

General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

Providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well

Safeguarding children

COVID19

Policy statement (including risk assessments to combat the spread of this disease)

Little Fishes Pre-School intends to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the setting during an epidemic or pandemic to protect the children, families and staff who attend the setting.

We acknowledge that we are living in unprecedented times where we (the whole world) are learning, as we go, about how deadly this coronavirus is and the huge impact it has had on us all. We acknowledge that information and guidance changes regularly as we learn and understand more about this virus.

Government guidance states "We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary school children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff"

Aim of the policy

This policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within the preschool that assures compliance to the Government and leading bodies requirements with relation to the outbreak of a pandemic such as Covid19. 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 changes and new precautionary measures are introduced and practices have been reflected upon.

Method

As early years providers, we ensure to offer a continuum of very high standard of practice of childcare. 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. It states protective measures put in place for child, parents, and staff to reduce the risk of transmission. The main areas we will be considering are:

- Maintaining personal and respiratory hygiene (handwashing, catch it, kill it, bin it)

- Ensuring cleanliness of the environment (especially frequently touched surfaces - door handles, handrails, tabletops, play equipment, toys, electronic devices etc.)
- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE) as required.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

Focus/Area of Consideration/Recommendations for Children

Dropping your child off at the start of their session

- Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting.
- Children will be unable to bring in toys from home.
- Parents will drop off children at the front of the setting. Observing social distancing by 'queueing' along the pathway and waiting for your child to be admitted into the setting. Parents must sign in their child in the daily register.
- Your child will then come in and wash their hands.

Wellbeing and Education

- Children will 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 the catch it, kill it, bin it regime.
- 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.
- Extremely vulnerable children should continue under government advice.

Picking up your child at the end of their session

- Parents can come into the foyer to pick up their children at the end of their session and sign them out. Observing the social distancing rule as much as possible.

Cleaning Regime

Whilst we cannot guarantee that the coronavirus will not enter our building (because there are too many variables that are not in our control), we can guarantee that we will work diligently to keep the setting as clean as is humanly possible.

- As it is challenging to reduce contact between young children in early years settings, regular cleaning and disinfection of surfaces, objects, and toys etc are particularly important. We will use cleaning products that have been recognised within the guidance as good products to use.
- We will thoroughly clean the setting floors.
- We will continuously clean tabletops, toys, door handles, electronic equipment, and the toilets throughout the day.

Staff

Attendance

Staff should only attend preschool 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.

PPE

Staff have been advised by the government not to wear PPE such as facemasks during the day but should continue to wear PPE at the usual times such as intimate care which includes wearing disposable gloves and an apron.

- Staff will use aprons and gloves when a task is presented to them that requires these items to be worn. At all other times, staff will practise a good hand washing regime alongside the children so that we are all doing it together and supporting each other to do so.
- Staff have been briefed on how best to remove their PPE in order not to 'shake' it and risk any potential droplets of the virus falling on the floor.
- Staff are aware of the procedure for double bagging PPE and disposing of it safely.

If a member of staff is caring for a child who has developed symptoms of covid-19 throughout the day they will be required to wear a face mask whilst they look after the child who is isolated from the group waiting to be collected. This is because the 2-metre distance is not able to be kept from a child displaying symptoms.

- The staff member who is caring for the unwell child should continue to wear PPE.
- Appropriate PPE should be used to clean the affected area with disinfectant.
- All PPE should be removed and disposed of following the current government guidelines, the staff member should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.

The settings 'normal' use of PPE

- Staff have always worn gloves and plastic aprons when dealing with a child's personal care.
- Staff have always worn gloves when dealing with an injury that involves blood. During this pandemic, we will now also wear an apron for any bodily fluid incidences.
- If a child requires 1-1 help and support because of such an issue the staff member dealing with them will:-
 1. Wash their hands
 2. Put on an apron.
 3. Put on a pair of gloves.
 4. Deal with the child's issue kindly and carefully, ensuring that they are left feeling comfortable and ready to continue with their play.
 5. Remove the gloves and the apron (as briefed) and place in the bin provided.
 6. Wash their hands.

Staff Social Distancing

Social distancing must be maintained where possible.

Symptoms of COVID 19

Whilst we are all trying to adjust to coming out of the lockdown and getting used to the new things we are allowed to do, we must still be mindful that this virus is still infecting people and people are still dying from it. We still have to be alert to any symptoms that we or our loved ones may start showing.

- If your child develops a new cough, or has a high temperature, or loses their sense of smell or taste you must NOT send them to the setting, and you MUST inform us of their symptoms.
- Your child needs to self-isolate for 10 days.
- Families will have access to being tested if you are displaying symptoms.
- If your child's test is negative, they can return to the setting.

- If your child’s test is positive you MUST inform the setting.
- Even though the guidance is there to help us decide how our setting will function during this time, it is open to interpretation as each setting will have different procedures for the way they run their setting. Our Trustees will follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- If your child develops symptoms because of another case at the setting you MUST inform us.

Track and Trace

Close contacts in early years settings are now being identified by NHS Test and Trace and education, and childcare settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.

As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from the setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case and/or their parent or carer specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact.

This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. Parents may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.

We will continue to have a role in working with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is a substantial increase in the number of positive cases in a setting or if central government offers the area an enhanced response package, a director of public health might advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures.

Legal framework

- *This policy has been written in accordance with the Government guidance that is available on their website and in consultation with staff and Trustees.*
- *Please refer to the Government website for all relevant and updated guidance.*

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Little Fishes Preschool
Held on	<hr/> 25/05/2020
Date to be reviewed	<hr/> Continuously as and when

Government guidance is
updated

1st review 31/05/2020

2nd review 28/9/2020

3rd review 14/04/2021

4th review 28/09/2021

Signed on behalf of the management
committee

Maggie Mann – Chair

Tracy Parkins - Manager
