

29. Pandemic

Statement of Intent

Polesden Lacey Playschool intend to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimize 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

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 or other infectious illnesses and diseases. 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 good hygiene practices 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:

- Maintaining personal and respiratory hygiene (handwashing, catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Ensuring cleanliness of the environment (especially frequently touched surfaces and resources)

Focus/ Areas of Consideration / Recommendations

Children

Wellbeing and play

- Children will 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 using a tissue and adopting a catch it, kill it, bin it regime.
- Provision will continue to be delivered through play and adult led activities as normal.
- Children will have access to fresh water from their personal water bottle throughout the day if they are thirsty.

Workforce

Physical distancing/ grouping /safety

- Staff to be informed of measures in place and any new or updated policies and procedures.
- All PPE will be removed and disposed of following current government guidelines, the staff member will wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.
- 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 to wear fresh, clean clothes for each session.

Training

- 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.
- Online training may be available to allow their training levels to be maintained if appropriate.

Parents

Communications

- Parents will 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 will inform the setting of their circumstances and if they plan to keep their child away.

Hygiene and Health & Safety

Hand Washing

- Children and staff members will 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 will follow the correct procedures as normal.

Cleaning

- An enhanced cleaning schedule will be implemented that includes surfaces and children's toys and equipment.
- 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.

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

Risk assessment

- The setting and all activity will be risk assessed before opening or going ahead to address the risks from virus' and due consideration given to any adaptations to usual practice.
- Sensible measures will be put in place and policies and procedures followed.

PPE

- Government guidance regarding will be followed PPE.
- PPE will be worn and disposed of as normal for one to one care and the administration of first aid.

Premises building

- Keep windows open of the indoor classroom where possible to ensure good levels of ventilation.

Resources

- All resources required for good quality play experiences of children will be regularly washed and/or sterilised.
- Equipment used by staff such as stationary, etc. will be allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly.

Responding to a suspected case

- In the event of a child developing suspected symptoms whilst attending the setting, will be collected as soon as possible and taken at home. If possible, a window will be opened for ventilation.

- The area will be thoroughly cleaned, immediately.
- In the event of a staff member developing suspected symptoms whilst working at the Playschool, they will return home immediately and isolate at home.

Closure

There may be occasions when we will have to consider temporarily closing the Playschool because we have too few staff to run sessions safely. If this occurs the manager will contact UKHSA for further support and guidance. The Playschool will also have to close if advised to do so by the local authority in the interest of safeguarding the children in our care.

In the event of closure, the manager will notify parents or carers as soon as possible. The manager will also inform Surrey Early Years as well as other relevant parties for example, the school.

The manager will also notify Ofsted of the closure.

Advance planning

In preparation for dealing with a pandemic disease, the Playschool will ensure that all contact details for staff, children and parents are up to date. We will prepare letters of notification for parents and staff, so that they can be distributed as soon as an outbreak occurs.

We will endeavour to build a bank of relief or supply staff who are able to provide cover should staffing levels fall below the required legal minimums. All relief staff will be DBS checked at the time of joining our team, so that they are checked to be suitable to work with children.

The Playschool will regularly update its information regarding pandemic diseases, by checking the latest guidance from DfE and the local authority and will inform parents and staff of any changes to our emergency plans.

In the event of an outbreak, or closure.

- Additional cleaning will be arranged for the setting to ensure minimal spread of a virus.
- The manager will notify Health Protection Agency (environmental health) and the local authority as well as gain advice from DfE (Department for Education).

Useful contacts

Public Health England:

PHE Surrey and Sussex Health Protection Team
(Southeast), County Hall,
Chart Way,
Horsham,
RH12 1XA
0344 225 3861

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Policy Review

As part of Polesden Lacey Playschool monitoring of pandemic viruses, this policy will be subject to periodic review.

Policy adopted by: Ellie Pragnell (Chair), Caroline O'Leary (Manager)

Date: September 24

Policy Review Date: September 25