

COVID-19 Policy - March 2022 - a contingency plan

This is the Policy and Procedure for dealing with possible cases of Covid-19 from March 2022. It is written in line with current advice from The Department for Education publications

'Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak'

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

Updated 24 February 2022

Contingency framework: education and childcare settings

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To minimise the risk of children attending and staff from contracting Covid-19, the following control measures will be in place:

- **Ensure good hygiene for everyone** - provision of tissues and bins, handwashing facilities, ensuring children wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after eating and using the toilet. We promote and teach the children to 'catch it, bin it, kill it' - catch a cough/sneeze in a tissue and put it in the bin to kill the germs and then wash their hands. Hand sanitiser is provided for staff, who also follow the above.
- **Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes** - The kitchen, toilets, and tables/unit tops to be cleaned by Little Pickles staff before children arrive (either completed the night before or in the morning.) During the day - toilets are cleaned in the morning and afternoon, tables are cleaned before and after snacks, before and after lunch and at the end of the day. Floors are swept/hovered after eating and at the end of the day and mopped. All equipment and resources used on that day are sprayed and wiped and are thoroughly cleaned on a 2-weekly basis. Any toys that have been in a child's mouth will be removed and returned when disinfected. Frequently touched areas such as the door handles and handrails, light switches etc will be cleaned at least twice a day.
- **Keep spaces well ventilated** - All available windows are to be kept opened. When children are outside the side door remains open.
- **Face masks** - During special indoor events at Little Pickles, ie, stay and play, harvest, Christmas celebrations when visitors are invited into to setting, and it is more crowded and enclosed than usual, it is recommended by the government that face masks are worn. Face mask will also be worn if there is a substantial increase in the number of positive cases in the setting.
- **Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19-** When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test, they should follow guidance on self-isolation. Close contacts of a confirmed case do not need to isolate. Children and staff should return to the setting as soon as they can. From 21 February 2022, staff in early years settings will not be expected to continue taking part in twice weekly LFT.

In the event of an outbreak, a setting may also be advised by their local health team or Director of Public Health (DPH) to increase testing for a period.

How to safely return to your normal routine before 10 days



- **Attendance** - Children or staff should not attend the setting if they present with symptoms of Covid-19 as defined by UK government as:

- new continuous cough -this means coughing a lot for more than one hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours, if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual) or
- high temperature - defined by the NHS as over 38°C
- Loss or change of taste/smell

Anyone experiencing any of the above symptoms should arrange a LFT and contact the setting as soon as possible and follow the isolation procedure as defined by government, available at

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts

Updated 14 March 2022

If staff or children try to attend the setting whilst positive, Little Pickles may refuse entry to protect other children and staff from infection.

- **If a child becomes ill with symptoms whilst at Little Pickles, the following procedure will be carried out** - The child will be separated from others and looked after by a member of staff in the entrance area and disabled toilet area. The adult will put on PPE (disposable gloves, face covering and a disposable apron.) The child's parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child as soon as possible. Advice will be given to the parent regarding self-isolation and testing procedures. The entrance area where the child has been, will be deep cleaned immediately after the child has left the setting. The whole setting will be deep cleaned at the end of the day in addition to our increased cleaning schedule throughout the remainder of the day. The staff member will dispose of the apron and gloves and change their clothing.
- **If a member of staff becomes ill with symptoms whilst at Little Pickles, the following procedure will be carried out** - The staff member will be asked to collect their belongings and to leave the premises as soon as possible. This may mean a short wait to allow time for management to ensure there are sufficient adults to care safely for the children. In this instance the staff member will be asked to isolate in the disabled toilet area. Advice will be given to the member of staff regarding self-isolation and testing procedures. The area where the staff member has been waiting will be deep cleaned immediately after the staff member has left the setting. The whole setting will be deep cleaned at the end of the day in addition to our increased cleaning schedule throughout the remainder of the day.

If the child or member of staff tests negative, they can resume coming to Little Pickles if they are well within themselves. If a child or staff member has tested positive, we are requesting confirmation of the results so that we can keep a record in the event of any further cases.

- **Staying in touch** - children who need to self-isolate and cannot attend Little Pickles can be supported at home with activities. Signposted on our website, are a variety of online learning support sites. Little Pickles also ensures parents and carers have access to learning/activity packs from the setting.

'Outbreak' plan

If we have several confirmed cases within 10 days, this may be deemed as an outbreak defined by the Department for Education thresholds as:

- 5 children, pupils, students, or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely and test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period or
- 10% of children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely and test positive COVID-19 within a 10-day period

In the event of the above thresholds being reached we will review and reinforce our existing testing, ventilation, and hygiene measures. This may include but is not limited to the re-introduction of face coverings when dropping off/collecting children and when at the setting, spending more time outdoors, increased supervision on handwashing, removal of equipment that cannot be cleaned easily, ie, fabrics, cushions. Additional public health advice will be sought by contacting the Department of education helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1).

1. **Staffing** - If the outbreak is because of staff testing positive, the manager will look at the number of staff required for each session - morning and afternoon. If there are enough remaining staff (who are not affected) to meet the adult to child ratios, then the setting will operate as normal. If there are not enough staff to safely care for the children, then the manager will contact an agency for staff cover. If no staff are available, the manager will contact families to offer an alternative session where there is sufficient staff. This will start with the children known to the setting whose families may be at home that day followed by 2-year funded children (as the ratio for adult to child ratio is lower than of the preschool children.) In extreme cases, and to prevent the setting closing, places will be offered to the children of critical workers only. The most up to date list of eligible families can be found here [Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/children-of-critical-workers-and-vulnerable-children-who-can-access-schools-or-educational-settings)
2. **Children** - If the outbreak is amongst children in the setting, we will work closely with all the relevant authorities and be advised by them. In the first instance a deep clean of the setting will take place. All parents will be notified of confirmed cases. No names will be given.
3. **Self-Isolation** - Current government advice is that children under 18 years old and adults do not need to isolate if they have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus. If the individual has symptoms and taken a test which is positive, self-isolation starts for up to **10 days** from the start of symptoms or when the LFT was taken. Self-isolation may end before the 10 full days if a LFT is taken from 5 days after the day the symptoms started (or the day the test was taken) and another LFT the following day. The second LFT must be taken at least 24 hours later than the first. If **both** these test results are negative, and there is no **high temperature**, self-isolation can end, and staff can return to work on day 6. As of the 17th of March 2022, staff who have been self-isolating due to Covid-19 will now only be entitled to SSP from day 4, as per Government SSP conditions.

All families will be notified of any case of Covid-19, and it will be the choice of the parent/carer if you wish your child to continue attending. Sessions which have been booked and staffed for will be payable, even for the child who is in isolation, as with any other illness, however, the quality premium will be waived.

4. If **someone in your household** has tested positive for coronavirus, children under 18 do not have to isolate, however, babies and toddlers have very close contact with their care givers, and as such are more likely to become infected if the care giver has Covid-19. Therefore, to further protect staff and other children and their families and to try and prevent any possible spread of infection in the setting or the wider community, it is the decision of the parent/carer if you wish your child to attend. Sessions which have been booked and staffed for will be payable, even for the child who is in isolation, however, the quality premium will be waived.

Little Pickles
NURSERY & PRE SCHOOL