

Little Avenues Preschool Covid-19 Policy and Procedures And Contingency Plan

This policy has been prepared in accordance with Government Guidelines as detailed below as well as information sent out by Essex County Council:

Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care>

Contingency framework: education and childcare settings:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1011704/20210817_Contingency_Framework_FINAL.pdf

This policy applies to all Little Avenues Preschool staff, children and families. This is a working document and updates will be added as guidance is updated.

This policy has been adopted for the period of the Covid-19 outbreak. Any updates will be added as they occur. It is the Managers' responsibility to ensure that all staff read and fully understand the content of the policy.

Commencing from 1st September 2020 and for the period of the COVID-19 outbreak and until otherwise communicated, this policy will over-ride any existing policies where information is different to that contained within this policy.

In addition to this policy a risk assessment specific to the Covid-19 outbreak must be completed. The Health and Safety officer is responsible for completing the risk assessment and ensuring all staff are aware of and fully understand its content.

In this Policy the terms 'Coronavirus' and 'COVID-19' are used interchangeably.

This policy was adopted by Little Avenues Preschool 28th September 2020

This Policy was Updated by Little Avenues Preschool 2nd December 2020

This policy was updated by Little Avenues Preschool 19th January 2021

This policy was updated by Little Avenues Preschool 14th May 2021

This policy was updated by Little Avenues Preschool 2nd September 2021

Manager's signature _____ Date _____

Health and Safety Officer _____ Date: _____

Infection prevention and control

This policy outlines how we will deliver safe, face-to-face, high-quality education and childcare to all children and reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in the preschool.

Risk Assessment

A Covid-19 Risk Assessment addressing the risks associated with COVID-19 must be completed, ensuring best endeavours are in place to control risks for children, staff and visitors. The Risk Assessment is undertaken to identify the measures needed to reduce the risks from coronavirus (COVID-19) so far as is reasonably practicable and make the preschool COVID-secure. It must cover all areas of this policy and be adhered to at all times. The risk assessment must be monitored, and the preventive and protective measures must be regularly reviewed, to ensure the measures are working, and taking action to address any shortfalls. The risk assessment is shared with all staff.

Supporting people who may be at increased risk from COVID-19

Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else. If people with possible risk factors are concerned, we will discuss their concerns and explain the measures the preschool has putting in place to reduce risks. We will as far as practically possible accommodate additional measures.

We will encourage and support all staff to get fully vaccinated.

Children and staff travelling from abroad

All children and staff travelling to England must adhere to travel legislation, details of which are set out in [red, amber and green list rules for entering England](#). Parents and carers should bear in mind the impact on their child's learning and development which may result from any requirement to quarantine or isolate upon return.

Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer recommended for staff and visitors in corridors or communal areas. We will encourage visitors to continue wearing face coverings (unless exempt) when inside preschool building.

If we have a substantial increase of COVID-19 positive cases at preschool, we will advise staff and visitors (unless exempt) to wear face coverings in communal areas (see Contingency Plans).

Tracing close contacts and self-isolation

As a setting we no longer are required to contact close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated.
- they are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Instead they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. Little Avenues Preschool will encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Children who are aged under 5 years old who are identified as close contacts will only be advised to take a PCR test if the positive case is in their own household.

Staff who do not need to self-isolate, and children who usually attend the setting, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend the setting as normal.

18 year olds will be treated in the same way as children until 6 months after their 18th birthday to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated.

Individual must self-isolate if they

- Have COVID-19 symptoms
- Have positive PCR test
- Have positive LFD test (you must book PCR test. If the PCR test is negative, you can stop self-isolating)
- If you live with someone who has symptoms or tests positive (unless you are except see above)
- If you are contacted by Track and Trace as a close contact (unless you are except see above)

In case of a local outbreak, we will work with health protection teams (see Contingency Plan below)

Control measures

Using our risk assessment, we will have control measures that addresses the risk identified.

We will:

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, using standard products such as detergents.
3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone

Hand hygiene

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning is now regular practice. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

Children and staff must wash their hands regularly throughout the day, including:

- when they arrive and leave preschool
- before and after eating
- after using bathroom

Children will be supervised when using hand sanitiser, given risks around ingestion.

Small children and those with complex needs will be helped to clean their hands properly. Skin friendly skin cleaning wipes can be used as an alternative

These routines will be built into preschool culture and helping ensure the children understand the need to follow them.

Respiratory hygiene

We continue to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

Enough tissues and bins are available in the preschool to support children and staff to implement this routine.

Children are helped to follow this routine and helped to understand that this is an important and important routine.

Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

Staff will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work i.e. Disposable gloves and aprons will be worn by all staff whilst changing children's nappies and children's personal care.

PPE is to be worn by staff when in close contact with a child displaying symptoms of COVID-19 (see contingency plans).

2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, using standard products such as detergents

We have in place and maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. We are following the guidance in the Government publication 'Cleaning of non-healthcare settings'.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

Regular cleaning using antibacterial spray, soapy hot water or normal household detergent. Cloths should be thoroughly rinsed after cleaning and disposed of at end of session.

Regular cleaning of areas and equipment with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces at beginning and end of day with additional cleaning especially of bathrooms as required.

