



# EPIDEMIC AND PANDEMIC POLICY (COVID-19)

## Statement of Intent

Pembury School House Nursery intends to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the setting during an epidemic or pandemic.

Legislation and leading authorities which have guided and influenced this policy are:

Coronavirus Act 2020, Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Government Briefings, Public Health England (PHE) and World Health Organization (WHO). Advice from but not limited to, The Secretary of State, The Chief Medical Officer, Local Authority (LA) and Department for Education (DfE). The policy also has regard to Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance where appropriate.

## Aim of Policy

This Policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within the setting that assures compliance to the Government and leading bodies' requirements with relation to the outbreak of a pandemic such as Covid-19. This policy will be reviewed regularly in line with the government guidelines.

As early years providers we ensure to offer a continuum of extremely 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 if they do not conflict with this policy.

## 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 and resources)
- Minimising general contact and mixing (creating globes)
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE)
- Testing

## **Focus/ Areas of Consideration / Recommendations**

### **Children**

#### *Attendance*

- Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting.
- Staff will be taking temperatures of children on arrival and risk assessing for returning children physical distancing/grouping.
- It is the parent(s)/carer(s) responsibility to be open and honest with the setting and keep your child at home if they or anyone in the same household is showing any of the following symptoms: HIGH TEMPERATURE, CONTINUOUS COUGH, LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL or has had a positive test result or been contacted by track at trace.

#### *Physical Distancing/grouping*

- Care routines including provision of snack, lunch club, nappy changing, and toileting should be within the space allocated to each 'globe' and thoroughly deep cleaned after every use. In the event of all the children returning to pre pandemic sessions vigorous cleaning will continue.
- The use of communal internal spaces are now open for use by all the children and staff, as much as possible outdoor learning spaces are being utilised as much as possible.
- Sunscreen should be applied by the parents / carers before the child arrives at the setting. T-shirts covering shoulders and leggings would be preferable to minimise how much top up of the Nursery staff will do.

#### *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 on entry and continuously throughout the day, coughing/ sneezing 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 because 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.
- Children will have access of fresh drinks of water throughout the day if they are thirsty, staff will monitor this to ensure no cross contamination of each child's water bottles that are provided from home.

## **Workforce**

### *Attendance*

- Staff should only attend Pembury School House Nursery 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.
- Temperature of staff will be taken on arrival. Staff are to wash their hands upon entrance to the nursery.
- Staff hours, days they work and length of day may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy.

### *Physical distancing/ grouping /safety*

- Staff to be informed of measures in place and any new or updated policies 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, drop off and at collection times; 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 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 still be maintained during breaks. This is to be achieved through a range of strategies including the staggering of breaks and subdivision of spaces allocated to team breaks where possible i.e. staff room, upstairs classroom.
- 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, staff will ensure the safety of the children is maintained through continuous risk assessments.
- 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 before they enter their 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 instruction and training in infection control and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating.

### **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.
- The one way system upon entry to nursery is still in place, until further notice to help aid in social distancing at drop off and collection times.
- 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.
- The provider should consider measures to minimise contact between the parent and other children and staff members.
- Parents will not be allowed into the setting, unless for a consultation or for a meeting in relation to their child, if they do enter the building the Covid-19 risk assessment will need to be completed along with temperature checks, washing of hands and mask wearing.

#### *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, these will be sent via email and Tapestry.
- Parents should inform the setting of their circumstances and if they plan to keep their child away.
- Although handovers are kept to minimum, we encourage parents and staff to have continuous communication via the software system Tapestry or phone calls throughout the day.
- Any parent meetings can be arranged via zoom at a convenient time for the key person and parent/ guardian.

### **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 setting unless essential e.g. essential building maintenance, specialised teacher services etc.

- Where essential visits are required these should be made outside of the usual setting operational hours where possible, if this is not possible the area will be cleared of children, staff and the visitor will be asked to wear appropriate PPE. Any Visitors MUST sign a COVID-19 disclaimer and have their temperature taken upon arrival and adhere to our Covid-19 risk assessment. Any Visitor that refuses to comply will be denied access to the setting. .

### **Travel**

- Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to the setting 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.

### **Hygiene and Health & Safety**

#### *Hand Washing*

- All staff must wash their hands upon arrival at the nursery for at least 20 seconds; the children will either have hand sanitiser applied upon arrival or wash their hands.
- Hand washing stations are located in the toilet area downstairs for the children and the staff toilet for staff.
- Children and staff members should 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 individuals.
- Bodily fluid spills should follow the correct procedures as normal.

#### *Cleaning*

- An enhanced cleaning schedule has been implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children's toys and equipment and all staff are responsible in their area of work.
- Communal area, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly and cleaned thoroughly every night.
- A deep clean may be needed after a child has become ill in the area they were waiting.
- A professional cleaner will come into the setting daily once all children and staff have left the building and complete a vigorous deep clean.

#### *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.

#### *Laundry*

- All items within the setting requiring laundering must be washed in line with NHS laundry guidelines.
- Items such as towels must not be shared by children. These will be washed after every use.

#### *Risk assessment*

- The setting and all activities are 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 for example the sharing of food and utensils.

#### *PPE*

- Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early year's 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 always be maintained. PPE should be disposed of following government guidelines – PPE is available from the office.

#### *Premises Building*

- Keep windows open where possible to ensure good levels of ventilation. If doors are opened ensure the children safety is maintained with locked gates.

#### *Resources*

- Children should not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless essential for their wellbeing. Anything that is brought in from home should remain in the child's bag in their named box.
- All resources required for play and learning experiences of children should be regularly washed and/or sterilised.
- 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 setting 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 setting 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 facemasks. These items will be washed at a high temperature in accordance with relevant guidelines and separate to any other washing.
- In case the supply of food is interrupted (such as fresh fruit from Downingbury Farm for snack), procedures must be implemented to ensure the appropriate food alternatives are sourced and normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed.

### *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 the front porch, under cover.
- The staff member responsible for the child during this time should stay with the child and not cross over with other staff members. The provider will provide 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.
- 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 nursery, 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.

*In the event of a positive case, outbreak, or closure*

- Parent(s)/carer(s) are responsible to notify a member of the management team at the earliest point of receiving a positive test result.
- We adhere to the recommended barriers and solutions processes of our LA (Kent County Council). However in the event of not being able to provide safe ratios of Early Years Educators to the children, within the setting due to staff shortages, we will inform you the parent(s)/carer(s) as soon as possible of any closures.
- Additional cleaning will be arranged for the setting to ensure minimal spread of the virus.
- Staff will continue to contact the parents and families via the software Tapestry with activities, videos, progress reports and well-being checks or to answer any questions and offer support.
- The manager will notify Ofsted, environmental health, and the local authority as well as gain advice from the London coronavirus cell and DFE (department for education).

**If a child or a member of staff test positive for Covid-19 they will have to isolate for 10 days or changes with current NHS guidance of symptoms developing.**

**Any parent / career failing to inform the setting of a positive result or has been advised to isolate from NHS track and trace but continues to attend will risk immediate termination of their contract with Pembury School House Nursery for putting other children, staff and families at risk.**

This policy was updated and adopted by the Trustees of Pembury School House Nursery on:

Date: ..... Signed on behalf of the Trustees: .....

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