

11. Information and temporary procedures for parents and children (V12, 18 April 2022)



Our aim at Halesfield Day Nursery is to protect our staff, children, and parents/carers from coronavirus and wherever possible reduce the spread of infection whilst ensuring the children feel safe and happy and can enjoy their time with us. As parents and carers, you play an important role in the safe operation of nursery, and so we want you to understand all we are doing to keep your children (and our staff) safe each day. We need your support and commitment to following these temporary procedures so that we can remain open to support your child’s learning and development and thereby support you. These temporary procedures have been updated in line with the latest government advice and will be implemented until further notice.

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IMPORTANT: If you or your child are, or become, unwell

If you, your child or someone in your household has, or is showing symptoms of, coronavirus (COVID-19) (a new continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell - anosmia) then they must not come to nursery.

The governments advice to settings is as follows:

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

Adults with a positive COVID-19 test result should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days, which is when they are most infectious. For children and young people aged 18 and under, the advice is 3 days.

The population now has much stronger protection against COVID-19 than at any other point in the pandemic. This means we can begin to manage the virus like other respiratory infections, thanks to the success of the vaccination programme and access to antivirals, alongside natural immunity and increased scientific and public understanding about how to manage risk. Regular asymptomatic testing is no longer recommended in any education or childcare setting,”

We ask that those displaying symptoms remain off nursery until they feel better and have no symptoms.

If someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19 or has COVID symptoms then we no longer ask that children remain at home until the end of any isolation. They may come in as normal as long as they do not display any COVID symptoms or seem unwell.

Introduction

It is important that everyone complies with the latest Government guidance on Coronavirus.

We have developed these Safe Operating Procedures based on guidance from the Department of Education and the National Institute for Health Protection specifically for Early Years. It is important that we adapt our everyday practices to ensure that we continue to offer the staff and children a safe environment. Hygiene and social distancing remain the two key elements of infection prevention and control. If any symptoms are displayed, families must be alert and self-isolate for the safety of everyone.

Compassionate leadership is at the heart of this nursery, and we will do everything we can to be honest, open and to communicate with you. There will be a lot of anxieties and we acknowledge that it is OK to feel worried and that COVID-19 and the lockdowns have had an impact on everyone.

Everyone involved in the day to day running of the nursery will receive appropriate instruction and training on how to operate under the terms of the Safe Operating Procedures.

We aim to work in partnership with parents and trust that everyone understands and follows these Safe Operating Procedures.

Attendance

Children and employees are welcome to attend nursery but must not be displaying any coronavirus symptoms, the most common being a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste and smell.

It is important that you seek medical advice if you are unsure.

It is important that children and staff do not attend nursery if unwell for their own wellbeing and for the safety of others. Children will not be accepted into nursery if they have been given Calpol/Paracetamol or any other medication that can mask fever symptoms after 4am on their day of attendance.

If anyone is experiencing any symptoms, they cannot return to nursery until they have completely recovered and are symptom free. Prompt exclusion is essential to preventing the spread of infection.

Drop off and collection of children

Parents are asked to drop off and collect their children at designated entrances and not to enter the nursery. Whilst parents are waiting, it is advised to maintain social distancing by keeping a distance of two metres apart.

Temperature and symptom monitoring

Routine temperature testing is not recommended as a reliable method for identifying coronavirus. Parents and employees should follow the most up to date NHS guidelines; in particular those relating to high temperatures and/or a new continuous cough.

Implementing social distancing

It is very difficult to avoid a level of physical interaction with young children and it is important to have their wellbeing at the centre of everything we do. If a child is in need of a hug, then it would not be fair to deny them this.

Staff will still wear PPE when changing nappies, but this is usual practice for Halesfield to protect from cross contamination.

Classrooms and key groups

Children are split into smaller groups and work with their key person throughout the day. This minimises interactions further as children are kept in small consistent key groups. Children will have access to a full range of activities that are considered safe at this time and their learning will not be affected by the pandemic.

Mealtimes

- Children will eat in their classrooms.
- No food will be eaten out of shared platters or containers.
- The children will need to bring in their own, named, drinking cup to keep in nursery. We will take responsibility for cleaning this daily ready for the next use.
- Lunch boxes will be sprayed down and cleaned when they come into nursery.

Health and Safety

Employees

All employees will undergo training on the Safe Operating Procedures, with emphasis on good hygiene practices and maintaining social distancing. Staff will also have to read and sign the most recent risk assessment and become familiar with the procedures the nursery is implementing.

Wellbeing

We know that this is a very unusual and worrying time for everyone. It is very important that at the forefront of this heightened awareness of safe operating procedures, we do not forget that care and consideration must be taken of the need to ensure that everyone within the nursery community feels safe and secure. We will try our best to create a normal nursery environment and hope that you will bear with us.

We will concentrate on building secure attachments and we will continue observing and assessing the children. We may struggle to carry out lengthy face to face handovers as we want our team to spend time with the children, playing and building their relationships. We will of course speak with you immediately if we have any concerns about your child.

If you have any concerns that you wish to raise, then please either email the nursery and discuss with the manager or ring to speak to your child's key worker.

Settling in sessions/transitions

Parents may enter the nursery for the purpose of settling-in sessions. Where possible settling in sessions will be conducted outside to reduce the risk of cross infection.

