

Tynemouth Nursery Group - Safe Operating Procedures

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Introduction

In these exceptional circumstances we must all comply with the latest Government Guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19).

These Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) are based on Public Health England ¹ and DFE ² guidance for nursery schools and their key workers. Detailed guidance or evidence supporting a procedure can be found in the accompanying footnotes. This SOP also supports our more detailed Epidemic and Pandemic policy.

Nurseries play an essential role in society and we must make adaptations to the way we work to keep our children, parents and staff safe during this time. The fundamental principle of this guidance is to ensure distancing between identified key groups and to implement enhanced hygiene practices. The design of our nurseries means we already operate in relatively small groups in large rooms which gives the staff plenty of opportunity to encourage the children to spread out and play.

COVID-19 appears to affect young children less often and with less severity ³. The role of children in transmission is unclear, but it seems likely they do not play a significant role ⁴

Attendance

Children and staff members who are not displaying coronavirus symptoms ⁵ are welcome to attend the nursery. Anyone who has experienced coronavirus symptoms must have completed the required isolation period ⁶ and be symptom free, not be living with someone who is displaying the symptoms or achieve a negative test result before returning to the nursery. If a member of a household is unwell or isolating, all members of the household must isolate for the required period ⁷. Staff members and parents are strongly advised to use the Government's Coronavirus Track and Trace to help protect our community when available. Children and staff members who were shielding ([clinically extremely vulnerable](#)) can now return to nursery. Those staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable, shielding has been paused from the 1st August, unless a local lockdown is enforced and shielding guidance changes. Clinically vulnerable should follow their medical advice.

Drop off and collection of children, staff entering nursery, thermal temperature checking

To minimise traffic in the nursery, parents are asked to drop off and collect their children at the main entrance and not to enter the nursery unless necessary. Parents waiting to drop off and collect are asked to maintain social distancing by standing at least 2 metres apart at all times. At point of entry a member of staff, who will be wearing PPE, will take a non-contact thermal temperature to ensure every child entering the nursery does not have a high temperature. Children will not be admitted if they have a high temperature. All staff entering nursery will also be checked for high temperature and will not be admitted if their temperature is high.

An identified staff member will be responsible for arranging handovers with parents. This may not be the usual Key Person for a child. To minimise physical interaction, only key information will be shared on handover. The staff member and parents should maintain physical distancing as much as practically possible.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

⁴ <https://dontforgetthebubbles.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-data-top-10.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

⁶ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/what-to-do-if-you-or-someone-you-live-with-has-coronavirus-symptoms/>

⁷ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-long-to-self-isolate/>

Travel to nursery

Wherever possible staff members and families should travel to the nursery alone, using their own transport or by foot or bicycle. If you travel by public transport, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed. Face coverings and gloves will be supplied to staff who use public transport.

Implementing social distancing

Physical interaction within nurseries is unavoidable. From the 20th July, early years settings are no longer required to keep children in small, consistent groups within settings but can return to normal group sizes⁸.

Homebase Rooms & Key Groups

Nursery will still consider how we can minimise mixing within the setting for example, where we use different rooms for different age groups, keeping those groups apart as much as possible. Wherever possible children and staff should remain within their home base room groups. Merging rooms during the day should be avoided. Staff members covering across different rooms should be avoided wherever possible.

Communal spaces & outdoor classrooms

Meals and snacks should be served in home base rooms. Children should only access communal spaces such as gardens and in their home base room groups unless an appropriate distance can be maintained between groups. Changing facilities are mostly in home base rooms. In the case where the toileting area is communal the home base groups should access these separately and more regular cleaning implemented.

Staff breaks

Social distancing guidelines will be maintained where possible in staff rooms. Lunch breaks should be divided into smaller breaks throughout the day to minimise the number of staff in the room at one time.

Cross Site Working

Cross site working should be avoided as much as possible. Relief staff members should work at their 'home nursery' and not work across multiple sites on the same day unless specifically requested to.

We will ensure, wherever possible, we have the right balance of experienced staff. Where we may encounter staffing shortages where teams are self-isolating, we will look to our other nurseries before using external recruitment.

