



## **COVID-19 Policy**

### **Statement of Intent**

Preschool intend to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the setting during an epidemic or pandemic. It also states ideas for continuity of business if allowed.

### **Important Information about Infectious Diseases**

As you will all be aware the world is currently facing an outbreak of a new strain of coronavirus, COVID-19. This epidemic is understandably a cause for concern as it continues to spread throughout the UK with the long-term effects on individual's health and the economy are still unknown. However, through careful planning and pre-cautionary measures we can prepare to minimise any disruption to daily life should wide-spread infection occur. This guidance sets out the measures that All Saints Wise Owls is putting in place and the steps that parents and carers can take to reduce the spread. We will continue to send you updated information as the situation progresses and we thank you all for co-operating fully.

For up to date information from the Government Guidelines please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

### **Who is this policy for?**

This policy is for the protection of all team members, children and parents and families at All Saints Wise Owls Pre-School.

### **What will we do?**

As early years providers 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 or anyone displaying symptoms. It states the protective measures put in place for children, parents and staff 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, catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Ensuring cleanliness of the environment (especially frequently touched surfaces)
- Minimising general contact and mixing (creating bubbles and limiting numbers)
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE) as per the requirements and guidelines
- Testing

### *Attendance*

- Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting.
- Risk assessing with regular health questionnaires for returning children Physical distancing/ grouping.
- Extremely vulnerable children should continue under government advice (to shield).
- Families who attend at least two settings should choose only one for the remainder of the term to ensure their 'bubble' is protected.

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- Initially children who currently attend 2 settings will need to choose which setting they wish to attend as we will not allow children to attend us, having attended another setting. This is set to reduce the risk of minimum contact for all children.

### Illness

- We will be adopting a very strict illness policy and no child with a temperature or a continuous cough will be allowed to attend. The same rules apply for staff. Anyone showing symptoms must self-isolate for 7 days if they live alone or 14 days along with their whole household if applicable. So, even a child who is teething and displaying some of the same symptoms (fever), just to be on the safe side, we will ask you to keep them at home for 7 days. If the symptoms do not develop further by the end of this period, they can come back to pre-school. If the child/staff member tests negative for Covid-19 in the meantime they may return to pre-school sooner.

### *Physical Distancing/grouping*

- Children may be organised into small groups which will also involve the outdoor area. Wherever possible these small groups or 'bubbles' should not mix during the day as best as possible. This is to minimise contact with others and mixing. Staff may exercise their own judgement during the day for the high standards of safety for all children.
- Children in small groups should have the same staff team caring for them wherever possible to limit the amount of people coming into contact with each other.
- Smaller amounts of children in the whole setting may be preferable, this could be achieved by, but not limited to:
  - A temporary cap on the number of children in the preschool at anyone time.
  - Changing children's hours to how we see fit for least amount of risk.
  - Working in line with government guidance for those allowed to return
  - Possibly changing the preschool opening hours.
  - Prioritising children as the government recommends
  - The take up on places may be small so there may be no need to change children's hours.
- Care routines including provision of meals, nappy changing and toileting should be within the space allocated to each 'bubble' wherever possible.
- The use of communal internal spaces should be restricted as much as possible and outdoor spaces should be utilised as much as possible and used by 'bubbles' in different areas during the day.
- A phased return may be best to ease their transition back into preschool
- Sunscreen should be applied by the parents / carers before the child arrives at the preschool.

### Please Note:

Children do not, and cannot be expected to, fully understand social distancing and therefore the children will likely come into contact with each other at a distance of closer than 2 metres throughout the day. We will have the chairs at the tables more spaced out and we will be limiting the number of children attending to help social distancing as much as possible, however we cannot guarantee that children will be at a 2 metre distance from each other for the duration of the day.

## *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.

## **Workforce-Staffing**

### *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.
- Consideration should be given to limiting the number of staff in the preschool at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day
- Staff hours, days they work and length of day may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy.
- Staff should wear clean clothing into work each day and bring a clean set of clothes to change out of at the end of the session.

### *Physical distancing/ grouping /safety*

- 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 to state they have read and understood the preschool policies and procedures.
- Wherever possible staff should remain with the small group of children, the 'bubble' of children who they are allocated to and not come into contact with other groups.
- Emergency revisions to the EYFS may have been implemented which provides some flexibility on ratios and qualifications to make this feasible.
- 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 and if supporting an ill child a face covering should 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 current 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 (if applicable). This may be achieved through a range of strategies including 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 for each session.
- Advise staff to remove their work clothes and change prior to leaving the setting and wash clothes as they enter their home and take a shower immediately.

### *Training*

- Where possible, meetings and training sessions should be conducted through virtual conferencing.
- All staff members must receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating.
- Online training may be available to allow their training levels to be maintained if appropriate.

## **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.
- Aim to limit drop off and pick up to one parent per family.
- Consider staggering the drop off and collection timings where possible will avoid a queue of families waiting to collect children.
- 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 policies.
- Consider allowing some parents to enter the preschool for the purpose of a settling in session if not doing so would cause a child distress, this could take place in the outdoor environment. The provider should consider measures to minimise contact between the parent and other children and staff members.
- If the child is too distressed perhaps a delayed start to their preschool entry may be preferred

### *Communications*

- Parents should 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.
- Parents should inform preschool of their circumstances and if they plan to keep their child away, this helps preschool to conform to our safeguarding policy.
- Parents may be needed to support the running of the preschool by providing extra resources and consumables the preschool may not be able to source or afford such as cleaning wipes or products, tissues, toilet rolls etc. This is to ensure the safe running of the preschool is not hindered by lack of equipment and resources.

