

# St John's Playtime Preschool

## Pandemic Policy

In response to the Covid-19 outbreak

St John's Playtime Preschool intends 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.

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 Organisation (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 preschool 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.

### **Method**

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 reasonable social distancing are enabled and that good hygiene practices are implemented as well as avoiding coming into contact with infected children and adults or anyone displaying symptoms. It states that the protective measures put in place for children, parents and staff reduce the risk of transmission. We will continue to follow all 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
- 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.
- Providers will take the temperatures of children and staff on arrival and will risk assess any children/staff who are returning after a period of isolation.
- Children with medical conditions that are very high risk should continue to follow the government advice (to shield).

### **Social Distancing**

- In the eventuality that spaces are limited, we would prioritise children such as those who are vulnerable, those with special educational needs and those from households where both parents work (or work full time).
- Where possible we will encourage the children to social distance and to keep hands to themselves e.g. no hugging or touching others.
- Sunscreen should be applied by the parents/carers before the child arrives at the preschool.

## **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 their 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.
- Parents will be asked to provide a plastic lunch box which can be easily sanitised upon arrival. We will also ask the parents to bring in a named water bottle for their child.

## **Workforce Attendance**

- Staff should only attend preschool if they are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result.
- Providers will take the temperature of staff on arrival and a risk assessment with a health questionnaire will be completed for staff returning from isolation.

## **Social distancing and safety**

- Staff will complete a risk assessment before opening to address any risks from the virus and ensure appropriate safe measures are in place to control risks.
- Staff to be informed of measures in place and sign a disclaimer to state they have read and understood the preschool 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 which includes wearing disposable gloves and an apron.

**If a member of staff is caring for a child who has developed symptoms of Covid19 throughout the day they will be required to wear a face mask whilst they look after the child who is isolated from the group waiting to be collected. This is because a 2-metre distance is not able to be kept from a child displaying symptoms.**

- The staff member who was caring for the unwell child 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.
- Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc.

### **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 procedures 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**

#### **Social 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.
- We will aim to minimise foot traffic limiting drop off and pick up to one parent per family.
- We will advise and ensure that parents follow the social distancing guidelines and ensure that queues are avoided for families waiting to enter preschool.
- Parents will be called forward to the door to drop off or collect their child.
- When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, social distancing should be maintained in a safe area sticking to government social distancing policies.

### **Communications**

- Parents should receive clear communication regarding the role they play in the safe operating procedure and all measures that are being taken to ensure the safety of their children and themselves.
- Parents should inform preschool of their circumstances if they plan to keep their child away as this helps preschool to conform to our safeguarding policy.

## **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 (e.g. essential building maintenance, outside agencies e.g. Health visitor).
- 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 unless there is an emergency. You would be required to wear a face mask upon arrival.

## **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 are advised that they cannot leave any 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 the preschool for at least 20 seconds.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for all children and staff to use regularly.
- Children and staff members should be encouraged to wash their hands frequently, this includes before and after eating food, after visiting the toilet, 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 toys and equipment and all staff are responsible in their area of work.
- Communal areas, high touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly and cleaned thoroughly at the end of every session.

- 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 etc that have been used by a child or staff member with suspected Covid19 must be disposed of following the government guidelines.
- Tissues must be immediately disposed of and placed in a bin with a bag and a lid.
- Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag and a lid.

### **Risk assessment**

- The setting will 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 this would include, but not be limited to, the suspension of learning experiences involving materials which are not easily washable such as malleable materials (playdough, jelly) and the suspension of the sharing of food and utensils.
- Limit the resources that we have out available for the children including any toys which have intricate pieces that would be hard to clean.
- Remove anything which cannot be easily wiped down or cleaned at the end of the day.
- Play food, play cutlery and crockery etc. should be removed and immediately sterilised which has been 'mouthed' by the children.
- Water play water is changed throughout the day and has antibacterial handwash inside to keep it clean.
- The use of large equipment such as obstacle courses which involve cones, hoops, tunnel-play, large balls and stepping-stones will be prioritised over other forms of play such as stickle bricks and lego.

### **PPE**

- Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early years 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, disposable gloves and an apron 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.
- Where the premises have been temporarily closed during the lockdown period or where they may need to temporarily close during future lockdowns for more than 6 weeks, we will carry out a full deep clean achieved by an industrial cleaning company before reopening.
- 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.
- 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.
- Equipment used by staff such as stationary, tablets etc. will be cleaned continuously throughout the day. Allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly in between use.

### **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. (Anti-bacterial sprays, Gloves, hand sanitizer, hand soap, paper towels).
- 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.

## **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 group. The provider will provide suitable PPE for the staff member caring for the child such as a face mask, 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 it should be 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 preschool, 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.
- We ask all parents and carers to ensure they organise a test for their child, in the event that they develop coronavirus symptoms, and notify us immediately of a positive test. Parents can access a test for under 5's by contacting 111.

## **Payment in the event of lockdown**

If someone wishes to leave for any reason, whether it be self-isolating or sent home due to showing symptoms, fees will still be payable unless the preschool closes on government advice. If we were to close, the sessions you have already paid but have not been able to attend will be reimbursed when the setting reopens.

## **Monitoring of this policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the setting managers/Committee. New government legislation and policies will be incorporated appropriately as and when required or informed.

**Date:** 08/09/2020



**Adopted by Authorized Signatures:** Katrina Thrower and Megan Blanchard

**Signed on behalf of the Management committee:**

**Name of Signatory:** Chris Coyle

**Name of Signatory:** Committee Chairperson

**Review Date:** Ongoing – Every Month