We will aim to organise groups of children who are due to transition into a new classroom, so they can transition together. However, some children who were due to transition might need the reassurance of the family group they were part of in order to feel safe and secure and parents might prefer them to stay within a particular age group. If you have any questions or concerns in regards to your child moving rooms then please speak with the nursery manager or deputy- they will be able to help with this.

Visitors

Visitors are allowed into nursery but at the discretion of the manager and nursery deputy.

Sometimes it may still be necessary to hold meetings via video conference using the Microsoft Teams or Zoom App or take place outside. This will be the case if nursery has cases of COVID or we feel that local levels are particularly high so the risk of the virus spreading is also high.

Visitors to the setting will be required to sign in and wear a visitors pass.

Nursery show-rounds

Prospective parents should make use of the nursery website and our Facebook page for information relating to the ethos and organisation of the nursery. There are videos and photos showing the nursery and also the activities that take place. However, we have started to partake in viewings again as feel this is the best way for prospective parents to get a feel for our setting.

Contractors

Any contractors to the nursery will be reminded of our policies and procedures prior to entering the building. Where possible any necessary works will be carried out at the weekend to minimise contact with the children and staff.

Hygiene and safety

Reducing the spread of the virus

It is recognised that good hygiene and cleaning practices will significantly reduce the spread and transmission of the virus as well as everyone being alert to the symptoms. Doors and windows will be opened as much as possible and children will spend a lot of time outdoors in the fresh air.

Cleaning

An enhanced cleaning schedule has been implemented throughout the nursery which is effective during the day and at the end of the day. Communal areas, door handles and shared facilities are regularly cleaned. The nursery manager and deputy will be responsible for recording these cleaning schedules.

The rate of hand washing is still significantly increased. Everyone, including children, must wash their hands on arrival at nursery. If no wash basins are available, then sanitiser will be available. There will be regular opportunities for hand washing throughout the day.

Use of Tissues

The children will be supported in age-appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves and others safe and this includes sneezing into a tissue (or their arm if immediate) and then to dispose of the tissue. Staff will familiarise children with the “Catch it, bin it, kill it” mantra by showing and repeating when necessary.

Toileting

The children will be taken to the toilets and supervised. Practitioners will talk to the children about why we are washing our hands and ensure it has taken place effectively. Children will be encouraged to sing through the “Happy Birthday” song twice to ensure they have washed for long enough.

Risk assessments

All risk assessments will reflect the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Certain activities will be adapted or removed to reflect this risk if necessary.

Items from home

If your child requires a comforter e.g. soft toy or blanket, please bring it in a bag and then take home at the end of the day. We would prefer no toys or comforters to be brought into nursery but do understand that this could cause distress.

Resources at Nursery

Toys and resources are cleaned and sanitised frequently to avoid any cross contamination. Cushions and soft toys are washed frequently.

Responding to a person displaying symptoms of COVID-19

A child

If a child is displaying coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the nursery, they should be collected as soon as possible. It is advised that children remain at home until they feel well enough and are completely symptom free.

If the child becomes very unwell, we will follow our normal emergency procedures and call 999.

A member of staff displays symptoms

In the event of an employee developing coronavirus symptoms whilst at nursery, they will leave work as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance. They can return within 5 days or when they are well enough to do so.

PPE Equipment

Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in nurseries to protect against COVID-19 transmission. Hand washing, effective cleaning and social distancing are the most effective measures. As per normal, gloves and aprons will be used for nappy changing and when administering first aid. Wipeable, aprons will be worn at mealtimes when staff are preparing and serving food.

Nursery Fee's

If your child is isolating

If your child is unwell and has been told to remain at home, then the nursery is unable to waiver the cost of the childcare you will be missing. This is because we still remain open and are still providing a service to other parents and will need to meet our overheads.

Partial or full closure of nursery

We may have to partially close or fully close the nursery at short notice if we have several staff off with illness and are unable to staff safely.

If two or more of the staff need to remain home or are taken ill at one time then we may need to temporarily closedown some of the setting, if appropriate staff cover cannot be found.

Prioritising children

If the nursery does not have sufficient staffing, then we may need to prioritise which children can attend nursery. This may also be the case if the government force another lock down. Priority will be given to:

- vulnerable children and children of critical workers
- then 3- and 4-year-olds, in particular those who will be transitioning to reception in September 2022
- followed by younger age groups

We hope this does not become the case and we need to prioritise, but if sessions are missed because the nursery was unable accommodate a child then parents will not be charged for any missed sessions and their place will still remain available at the nursery for when they are able to return.

A lock down may mean that some of the nursery staff are unable to work due to isolation, this may affect our capacity to staff the nursery fully and safely. If this is the case, then we may have to reduce the nursery day from 7.30am to 6pm back to 8am till 4pm. In this eventuality, should this be the case, we will of course give as much notice as we can so you can make adjustments to work patterns if necessary.

Questions and complaints

We appreciate these are worrying times and we are doing all we can to keep everyone in nursery safe and keep things normal but appreciate that sometimes things do go wrong so please if you any questions or complaints regarding our covid procedures, then queries should be either emailed to the nursery manager at halesfield@telfordnurseries.org or rung through on 01952 583848.

Further guidance

Further guidance can be found on the government website at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>