

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on premises.

Health

The provider must promote the good health of children attending the setting.



23. Coronavirus pandemic

Statement of Intent

Ducklings Pre-school intend to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the pre-school during the pandemic.

Ducklings pre-school policy statement

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 coronavirus pandemic. This information should be read alongside our Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults (2), Managing children who are sick, infectious, or with allergies (16) and Valuing diversity and promoting inclusion and equality (32) policies, however new procedures may emerge as the situation continues. The policy and considerations may evolve as the situation changes and new precautionary measures have been introduced and practices have been reflected upon.

Procedures

As an early years provider 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 physical distancing is enabled and implement good hygiene practices as well as avoiding coming into contact with infected children and adults displaying symptoms. It states the protective measures put in place for children, parents and staff are 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 and catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Ensuring cleanliness of the environment (especially frequently touched surfaces)
- Minimising general contact and mixing (limiting numbers)
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE)
- Testing

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 to follow government and/or medical advice.
- Families who attend two settings need to speak to the supervisor, so that a risk assessment can be completed with the other setting before the child attends.

Physical Distancing

- Children may be organised into small groups in the pre-school, this will also involve the outdoor area. Staff may exercise their own judgement during the day for the high standards of safety for all children.
- We will restrict as much as possible the use of the bathroom area to two children only at any one time and our outdoor garden will be utilised as much as possible.
- Sunscreen should be applied by the parents before the child arrives at the preschool. T shirts covering shoulders and leggings would be preferable as the preschool staff will be unable to apply it.

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.
- Snacks will continue to be provided by the pre-school, although it will no longer be the child selecting their own snack but will now be chosen by the child and dished up on their plates by the member of staff. Drinks will also be selected by the child but poured by a member of staff. Staff will wash all of the used equipment and resources in the dishwasher.

Staff attendance

- Staff should only attend pre-school 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.
- Staff hours, days they work and length of day may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy if a lockdown is required.

Physical distancing for staff

- 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 coronavirus pandemic policy and procedures.
- 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 a face mask and visor 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 PPE and clean the affected area with disinfectant.

- All PPE should be removed and disposed of following up to date 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 will be achieved through the staggering of breaks.
- 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 each day worked.
- Staff are advised to remove their work clothes when they get 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 instructions and training in infection control, and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating.

Physical distancing for parents

- 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 have organised a one-way system to minimise the 'pinch points' and requested that drop off and pick up is by no more than two family members at a time.
- We have arranged drop off and pick up to take place in the garden area to avoid parents entering the pre-school room 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 guidelines.
- We would allow a parent to remain in the garden area for the purpose of settling-in if not doing so would cause a child distress. We will endeavor ensure that there is minimal contact between the parent and other children and staff members.
- If the child is very distressed we would work with the parents and advise that a delayed start to their pre-school session or short half hour settling in session without their parent may be the way forward.

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 only children and staff as far as practically possible and visitors should not be permitted to the pre-school unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance).
- Where essential visits are required these should be made outside of the usual pre-school operational hours where possible.

- As far as possible parents do not enter the premises.

Travel

- Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to pre-school 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 or bikes in the community centre grounds.
- Outings from the pre-school into the local community will not take place during a pandemic to ensure mixing with members of the general public does not happen.

Hand Washing

- All children and staff must use the alcoholic hand gel or wash their hands for at least twenty seconds upon arrival at the pre-school.
- Children and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently, this includes before and after eating food, after visiting the toilet or playing outdoors, after sneezing, blowing their nose or coughing into their hand and dealing with unwell people.
- Bodily fluid spills should be cleaned following the correct procedures as normal.

Cleaning

- An enhanced cleaning schedule is implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children's toys and equipment and all staff are responsible to help maintain this.
- Communal area, touch points and hand washing facilities are cleaned and sanitised regularly and cleaned thoroughly after each session.
- A deep clean will be carried out after a child has become ill in the area they were waiting.

