

10.14 Dealing with COVID-19

1.2 Safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults

All staff remain alert to any signs that during the current COVID-19 outbreak a child in their care is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. This includes signs of neglect that may be caused by extraordinary circumstances due to measures to curb the spread of the virus.

Keeping group sizes to a maximum of 8 children, while adhering to EYFS ratios, is preferable so groups are as small as possible. Providers are expected to ensure that there are no more than 16 children in a group in early years settings. While it is not expected that children and staff within a group will keep 2 metres apart, it is important to reduce contact between groups of children and staff as far as possible, for example by ensuring children and staff mix in a small consistent group and that small group stays away from other groups.

Settings should ensure:

- physical distancing between groups of children and staff as far as possible.
- that individual groups use the same area of a setting throughout the day as much as possible.
- that the sharing of toys and resources is reduced.
- that any toys or resources that are shared can be easily cleaned between different groups' use.

2.2 Student placement – Suspended

4.1 The role of the key person and settling-in

During the COVID-19 outbreak it is likely that some children will not have their usual key person. Where this is the case, the principles of the key person role are followed as closely as possible.

Any temporary staff must be trained to administer medication and medical procedures proficiently and safely for individual children. They must also adhere to the guidelines and procedures on 'caring for the individual needs of children with SEND', as detailed in their Health Care Plans. *8.4a Prioritised Place Risk Assessment* should be used to identify any risks that may be incurred due to a change in key person for such children.

5.1 Staffing

During the COVID-19 outbreak, staff will be deployed as per the government guidance. Relaxation of the rules on ratios may be implemented only in exceptional circumstances, and only during the COVID-19 outbreak period. Any relaxation of ratios must be based on a risk assessment approach and with the authorisation of the manager. Otherwise the following procedure applies.

- During the COVID-19 outbreak early years staff are themselves considered to be 'key workers'. If staff cannot source care for their own children then they are able to bring their child to the setting, ensuring that as far as possible, they adhere to the criteria below and ensure they are not breaching conditions of their insurance provider:

- where members of staff have their own children with them at the setting, the age of the child must fall within the stipulated ages of the setting's Ofsted registration
- where members of staff are likely to be working directly with their own children, this is subject to discussion before commencement with their line manager

6.2 Managing children who are sick, infectious, or with allergies

During the COVID-19 outbreak, any child or staff member showing symptoms, such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; loss of taste or smell, should follow the government guidance:

Anyone who begins to display coronavirus symptoms while in the setting should be sent home immediately and follow government guidelines on [what to do if you or someone in your household develops symptoms](#). If a child is waiting to be collected, they should be separated from their group and isolated with one member of staff if this is possible.

A facemask should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from a child who is symptomatic and awaiting collection and if contact is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a facemask should be worn. If a risk assessment determines there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing or spitting, then eye protection should also be worn. Settings should ensure they are prepared to respond in line with the [guidance on protective measures in education and childcare settings](#) and [guidance on using PPE in education, childcare and children's social care settings](#).

Once the child or member of staff has left the setting, settings should follow [Cleaning of non-healthcare settings](#) to ensure areas they have been in are disinfected and any PPE and other waste is disposed of safely.

Once early years and childcare providers open to more children, all staff and children who are attending a childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario. Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation. If the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their immediate group within their setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. For childminding settings, this applies to everyone attending your setting who came into contact with the child or staff member. The other household members of those advised to self-isolate do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they live with subsequently develops symptoms. Take appropriate steps to deputise responsibilities or arrange cover if affected members of staff fulfil designated roles, for example paediatric first aid, SENCO or safeguarding lead.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger group may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

The following steps should also be taken:

- Child's parents are requested to inform setting of outcome/diagnosis and keep child at home for the recommended exclusion period. For cases of suspected Coronavirus, staff and service users must adhere to current Government advice regarding self-exclusion even if no symptoms are present.
- For confirmed cases of a notifiable disease and Coronavirus the setting must contact their local Health Protection Team (HPT) as soon as possible for further guidance. The line manager will inform the committee and retain a confidential record.
- If a notifiable disease is confirmed, staff must inform the line manager immediately and Ofsted must be informed within 14 days. Cases of confirmed Coronavirus should be treated as a notifiable disease.
- A deep clean is undertaken at the soonest opportunity following any illness outbreak. Hand hygiene messages are reinforced, and staff are vigilant to any further signs of infection.
- The manager continues to liaise with the HPT as required and keeps a full record of children affected, how long they are away from the setting and the date on which they return.

6.5 Food and drink

Where food is provided, in circumstances where there is shortage of food supplies, it may be necessary to ask parents to supply a packed lunch. The following procedures must be followed:

- Children thoroughly wash hands prior to being given food or drink.
- Staff who are eating with the children must role-model hygiene best practice.
- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes. Some social distancing is encouraged even though it is acknowledged that children will play in close proximity for the rest of the session.

8.3 Supervision of children on outings and visits - Suspended

During the outbreak, trips and outings are suspended. Children should still have access to outdoor play and learning opportunities as normal, as long as social distancing measures are followed.

8.3 Risk assessment

Staff should read and refer to the settings risk assessment for dealing with Coronavirus to ascertain the extra steps that need to be undertaken during this crisis.

9.11 Promoting Positive Behaviour

This is an unsettling time for young children. Practitioners are alert to the emotional well-being of children who may be affected by the disruption to their normal routine. Where a child's behaviour gives cause for concern, practitioners take into consideration the many factors that may be affecting them. This is done in partnership with the child's parents/carers and the principles of this procedure are adhered to.

10.7 Provider records

During the COVID-19 outbreak there may be the need to keep additional records as part of outbreak management.

A central record of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 that affect any member of staff or service user is held. This record does not contain personal details about the individual (unless for a member of staff). Records are

kept of individual cases of children/families who are self-isolating due to symptoms. In all cases the principles of data protection are maintained.

This policy was adopted by St Nicholas & St Faith Pre-School

On _____ (date)

Date to be reviewed _____ (date)

Signed on behalf of the provider _____

Name of signatory _____

Role of signatory (e.g. chair) _____