

Policy for dealing with COVID-19



Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, it is unlikely that they have been infected.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.

Possible symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have been reported in children.

How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.

There are 2 routes by which people could become infected:

- secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face).

There are general principles to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See Catch it, Bin it, Kill it
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
- pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands: before leaving home, on arrival to the nursery, after using the toilet, after breaks and physical activities, before food preparation, before eating any food (including snacks) and before leaving the nursery.
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment

Face masks are no longer required for the general public, children, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

Cleaning Routines:

Daily cleaning routines will largely remain the same, as high standards of good hygiene are currently in place. However, in areas where there are hard surfaces that are infrequently cleaned or not cleaned to a high enough standard the following will be put in place:

All frequently used hard surfaces will be cleaned with a hard surface cleaning and sanitising solution each day, this includes all door handles, door release buttons, gates, gate latches, toys, light switches, key boards/ mouse, telephones, office desks, printers, phone, banisters.

Hand Washing Routines:

To ensure the staff, children, parents and visitors are washing their hands in line with the current guidelines the following will be put in place:

On arrival to nursery all adults and children will sanitise their hands at the front door.

Parents must take their child to the bathroom on arrival and wash their child's hands before leaving the nursery.

Staff should wash their own hands before supporting a child to wash theirs.

During the day children and staff will wash their hands after going to the toilet or having their nappy changed, before meals or snacks, and when arriving back from a walk.

Children's guides on handwashing will go in all bathrooms.

In the baby room where there is no direct access to the bathroom children can be lifted to the sink to wash their hands by their parents at the start and end of the day.

Hands can be washed with a disposable baby wipe for very young children when returning from a walk and before any meal. Individual face cloths are used at mealtimes and will be washed after each use on a 60degree wash cycle.

Staff must wash their hands before preparing or serving food even if wearing gloves.

Guidance on dealing with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

Children with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend the setting.

Children who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.

It can be difficult to know when to seek help if your child is unwell. If you are worried about your child, especially if they are aged under 2 years old, then you should seek medical help.

What to do if you have a positive COVID-19 test result at nursery

Try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people

If you have a positive COVID-19 test result, it is very likely that you have COVID-19 even if you do not have any symptoms. You can pass on the infection to others, even if you have no symptoms.

If a child has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can. After 3 days, if they feel well and do not have a high temperature, the risk of passing the infection on to others is much lower. This is because children tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults.

Children who come to the setting and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal.

During this period there are actions you can take to reduce the risk of passing COVID-19 on to others.

Although many people will no longer be infectious to others after 5 days, some people may be infectious to other people for up to 10 days from the start of their infection. You should avoid meeting people at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19.

What to do if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in the nursery

From 21 February 2022, you are no longer required to notify Ofsted , of any COVID-19 cases in the setting, whether that is of a child or staff member. It is a legal requirement under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework to report any change to the premises that may affect the quality of childcare for example if your setting is closed for a significant amount of time, i.e. for three days or more. Report as soon as you are able to, and in any case within 14 days.

Disposing of waste in the nursery including tissues, if children, students or staff become unwell with suspected COVID-19

All waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, and masks if used, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. It should be put in a safe place and marked for storage until the result is available. If the individual tests negative, this can be put in the normal waste.

Should the individual test positive, the nursery will be instructed what to do with the waste.

Policies are reviewed annually, this policy was written in November 2022 by Kayleigh Wadsworth