for collection. Following the same procedure as arrival.
* No belongings are to be brought into nursery other than coats and one bag which will be kept, on your child’s peg.

Baseline measures

The [operational guidance](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare) sets out the measures that all education settings should have in place to manage transmission of COVID-19. This includes:

1. Staff and students should continue to test twice weekly at home, with lateral flow device (LFD) test kits, 3 to 4 days apart. Testing remains voluntary but is strongly encouraged.
2. **Those who test positive should isolate**, take a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, and continue to isolate if the result is positive.
3. **Under-18**s, irrespective of their vaccination status, and **double vaccinated adults will not need to self-isolate if they are a close contact of a positive case**. 18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children until 6 months after their 18th birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated. Further information is available in [NHS Test and Trace: what to do if you are contacted](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works) and in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance).
4. All education and childcare settings should continue to ensure good hygiene for everyone, maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, keep occupied spaces well ventilated, and follow public health advice on testing and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
5. All settings should continue their strong messaging about signs and symptoms, isolation advice and testing, to support prompt isolation of suspected cases. Settings should also continue to encourage vaccination uptake for eligible students and staff.

Attendance

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

* If your child has any signs of being unwell such as, sore throat, cough, cold, headache, temperature or anything unusual for your child prior to arrival please let us know by calling the office where a decision will be made on a case by case analysis.
* Our Policy is ask children to obtain a PCR in the event of an outbreak or a positive case in the household.
* Should your household have a positive case we would ask that children do not attend nursery. In our experience children have attended and then tested positive several days later which has affected several children and their families.

Close mixing

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely will be different for each setting. Below are some examples.

For early years, this could include:

* a childminder minding children, including their own
* childminders working together on the same site
* a nursery class
* a friendship group who often play together
* staff and children taking part in the same act

Physical distancing/ grouping

• Children are usually organised into small groups or rooms within the setting. Wherever possible these small groups or ‘bubbles’ should not mix during the day. Staff should remain with the same children.

• Care routines including provision of meals, nappy changing, and toileting should be within the space allocated to each ‘bubble’ wherever possible no child from another group may use changing or bathroom facilities from another room.

• The use of communal internal spaces should be restricted as much as possible these will be cleaned regularly by senior staff.

• Outdoor spaces should be used by different ‘bubbles’ at different times of the day.

• Distancing of beds/cots should be facilitated wherever possible children will be placed in alternate cots.

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 and sneezing into a tissue.

• 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.

Workforce

Attendance

• Staff should only attend the nursery if they are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result.

* All staff are taking part in the lateral flow programme and will be testing regularly throughout the week. All staff will also test before our return on 4th January.

• Consideration should be given to limiting the number of staff in the nursery at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day and one senior member of staff depending on occupancy levels.

Physical distancing/ grouping

• Wherever possible staff should remain with the same small group of children, the ‘bubble’ of children who they are allocated to and not come into contact with other groups. Children will be allocated at the beginning of each day as usual and will usually be key children.

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

• Where possible, meetings and training sessions should be conducted through virtual conferencing in the event the ‘R’ number should rise again.

Training

• All staff members will receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating (using this document).

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 and this will be outdoors only.

* Parents should avoid gathering to chat at drop off and pick up times and observe social distancing.

• We aim to limit drop off and pick up to 1 parent per family and stagger the timings where possible. (see arrival procedure above).

• Nursery have specified to drop off and pick up at the nursery gate on the car park to avoid parents entering the nursery unnecessarily.

• When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, social distancing should be maintained in a safe area. Parents should remain in their car if another child is being dropped off or collected from the car park gate, where a member of staff will be waiting by the office window outside to safely manage arrival and departures.

To ensure safe arrival and departure procedures. Parents and staff must use the outdoor sanitising machines provided. No parent must enter the nursery premises.

• Such measures are in place to minimise contact between the parent and other children and staff members.

If a child is in distress the parent may enter the garden or approach the door but not entering nursery and settle the child provided there are no other people present, other than a staff member at a safe distance and the porch internal doors are closed.

Communications

• Parents will 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.

Visitors

• Attendance to the setting should be restricted to children and staff as far as practically possible and visitors should not be permitted to the nursery unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance). Where essential visits are required these should be made outside of the usual nursery operational hours where possible.

Travel associated with setting operations

• Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to the nursery alone, using their own transport

• 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, but rather in external buggy areas if necessary.

• Outings from the setting into the local community should be restricted unless the setting has no or very limited outside space in which case outings to open spaces which do not include mixing with members of the general public could be considered

Hygiene and Health & Safety

Hand Washing

• All children and staff must wash their hands upon arrival at the nursery soap is available throughout nursery and hand sanitizer and sanitising units are places at the nursery gate, each entrance and in every room.

• Children and staff members should be encouraged to wash their hands frequently.

Cleaning

• An enhanced cleaning schedule must be implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children’s toys and equipment this will be to Dettol all surfaces each morning, lunchtime mid afternoon and evening before close staff should ensure their own area is completed at these times. (see daily risk assessment sheet)

• Communal area, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly management will complete these areas at regular intervals particularly after use.

Soft toys and those harder to clean will be removed.

Waste disposal

• All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner using gloves and aprons in external bins. (see daily risk assessment sheet)

• Tissues must be immediately disposed of in external bins using gloves and aprons. Using the catch it, kill it bin it approach outlined in signage around the nursery.

