

Essential Information for Parents September 2020

Coronavirus (Covid 19) is a respiratory virus that causes a persistent cough, pyrexia and loss of sense of smell and/or taste (WHO. Listed symptoms). Highly infectious it is airborne, spread by droplet and can live for up to 72 hours on infected surfaces. It has had a major impact on the way Early Years settings and schools can operate to keep both children and staff safe.

We re-opened following the lockdown on the 1st June to almost half of the children who were registered at that time. We operated safely and smoothly and the children (and staff) adapted to our safety measures and new ways of working really well and we had a busy and enjoyable half term up to the summer break.

Welcome to our information leaflet giving you all the necessary, up to date information about our arrangements in Playgroup to operate safely from September. This is based on government advice for the full opening of Early Years settings published on 27.07.2020 which states that settings are “responsible for planning and implementing the ‘system of controls’, building on the hierarchy of protective measures that have been in use throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak”

Attendance

- Children and staff should only attend Playgroup if they and everyone in their household are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result.
- We will not be operating a regular triage system and taking temperatures of children or staff on arrival, however parents are required to keep Playgroup informed in relation to COVID tests and result outcomes.
- The current guidance is that parents should limit the number of settings a child attends (no longer limited to only one setting). We will therefore accept children who attend a childminder setting provided it is a consistent arrangement.
- Attendance to the setting will be restricted to children and staff only as far as practically possible and visitors will not be permitted to playgroup unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance).

Please do not bring your child to playgroup if you or any member of your household is not feeling well, is experiencing possible coronavirus symptoms, is waiting to take a COVID test, has taken a test and is waiting for results or has received a positive test result in the last 10 days.

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the above symptoms you should self-isolate at home.

Arrival at Playgroup

- We will stagger arrival times to reduce congestion and ensure social distancing in the outside area. Parents will be given a 10 minute arrival slot and we request that you make every effort to be punctual within your arrival time slot.
- Only parents who are symptom free and/or have completed the required isolation periods should drop off or collect their child. Please aim to limit drop off and pick up to 1 parent per family.
- When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained in the outside area. The area will be marked with 2m distance spots and a sign will be displayed to remind parents about 2m social distancing.
- While waiting to drop off, please do not allow your child to touch any of the toys that are ready outside as they will have been made ready and would need to be re-cleaned.
- Parents are advised we are unable to store buggies/scooters/bikes on site at this time.
- Parents will be allowed to come in to playgroup to settle their child for the first session. Following this first session parents will not be able to enter the building and we will arrange drop off and pick up at the playgroup entrance.
- Those arriving for an afternoon session should come to the signposted disabled entrance at the back

Playgroup Organisation

The latest Government guidance is that we no longer have to keep children in fixed bubbles but we do have to minimise contact between individuals wherever possible and maintain enhanced cleaning of the environment. There is no social distancing requirement for young children however adults should maintain appropriate social distancing. In our previous free play environment maintaining enhanced hygiene would be very difficult, particularly during the winter months. We have therefore planned a new way of operating in which the children are in groups and the environment divided into areas and they will move around the activity areas on offer in their groups thus allowing us to clean each area between each group. This is similar to the way we operated from June 1st and the children very quickly adapted to this.

- Children will be organised into small fixed groups within Playgroup of up to approx. 10 children. Wherever possible these small groups will not mix during the day and will keep a safe distance apart. Siblings and known friends will be grouped together.
- The small groups will rotate around the activities on offer including the outside space. All activity will be risk assessed and due consideration given to any adaptations to usual practice.
- Children will be regularly instructed to understand about social distancing and hygiene measures and will be supported to maintain these.
- Windows will be open wherever possible to ensure ventilation
- When children are seated at tables, wherever possible there will be 2m between them.
- Wherever possible staff will remain with the small group of children, to whom they are allocated and not mix with other groups. It may be necessary for staff to occasionally mix with another group if we have staff absences.

Hand Hygiene

Hand washing and good respiratory hygiene continue to be the most important protective measures that we can have. **Children will be supported in age appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves safe including regular hand washing and coughing/sneezing into a tissue.**

- Children and staff members will continue to follow the strict handwashing procedures.
- Everyone must wash their hands with water and liquid soap on arrival at the playgroup, before and after snack and lunch, after using the toilet, if hands are visibly dirty, after physical contact with children particularly those who are not in their group and when re-entering the building from outside.
- All children and adults will have easy access to tissues and will be reminded of the “catch it, kill it, bin it” approach and must place the used tissue into the bin provided. They will then wash their hands or use the hand sanitiser provided.
- Children will be reminded not to touch their face or put hand/fingers or toys in their mouths.
- Hand sanitising gel will be available outside for parents to use on arrival if wished and for children to use for outside play.
- Children will use hand sanitiser before leaving the setting at the end of their session.

Snack and Lunch

- We will have staggered snack and lunch times and children will eat in their groups. Children and staff will wash their hands before and after eating
- At snack time, food will be portioned and served for individual children rather than a café style where children help themselves to the crockery and food.
- There will be no sharing of utensils. Each group of children will use a designated set of plates and cups which will be cleaned in the dishwasher.
- Each group of children will have a designated shelf on the lunch box trolley.
- Parents are asked to provide children’s lunch in a hard Tupperware box rather than a fabric lunch bag. This is so that the Tupperware lunch box can be cleaned on arrival and again after lunch before being replaced on the correct shelf of the trolley.
- The tables and chairs will be cleaned after each sitting of snack and lunch.

Toileting

- It is expected that children will wipe their own bottoms after using the toilet. Staff will not routinely do this for children unless children are potty training. Where children are learning to wipe their own bottoms they

will be encouraged to do so and then staff can check that they are clean. Staff will wear gloves and apron when changing nappies, wiping bottoms or dealing with toileting accidents and may choose to wear a mask.