## **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 preschool unless essential.
- Where essential visits are required these should be made outside of the usual preschool operational hours where possible.
- As far as possible parents and carers should not enter the premises.

## **Travel**

- Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to preschool 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 not leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, scooters in the setting premises or grounds.
- Outings from the preschool into the local community should be restricted to ensure mixing with members of the general public does not happen.

## **Hygiene and Health & Safety**

### *Hand Washing*

- All children and staff must wash their hands upon arrival at the preschool for at least 20 seconds.
- Children and staff members should be encouraged to wash their hands frequently, at least once an hour, then also 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 follow the correct procedures as normal.

### *Cleaning*

- An enhanced cleaning schedule must be implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children's resources and equipment and all staff are responsible in their area of work.
- Communal area, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned regularly throughout the day and cleaned thoroughly every night.
- A deep clean may be needed 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
- Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag
- Bins will be emptied regularly throughout the session

### *Risk assessment*

- The preschool and all activity 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 and 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 malleable materials (dough, clay) and the suspension of the sharing of food and utensils.
- Limit the available resources out in the preschool at any one time.
- Remove anything which cannot be easily wiped down or washed at the end of the day.
- Play food, play cutlery and crockery etc. should be removed or anything else which may be 'mouthed' by many children.
- Baking, food play and finger painting should be avoided.

### *Resources*

- Children should not be permitted to bring items from home into preschool.
- All resources required for play and learning experiences of children should be regularly washed and/or sterilized. Any resources which are difficult to clean should be removed.

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- Equipment used by staff such as stationary, tablets etc. should be allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly.

### *Supplies Procurement & monitoring*

- The preschool should ensure 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 preschool will not be able to operate without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control.
- A monitoring system for the usage of PPE is essential 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 and facemasks. These items will be washed at a high temperature in accordance with relevant guidelines and separate to any other preschool washing.
- Packed lunches which the children bring in must be a washable plastic container only.

### *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 current 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 provider may consider suitable PPE for this staff member such as the addition of face mask, visor disposable gloves and apron.
- The 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 ideally should be the person dealing with the unwell child and should continue to wear their PPE. This should then be disposed of according to current government guidelines.
- In the event of a staff member developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst working at the pre-school, they should return home immediately and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance. They should also follow current testing advice for themselves and their household.

### **Monitoring of this policy**

*This policy will be reviewed annually by the setting manager and committee, new government legislation and policies will be incorporated appropriately as and when required or informed.*

## FAQ

### **How do we know if someone has the symptoms?**

High temperature/fever and/or a new persistent cough, change or loss of taste/smell.

### **What are the rules for self-isolating?**

Any staff members with symptoms will be asked stay at home for at least seven days. If they live with other people, they should all stay at home for at least 14 days, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home. After 14 days, anyone they live with who does not have symptoms can return to their normal routine and return to work.

### **What we will do if I suspect a child or member of staff has COVID-19 but it's not been confirmed?**

If the child or staff member is displaying the symptoms as above, they will be sent home to self-isolate for seven days and their whole household should isolate for 14 days. If it is a positive result, our local public health protection team will contact the setting and advise on what precautions we should take.

### **What should I do if a child or staff member becomes unwell at pre-school and has reason to believe they may have COVID-19?**

If the child or staff member is displaying the symptoms as above, they should be sent home to self-isolate for seven days and follow the above procedure.

A staff member would be sent home as soon as possible and another staff member would be called upon if needed.

If it was a child becoming unwell during their session then their parent/carer would be called and immediate collection would be expected. Whilst a child is awaiting collection, they will be moved, if possible and if appropriate, to either an unoccupied outdoor space, or an area where they can be isolated with a staff member at least two metres away from other people. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, we will take them to use a separate toilet if possible.

This staff member would be provided with PPE including a mask, an apron and gloves.

Once the child had been collected they would be expected to isolate for 7 days, along with their household, for 14 days.

The staff member staying with the child would then be given a break to change into a complete fresh change of clothes and wash their hands thoroughly, before continuing their shift.

The room would be thoroughly cleaned before anyone else used it in line with the government guidance.

### **What can we do to prevent the spread of the virus?**

Good hygiene and handwashing are essential and very important in childcare anyway but encouraging children to wash their hands thoroughly on a regular basis will be an extra precaution.

Limiting numbers into the pre-school and stopping the sharing of provision temporarily so children can only attend one provider for this time.

Asking parents to drop off and collect children from the main entrance gate will help to stop the virus entering the building.

The staff wearing fresh clothes each day and changing out their uniforms/work clothing on leaving pre-school will help prevent the spread of the virus. The staff will also wear protective clothing were appropriate such as gloves and aprons. Masks will also be available for staff if required.

### **Advice for Parents, Carers and Families**

And the most important...exercise good hygiene procedures!

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1. Wash your and your child's hands regularly using hot, soapy water for at least 20 seconds
2. Avoid touching your and your child's face
3. Use tissues when coughing and sneezing and dispose of safely.

Catch it, Kill it, Bin it!