Laundry

• All items within the setting requiring laundering must be washed in line with NHS laundry guidelines at high temperatures.

• Items such as towels, flannels and bedding must not be shared by children each child already has their own bag for bedding. This has been extended for the two year old group. Hooks and bags have been provided.

Risk assessment

• All activity should be risk assessed and due consideration given to any adaptations to usual practice. It is expected that would include, but not be limited, to the suspension of learning experiences involving materials which are not easily washable such as malleable materials and the suspension of the sharing of food and utensils.

Sand, water, play dough, and other communal activities will be suspended at this time.

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 as normal for nappy changing and the administration of first aid.

* Gloves and aprons will be provided for nappy changes, all meal times and wherever else appropriate.

Premises

Building

• Where premises have been temporarily closed during the lockdown period or where they may need to temporarily close during future lockdowns appropriate Health & Safety checks will be conducted prior to reopening.

• Keep windows open where possible to ensure ventilation

Resources

• Children are not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Where this is the case items should be appropriately cleaned upon arrival outside the premises.

• All resources required for play and learning experiences of children should be regularly washed and/or sterilised before opening, at lunchtime, mid afternoon and during close down procedures by the staff in their areas. Management will complete all communal areas regularly.

• Equipment used by staff such as stationary, tablets etc. should be allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly. Antibacterial wiped will be provided if they can be sourced. Antibacterial Spray and blue roll is to be used as an alternative.

Supplies

Procurement & monitoring

• The setting will ensure an adequate supply of essential supplies and contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies. The setting will not be able to operate without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control.

• A monitoring system for the usage of PPE is in operation to ensure that 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. These items will be washed at a high temperature and separate to any other nursery washing. If any supplies are running low JADE must be made aware – this is the allocated ppe distributor for the setting.

• In the case the supply of food is interrupted, procedures must be implemented to ensure the appropriate food alternatives are sourced and normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed. In the event that food cannot be sourced the setting must close as we can not allow items from home to enter the setting as a precaution.

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 NHS guidance.

• 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 ‘bubble’. The PPE must be worn for this staff member including apron, gloves, mask or visor.

• The used 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 the area should wear appropriate PPE.

• 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.

This operation procedure will be reviewed and updated if needed as guidance is announced, updated or changed. All official changes will be emailed. Unless the procedure is immediate then a member of management will be allocated to tell staff individually to ensure efficient and accurate communication.

I hope all Staff and children are safe and well. I hope the extensive procedures put into place will help us all remain so.

Managing and Reporting outbreaks of COVID 19

* The child is taken home as per the procedures above
* The areas used by positive child are deep cleaned via a steamer, dettol and fogging.
* The area is left unused as for as long as possible up to 72 hours to make sure all bacteria is no longer on surfaces and the area is safe to use.
* Manager must report the case to LCC, OFSTED and public health England.
* Manager must fill in the positive case sheet on your one drive and email to jade.
* A copy must be placed in the covid file also for tracking.
* Parents must be made aware there is a positive case in their bubble and of all the precautions taken.
* Parents must be made aware to look out for symptoms, and seek a PCR only if necessary.
* Children do not need to go for a PCR unless they have symptoms although parents can take them if they wish.
* All settings should seek public health advice if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19.
* They can do this by phoning the DfE helpline ([0800 046 8687](tel:0800%20046%208687), option 1), or in line with other local arrangements.
* Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern.
* Settings may be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

Outbreak management plans should come into force in the following circumstances

* 5 children, pupils, students or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period
* 10% of children, pupils, students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

For special schools, residential settings, and settings that operate with 20 or fewer children, pupils, students and staff at any one time:

* 2 children, pupils, students and staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

Staff testing positive for covid 19

Where a staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, education and childcare settings do not need to routinely contact the NHS Self Isolation Service Hub to provide details of close contacts. However, to ensure eligible individuals identified as a close contact can access [Test and Trace Support Payments](https://www.gov.uk/test-and-trace-support-payment) you may consider providing staff details to the NHS Self Isolation Hub when:

* a staff member who was in close contact with the person testing positive has indicated they are not exempt from self-isolation, but the person testing positive was unable to provide that person’s details to NHS Test and Trace
* it is particularly difficult for the person testing positive to identify or provide details of some members of staff they were in contact with, for example, temporary workers such as supply staff, peripatetic teachers, contractors or ancillary staff

Frequently asked questions on contact tracing and self-isolation can be found on the document sharing platforms for primary and early years, secondary schools, further education and higher education and children’s social care.

Shielding

Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) will not be advised to shield again.

Individuals previously identified as CEV are advised to continue to follow the guidance on [how to stay safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do). Individuals should consider advice from their health professional on whether additional precautions are right for them.

Vulnerable children

Where vulnerable children and young people are absent, settings should:

* follow up with the parent or carer, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), to explore the reason for absence and discuss their concerns
* encourage the child or young person to attend educational provision, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), particularly where the social worker and the virtual school head (where applicable) agrees that the child or young person’s attendance would be appropriate
* focus the discussions on the welfare of the child or young person and ensuring that the child or young person is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home
* Have in place procedures to maintain contact, ensure they are able to access remote education support, as required, and regularly check if they are doing so.
* This will be providing support by contacting via famly regularly and phone calls at least twice weekly and recording those outcomes.
* Dropping resources off via a no contact method.

If settings have to temporarily stop onsite provision on public health advice, they should discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and young people with the local authority.

Lateral flow testing