



COVID-19 POLICY

COVID-19 is a new virus. The most common symptoms are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature (over 37.8 degrees). For the vast majority of children and staff, COVID-19 will not cause serious illness.

This policy is based on government advice at the time of writing. It should be read in conjunction with our existing **Infection Control** Policy. This policy and the associated risk assessment aims to limit the spread of the virus within the setting and sets out the additional measures we will take in order to limit the spread of COVID-19. These measures will apply until further notice.

Attendance

- **Children and Staff who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, must not attend nursery and should follow NHS guidance¹.**
- If anyone is experiencing any symptoms they cannot return to nursery until they have completed the required isolation period and are symptom free, OR have achieved a negative test result (proof will be required). Prompt exclusion is essential to preventing the spread of infection. The Nursery Manager retains the right of refusal of all children, parents, staff and visitors who are suspected to have symptoms.
- It is important that children do not attend nursery if unwell for their own wellbeing and for the safety of others. Calpol or other medication that can mask fever symptoms should not be given before they come to nursery.
- The Nursery may need to take temperatures of staff and children on arrival.
- Shielded or “clinically extremely vulnerable”² adults or children, or those sharing a household with such persons, should not attend the nursery.

Drop Off & Collection

- Parents/Carers will no longer normally be permitted to enter the building. At drop-off/collection they will be met at the gate or front door by a member of staff who will receive or hand over their child.
- Parents/Carers should maintain safe distancing of at least 2 metres whilst waiting to drop off or collect their children.
- We will stagger drop-off and collection times to minimize delays. However, please allow additional time for drop offs/collection.
- Where possible the same Parent/Carer should collect and drop off the child every day.

¹ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>



- Parents should ensure they do not leave travel accessories including bags, buggies, car seats, scooters in the setting premises, but can leave items in the outdoor pram shelter.
- Children will not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Where this is the case items must be appropriately cleaned upon arrival.

Hand Washing

- All children and staff must wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds upon entry to the nursery. They should also wash hands before and after eating, if they cough or sneeze, after playing outside, using the toilet, and any physical contact.
- Children will be supported and supervised when hand washing to ensure that they do so properly.
- All staff must complete training on Hand Hygiene.
- Hand washing facilities will be available at all times. Gel sanitizers will also be available in any areas where there are no immediate handwashing facilities.
- Staff and children will be reminded to wash their hands on a regular basis for a period of 20 seconds with soap and water and reminded of the importance of drying hands properly with the disposable towels.
- All children will be reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue which will be disposed of immediately in a lidded bin (Catch It, Kill It, Bin It”).

Minimising Contact

It is difficult to maintain the recommended safe distance of 2m in a childcare setting. However, the following measures will be taken to minimize contact and the risk of infection:

- Children will be split into age groups (or *bubbles*) and kept together throughout the day for activities, eating, sleeping, toileting, and outdoor play. We will endeavour to avoid mixing these groups.
- As far as possible staff should remain with their allocated bubble, and not come into contact with other groups.
- Sleep mats and cots should be positioned to facilitate safe distancing.
- One-way circulation will be used whenever possible
- Some resources and activities will be suspended including sand play, water play, play dough, cooking activities, soft toys and any others which are hard to clean.
- Outdoor education and activities will be encouraged as much as possible.
- Mealtimes, breaks, and toileting will be staggered as necessary to minimise mixing.
- Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc and maintain distancing when in corridors or rooms as far as possible.
- We will seek to prevent the sharing of resources and stationery. If this is not possible then shared materials will be disinfected between uses.
- Where possible, meetings and training sessions will be conducted through virtual conferencing



Cleaning & Hygiene

An enhanced cleaning schedule will be implemented. Checks will be carried out by managers to ensure that the procedures are being fully adhered to at all times.

- Toilets will be cleaned twice daily using standard cleaning products, and sprayed with disinfectant after each use.
- All high-contact surfaces, including tables, door handles, taps, and light switches will be disinfected twice daily.
- Blankets or bedding will be only used by one child, and washed every day at high temperature.
- Toys and resources should be cleaned at the end of each day, and any items that are not easily disinfected (such as fabric items) will be put away until the end of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Computers should be disinfected before and after use, and personal mobile phones should be cleaned at least once a day.
- Bins should be emptied before completely full, and at least once a day.
- Management will conduct regular stock takes of hygiene supplies and PPE (aprons, gloves, cleaning products). When stocks are low and cannot be sourced, other options may be considered, such as the use of washable tabards.
- All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner. Used tissues to be immediately disposed of.
- Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early years setting to protect against COVID-19 transmission. PPE will continue to be worn as normal for nappy changing and the administration of first aid.
- Windows will be kept open where possible to ensure ventilation.

Wellbeing & Education

- Children will 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 will 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

Staff Attendance

- Staff with any signs of COVID-19 should not attend nursery and follow the nursery **Absence Management Procedure** and NHS guidelines.
- In the event of an employee developing coronavirus symptoms whilst at work, they will leave work as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance. They will be required to have a test before they return.



- The Nursery may take temperature of staff on arrival, and will risk assess staff with health questionnaires for returning staff.
- We will limit the number of staff in the nursery to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels.
- In the event of an employee developing coronavirus symptoms whilst at work, they will leave work as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance. They will be required to have a test before they return.

Training

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

Visitors

As far as practically possible and visitors will not be permitted to the nursery unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance). Where essential visits are required these will be made outside of the usual nursery operational hours wherever possible.

Travel

- Wherever possible, staff and parents/carers should travel to the nursery alone, using private vehicles, walking, or cycling, rather than public transport.
- If public transport is necessary, government guidance³ on the use of public transport must be followed, e.g. wear a face covering and avoid peak times.
- Staff should not wear uniform while on public transport, and should change into uniform when in the nursery.
- Outings from the setting will be suspended.
- If a child or employee, or a member of their household, travels internationally or to an area of the UK under local COVID restrictions, then they must be tested and have a negative result before returning to nursery, or complete the 14 day quarantine after arrival to the UK. This is not limited to countries listed on the current government quarantine list.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#public-transport>



Responding to a suspected case

- If a child develops COVID-19 symptoms whilst at nursery, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance.
- While awaiting collection, they should be isolated behind a closed door if possible, with appropriate adult supervision. A window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2m away from other people.
- The supervising staff member should try to maintain 2m distance. If contact with the child is necessary, then disposable gloves, apron, and a mask should be worn.
- If the child needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, the bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected before being used again.
- The isolation area should be thoroughly cleaned in line with government guidance⁴, immediately if the area cannot be left unvisited, and if the area can be left unvisited then isolated and cleaned after 72 hours. The person responsible for cleaning the area should wear appropriate PPE.

Reporting, Testing and Tracing

- Everyone is now eligible for a COVID-19 test, should they display coronavirus symptoms.
- Any suspected or confirmed case must be reported to the Nursery Manager as soon as possible. If a positive result is confirmed, the practitioners and children associated with that group/bubble will follow advice from Birmingham City Council Public Health Team and self-isolate for 14 days before returning to nursery.
- The Nursery Manager is responsible for contacting the Birmingham City Council Public Health Team if a case is confirmed or if a symptomatic person is admitted to hospital, a possible case refuses testing, there are a cluster of possible cases/unexpected increase in absenteeism or a suspected case has a definite link to a confirmed case.
- If there is reasonable evidence that a positive diagnosis was caused by exposure at work, this will be reported to RIDDOR.
- If someone in your household, or someone you have close contact with, is contacted by track and trace and told they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, you need to be tested. If they test positive, then you will also need to self-isolate for 14 days even if you do not test positive yourself.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>