- Children will wash their hands after using the toilet.
- The warm air hand dryer will be used for all children except those who have a fear of it as recorded on their information form. Those children only will use an individual small towel which will be washed daily
- Toilets will be cleaned (sprayed with anti-bac and wiped) after each use.

Clothing

- Children should wear clean clothing daily and have an entire second set of clothing in a sealable plastic bag. Spare shoes should also be in a sealable plastic bag. No fabric back packs should be brought in to playgroup. This is so the bags can be wiped clean as they are brought into Playgroup.
- Staff will also bring a change of clothing in case of contamination.
- Staff and children should wherever possible change their clothing on arrival home and clothing should then be washed.

Cleaning

- Communal area touch points (high contact surfaces, tables, door handles, taps, toilet flushes, light switches) will be cleaned a minimum of twice daily
- Children are **not** permitted to bring any toys from home into the setting. This includes a comforter.
- Non washable toys (eg soft toys, cardboard games and puzzles) and malleable materials will not be used and have been put away until the end of the pandemic.
- No mats, rugs or soft furnishings (eg. cushions) will be used as these have to be washed daily.
- Each of the activity areas will be cleaned between each group of children using them as the groups rotate around the areas of provision.
- Bikes or other outside toys will be cleaned between each group of children using them as children rotate through the areas of provision.
- All resources required for play and learning experiences of children will be cleaned daily by wiping with anti-bac spray. At the end of each week these toys will wherever possible then be cleaned on a high temperature cycle of the dishwasher.

Comfort and First aid

- It may be difficult for some children coming in to playgroup. We will make every effort to encourage them to come in by themselves. If your child is upset then a member of staff may take them by the hand to provide comfort and reassurance. Both staff and child will wash their hands after contact.
- Children will be supported to understand the changes and challenges they may be encountering as a result of Covid-19 such as to understand social distancing and that they cannot have the same physical contact with the staff that they are used to (eg. hugs, sitting on laps etc.)
- If your child is too distressed we may ask you to take them home and try again tomorrow. In the event that a child's behaviour puts others at risk of actual harm (eg biting), we will phone parents to collect them and try again another day.
- If a child needs first aid, the staff member will wear gloves, and a plastic apron and may choose to wear a mask while treating your child. This will be fully explained to the child while dealing with the injury to reassure them. The staff member will stay with them until they are ready to return to activities.
- Current Government guidance is that PPE and face coverings are not required for general use in Early Years settings to protect against COVID- 19 transmission.

Medication

- You will need to bring any emergency medication that your child needs (inhaler/epipen) in a sealable plastic bag. This is so the bags can be wiped clean as they are brought into Playgroup.

Communication

- We will display Government Information Posters at both the entrances and also in the toilet space and in the main hall.
- We will start to use the children's red diaries again to share news. Please send them in to playgroup in your child's named plastic folder. New children will be issued with these when they start.

- We will try to email parents each week to share what we have been doing during the week. Any news will also be emailed and shared on our Facebook page.
- Parents can phone or send a message to playgroup during our working hours on 0784 0822 476. Any non-urgent communication would be better via email to : woottonplaygroup@btconnect.com
- It is essential that we have up to date contact details for you or someone in your household so that in the event that your child becomes unwell or starts to display possible coronavirus symptoms we are immediately able to contact someone who can come and collect your child as soon as possible.
- Parents should respond to all voicemails and messages left by playgroup as quickly as possible in these circumstances in order to protect children and staff.

End of Day Collection

- We will stagger departure times to reduce congestion and ensure social distancing in the outside area. Parents will be given a 10 minute collection slot and we request that you make every effort to be punctual within your collection time slot.
- When parents are waiting to collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained in the outside area. The area will be marked with 2m distance spots and a sign will be displayed to remind parents about 2m social distancing.
- We will get children ready to be collected for their pick up time so that parents are not kept waiting.
- Parents will collect their child from the playgroup entrance and not come into the building. If weather is inclement please remember to bring an umbrella as we do not have any outside shelter.
- It is important that parents stick to their collection time to avoid congestion in the outside area.

Responding to a suspected case of coronavirus

- In the event of any child or staff member developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the setting, they will be sent home to self-isolate for at least 10 days and arrange a test.
- Whilst waiting for the child to be collected they will be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window will be opened for ventilation. The staff member responsible for the child during this time will be the staff member from their group and should wear PPE at this time until the child is collected.
- Parents will be contacted immediately and the child should be collected as soon as possible and should isolate at home in line with the NHS “stay at home” guidance and must arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus. Other members of their household including siblings should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.
- Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household disinfectant after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people
- Staff and parents must be willing to provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus or if asked by NHS Test and Trace.
- Playgroup will be in contact with the local Public Health England health protection team and will also notify Ofsted of any outbreak.
- These are essential actions to reduce the risk in Playgroup and further drive down the transmission of coronavirus.
- All children and staff will be able to book a test if they display symptoms, including children who are under 5. Tests can be booked online through the NHS test and trace for coronavirus website or ordered by phone via NHS 119.
- Staff and parents must be willing to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus.
- Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any children who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate. However, they must self-isolate and arrange for a test if they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test), if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below) or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace

Coronavirus Test Results

- **Parents and staff must inform Playgroup immediately of the results of the test**
- If someone tests negative, and they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can also stop self-isolating
- If someone tests positive, they should follow [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#) and should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to the setting only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell or taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The at least 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

This information is based on the current government guidance available. If there are any updates which may result in changes to our plans we will contact parents with new arrangements.