Toys and equipment will be regularly cleaned and toys, books and puzzles that are difficult to clean will be regularly swapped. Soft toys and resources will be regularly washed in washing machine.

Tea towels and other laundry to be placed in plastic bag and washed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely.

3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

When the preschool is in operation, we will ensure that it is well ventilated, and a comfortable environment is maintained.

We will achieve this:

- natural ventilation – opening windows and doors, when it is safe to do so. In colder weather windows should be opened just enough to provide constant background ventilation and periodically opened more fully when it is safe to do so to purge the air in the space
- Encouraging outdoor play and activities as much as possible

To balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature, the following measures should also be used as appropriate:

- opening high level windows in preference to low level to reduce draughts

- increasing the ventilation while spaces are unoccupied
- re-arranging furniture where possible to avoid direct draughts
- Using the butchers curtain on doors and ensuring this is thoroughly cleaned as part of the cleaning regime and removed at end of day

Heating should be used as necessary to ensure comfort levels are maintained, particularly in occupied spaces.

4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

When Children, staff and other adults COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test should follow public health advice on [when to self-isolate and what to do](#).

Children, staff and other adults should not come into the setting if they have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, they are required to quarantine).

If anyone in your setting develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, they will be sent home and they should follow public health advice (i.e. book a PCR test and self isolate).

If a child is awaiting collection, appropriate PPE should be used if close contact is necessary. Any rooms they use should be cleaned after they have left.

Asymptomatic testing

The use of rapid lateral flow device (LFD) testing allows settings to identify asymptomatic cases that would otherwise go undetected. Little Avenues Preschool encourages all staff to use rapid lateral flow home test kits for twice weekly testing.

Confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests

Staff with a positive rapid lateral flow test result should self-isolate and get a PCR test to check if they have COVID-19.

While awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.

If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive rapid lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the rapid lateral flow test and they can return to preschool.

Admitting children back to the setting

In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a child with symptoms should not attend preschool, given the potential risk to others. If a parent or carer insists on a child attending preschool, we can take the decision to refuse the child if, it is necessary to protect other children and staff from possible infection with COVID-19. Our decision will be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

Reporting COVID-19 cases to Ofsted

Ofsted will be notified of any confirmed cases in the setting, whether a child or a staff member. Also Ofsted will be notified if preschool has to close as a result.

It is a legal requirement as set out in paragraph 3.51 of the [statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#) to report as soon as you are able to, and in any case within 14 days. See [tell Ofsted if you have a COVID-19 incident at your childcare business](#) to assure all the information required is included.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Coronavirus Dis-applications

EYFS Coronavirus dis-applications do not apply after the 31st August 2021.

Safeguarding and welfare

Child Protection Policy

To reflect changes during coronavirus outbreak, a COVID-19 Appendix has been added to the Child Protection Policy and regularly reviewed.

Keeping Children Safe On Line

To support keeping children safe on-line during a coronavirus outbreak, the preschool on-line safety policy will be regularly reviewed, and on-line safety advice will be regularly shared with parents in newsletters.

Supporting Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing

We understand that staying at home for a prolonged period and the change of routine may have caused difficulties for some children, such as changes in behaviour or mood.

We will consider the mental health, pastoral or wider wellbeing support children may need, including with bereavement, and how to support them to transition into the preschool after a long period of absence. Using the [Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus pandemic](#).

Staff will be supported to identify and support vulnerable children and parents and carers that return to the preschool, and be vigilant to actively look for signs of harm and abuse. For example, by sign posting them to appropriate local services such as mental health, domestic abuse or substance abuse services.

We will work to meet the needs of vulnerable children and work with local authority and other professionals to support these children and families.

Supporting Children with SEND

We understand that children with SEND will need particular care and support when return to preschool. Our SENCO will support children and their families so they settle into preschool and their needs are met.

We will be alert to the fact that there may be children with additional or worsened social, emotional and mental health needs as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19), and that there may also be children who have fallen further behind their peers as a result of time out of preschool, or missed diagnosis as a result of a period of absence.

Contingency Plan

The Contingency Plan outlines what we will do if children or staff test positive for COVID-19, and how we will operate if you were advised to take extra measures to help break chains of transmission.

When/Threshold

If the number of positive cases substantially increases within preschool, this could indicate transmission is happening in the setting and we will seek public health advice (DfE helpline 0800 046 8687, option 1).

The threshold to indicate when to seek public health advice is: 5 children or staff, who have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period; or 10% of children or staff who mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

We will seek public health advice if child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19 (DfE helpline 0800 046 8687, option 1) Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Settings may be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

Close mixing at preschool will be considered to be any child or staff member at preschool when outbreak occurs.

Actions to consider

If the above threshold is met to following actions will be put into place as required and advised by public health:

- Increase use of testing by staff
- Use of face mask masks in communal areas
- Review hygiene and ventilation measures already in place (i.e. enhanced cleaning and more ventelation and out door activities)
- Sheilding can be considered for individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL),
- Consider limiting partenal visits, induction visits, open days and performances
- Attendance resitrictions – this will on be considered as a short-term measure and last resort following advice from public health. Priority will be given to be given to vulnerable children and children of critical workers to attend as normal. Safeguarding and welfare of child not attending preschool will be supported as outlined above.