Waste disposal

- All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner following government guidelines.
- Tissues must be immediately disposed of and placed in a bin with a bag and lid.
- Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag and lid.

Risk assessment

- The pre-school and all activities should be risk assessed before opening or going ahead, to address the risks from the virus and due consideration given to any adaptations to usual practice. Sensible measures should be put in place with policies and procedures followed.
- 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 soft toys and furnishing, and the suspension of the sharing of food and utensils.
- Remove anything which cannot be easily wiped down or washed at the end of the day.
- Cooking and food play, and finger painting should be avoided.

Personal Protective Equipment (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 mask, visor, disposable gloves and apron if a 2-meter distance cannot be maintained at all times. PPE should be disposed of following the government guidelines.

Premises Building

- Where we may need to temporarily close during future lockdowns appropriate Health & Safety checks should be conducted prior to reopening including legionnaires checks.
- We keep windows open where possible to ensure good levels of ventilation. If doors are open we ensure the children's safety is maintained at all times.

Resources

- Parents are asked to help us by encouraging their children not to bring in toys from home, unless they are essential for their wellbeing, or to assist with settling in. Anything that is brought in from home should be clean and labelled with the child's name and is done so at their own risk.
- All resources required for play and learning experiences of children are regularly washed and/or sterilised. Any resources which are difficult to clean have been removed.
- All equipment used by staff members such as stationary, tablets etc. is allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly.

Supplies Procurement & monitoring

- The pre-school ensures 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.
- The pre-school will not be able to operate without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control.
- A monitoring system is in place for the usage of PPE 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 pre-school.
- In case the supply of food is interrupted, procedures will be implemented to ensure appropriate food alternatives are sourced and normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed.

Procedures if a child is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)

- If a child develops a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home and the family will be advised to follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.
- This sets out that the child must - self-isolate for at least 10 days
 - arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19)
- In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk.

- Temperature is taken using a 'Infrared forehead thermometer' or a 'Digital ear thermometer' kept in the cupboard next to the first aid box.
- We will call the child's parents to collect the child and take them home. We will advise them that all household members will need to isolate and follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.
- While the child is awaiting collection, we will move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.
- While they are awaiting collection the staff member caring for the child should wear suitable personal protection equipment (PPE) .
- If the child needs to use a toilet while waiting to be collected, they should use the staff toilet if possible. The toilet will then be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.
- The staff and other children who have had contact with the symptomatic child must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds.
- When the parents pick up the child, ask them to get the child tested to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) and to notify us of the results.
- Once the child has left the premises, we will thoroughly disinfect and clean all the surfaces and touchpoints the child came into contact with (including the staff toilet if used).

What to do if a child tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

- We will notify our local health protection team (HPT) immediately when we become aware that a child or a member of staff who has attended pre-school has tested positive for coronavirus.
- Public Health England (PHE) East of England local health protection team phone number is 0300 303 8537.
- The HPT will work with us to carry out a rapid risk assessment and identify appropriate next steps.
- We will follow HPT advice and help to identify close contacts of the symptomatic individual. Contact tracers will then inform contacts that they need to self-isolate for 14 days in line with guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.
- We will notify Ofsted of any confirmed case of coronavirus, either staff member or child. We will also notify Ofsted if our pre-school is advised to close as a result.
- The pre-school must not share the names of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless it is essential to protect others.

Legal framework, legislation and leading authorities

- Coronavirus Act 2020
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- Government Briefing
- Public Health England (PHE)
- World Health Organisation (WHO)
- The Secretary of State

- The Chief Medical Officer
- Local Authority (LA)
- Department for Education (DfE)

The policy also has regard to Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance where appropriate.

This Coronavirus pandemic policy was adopted by	NGCA Ducklings pre-school
On	21 st September 2020
Date to be reviewed	20 th September 2021
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	Tina Cassidy
Role of signatory	Chairperson