

## **Whitley Lodge Under Fives**

### **Epidemic and Pandemic Policy (Covid 19)**

#### **Statement of Intent**

Whitley Lodge Under Fives 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 operating if allowed.

#### **Legislation and references**

Coronavirus Act 2020  
Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)  
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)  
Government Guidelines  
Public Health England (PHE)  
World Health Organisation (WHO)  
Local Authority (LA)  
Department for Education (DfE)

The policy also has regard to Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance where appropriate.

#### **Aim**

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 Covid19. This information builds upon our current procedures for areas such as Safeguarding, Child Protection and Equality and Diversity, however new practices may emerge as the situation continues. The policy and considerations may evolve and be built upon as the situation deepens and new precautionary measures have been introduced and practices have been reflected upon.

#### **Methods**

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 good hygiene practice (handwashing, catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Ensuring cleanliness of the environment (especially frequently touched surfaces)
- Minimising general contact
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE) when necessary

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

### **Children Attendance**

- Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting. (in line with Government guidelines)
- Only children whose entire household have no symptoms or they have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting. (in line with Government guidelines)
- Parents/Carers will be asked at drop off if anyone in their household has symptoms
- Parents/carers should be encouraged to limit the number of settings their child attends, ideally ensuring their child attends the same setting consistently.

### **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 method.
- 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.
- Snack times will continue as normal, staff to wear disposable aprons

### **Staff Attendance**

- Staff should only attend playgroup if they and their household are symptom free and have completed the required isolation period, (in line with Government guidelines) Staff will be asked this daily. 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 setting at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day
- Staff hours and the days they work may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy.

### **Physical distancing/safety**

- Physical distancing within playgroup is not possible.
- Sunscreen (if applicable) should be applied by parents/carers before the child arrives at playgroup.
- 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 this policy to state they have read and understood these policies and procedures.
- Staff to agree and sign the playgroups Covid-19 staff agreement

- Staff have been advised by the government not to wear PPE such as facemasks during their day, but should continue to wear appropriate PPE at the usual times such as intimate care, first aid e.g. disposable gloves and aprons and if supporting an ill child, a face mask and visor should also be worn if a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained.
- After dealing with an ill child with suspected 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 lunch breaks and staff meetings.
- 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.

### **Training**

- All staff members must receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control, the safe operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating. (Educare Infection Prevention and Control in Early Years Setting and Virtual College Prevent Covid-19)

### **Parents**

- 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 minimise the 'pinch points' during the day and limit drop off and pick up to one parent per family.
- Maybe stagger the drop off and collection timings to avoid a queue of families waiting to enter the setting.(to be reviewed after playgroup resumes 2/9/20)
- In line with DFE guidelines, arrange drop off and pick up at the entrance to avoid parents entering unnecessarily.
- When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained sticking to government social distancing policies.
- If a child is too distressed perhaps a delayed start 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/carers to agree and sign the playgroups Covid-19 Parental Agreement. Any parent/carer refusing to sign and/or not abiding by the agreement may be asked to withdraw their child.
- Parents should inform the setting of their circumstances and if they plan to keep their child away, this helps us to conform to our safeguarding policy.

## **Visitors**

Attendance to the setting will be restricted to only children and staff as far as practically possible and visitors will not be permitted unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance).

- Where essential visits are required these should be made outside of the usual operational hours where possible.
- In line with DFE guidelines, as far as possible parents and carers should not enter the premises.

## **Travel**

- Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to playgroup alone, using their own transport or if possible, walk or cycle.
- If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed.
- Parents should be encouraged to ensure they do not leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, scooters in the setting premises or grounds.

## **Hygiene and Health & Safety**

### **Hand Washing**

- All children and staff must wash their hands upon arrival at playgroup for at least 20 seconds.
- 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 people.
- Bodily fluid spills should follow the correct procedures as normal.

### **Cleaning**

- An enhanced cleaning schedule will be 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.
- All soft furnishings/soft toys that are hard to keep clean will be temporarily removed from the setting.
- Children will not be allowed to bring toys in from home.

### **Accident/Incident**

- If a child has an accident in playgroup the accident will be recorded in the accident book and the parent/carer collecting will be informed at the door. This will be followed up by an email and the parent will be asked to acknowledge the email.

### **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, lid and foot pedal.
- Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal.

### **Laundry**

- All items within the setting requiring laundering must be washed in line with NHS laundry guidelines.
- Items such as towels, flannels and bedding must not be shared by children.

### **Risk assessment**

- The setting 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.
- Cut down on the available resources in order to support cleaning schedules.
- Remove anything which cannot be easily wiped down or washed at the end of the day.
- Baking, food play and finger painting should be avoided.

### **PPE**

- Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early years settings to protect against COVID- 19 transmission.
- Normal PPE (disposable aprons and gloves) should continue to be worn and disposed of as normal for nappy changing and the administration of first aid.
- If a child shows symptoms, staff should wear disposable gloves and a disposable apron. A face mask and visor should be worn if a 2-meter distance cannot be maintained at all times. PPE should be disposed of following government guidelines

### **Premises Building**

- Where premises have been temporarily closed during the lockdown period or where they may need to temporarily close during future lockdowns appropriate Health & Safety checks should be conducted prior to reopening including legionnaires checks.
- Keep windows open where possible to ensure good levels of ventilation. If doors are opened, ensure the safeguarding of the children is maintained e.g. locked gates.

## **Resources**

- Children should not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Anything that is brought in from home should remain in the child's bag on their peg.
- All resources required for play and learning experiences of children should be regularly washed and/or sterilised. Any resources which are difficult to clean should be removed.
- Equipment used by staff such as stationary, should be allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly.

## **Supplies Procurement & monitoring**

- The Manager should ensure that essential supplies/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 tabards and facemasks. These items will be washed at a high temperature in accordance with relevant guidelines and separate to any other preschool washing.
- Snack to share will be suspended until further notice, playgroup to provide all snacks.

## **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, staff will isolate the child from others in the cloakroom. If possible, the door should be opened for ventilation.
- The staff member responsible for the child during this time should be a staff member from their allocated cohort. The staff member should wear suitable PPE to protect themselves e.g. disposable gloves and disposable apron. A face mask and visor should be worn if a 2-meter distance cannot be maintained at all times.
- 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 playgroup, 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.

This policy and The Safe Operating Procedure was read and understood by all staff

Carol Shields.....

Helen Graham-Potts.....

Jayne Pronk.....

Amy Kennedy.....

Lucy Brown.....

Dated 23rd July 2020

To be revised September 2020