Hygiene & Safety

Good hygiene and cleaning practices significantly reduce the spread and transmission of the coronavirus. Enhanced hygiene and cleaning practices must be implemented, rigorously followed, and validated.

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

Cleaning

An enhanced cleaning schedule must be implemented. Communal areas, toilets, touch points, shared resources and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly. A senior person must be responsible for validating and recording cleaning schedules.

Hand washing

The rate of handwashing must be significantly increased⁹. All staff must wash their hands with soap and water upon their arrival to the nursery and children should be encouraged to do the same. Adequate supplies of soap and paper towels are provided at identified handwash stations. Hand sanitiser should only be used in areas where hand washing facilities with soap, water and paper towels cannot be provided. Hand sanitiser is not required after hand washing with soap and water. A hand sanitizer station will be provided for visitors to use.

Uniform

Extra uniforms will be provided to ensure a clean uniform can be worn daily. Uniforms/personal clothing worn at nursery should be washed after each use, and can be washed at nursery. Washing uniforms with detergent in a normal wash is effective at reducing the risk of transmission. If a staff member has come into contact with a person presenting coronavirus symptoms, the uniform should be washed at a higher temperature for longer¹⁰.

Nursery Laundry

Nursery laundry should be washed at the highest temperature the manufacturing label identifies it can take.

Risk Assessment

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 should be added to all new nursery risk assessments until these restrictions are lifted. If a planned activity or action could increase the risk of transmission, the activity should be avoided. If in doubt, the assessor should seek advice from the Area Manager.

Resources

Play equipment in communal areas (e.g. outdoor classrooms) should be sanitised between groups. Soft furnishings and resources with intricate parts that are difficult to clean should be removed from home base rooms. Sand and water play will be restricted i.e. will be disposed of after each activity and not be shared between groups during the pandemic.

Items brought from home

Families should be discouraged from bringing items from home into the nursery. Comforters are permissible if not having them would cause a child distress.

⁹ <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

¹⁰ <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/infections/can-clothes-and-towels-spread-germs/>

Visitors and meetings

Attendance in the nursery should be restricted to children and staff as far as practically possible. All meetings and interactions should continue but by using MS Teams or other web meeting tools, rather than inviting visitors into the nursery.

Settling in sessions

Parents may enter the nursery for the purpose of settling in sessions if by not doing so would cause a child distress. Any meetings must adhere to social distancing. Parents should minimise their movement around the nursery and only enter the room their child will be attending. Parents should minimise their interaction with other children and staff members and adhere to the nursery hygiene policy.

Visitors

During these measures, visitors should not be invited to visit the nursery. Interactions with support workers and other agencies should only be conducted on-line via Microsoft Teams etc. Any 'Stay & Play', and extra-curriculum activities will be postponed until restrictions are lifted. All visitors are asked to wear a face covering before entering the setting and must keep it on until you leave unless there is a reasonable excuse for removing it.

Nursery views and tours

Prospective parent viewings and tours will try to be accommodated where practicable, out of hours or in empty spaces; or conducted via a 'Virtual Tour'. All visitors are asked to wear a face covering before entering the setting and must keep it on until you leave unless there is a reasonable excuse for removing it.

Meetings

Physical staff meeting may resume in the nursery following current social distancing guidelines. 1-2-1 meetings can be held where social distancing rules can be observed in full.

Interviews

If and when we need to recruit new employees or use supply or agency, we will adhere to all necessary safety precautions and current social distancing guidelines.

Responding to a child or adult displaying symptoms of COVID-19

In the event of a child developing suspected coronavirus symptoms ¹¹ whilst attending the nursery, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance.

Whilst waiting for a parent/carer to collect the child, the child should be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation. The staff member most closely associated with their care should care for them on a 1:1 basis. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available for the team member if they feel it is appropriate.

If the child becomes very unwell, it may be necessary to call 111 or 999. Normal procedures on child illness must be observed. Targeted and enhanced cleaning should then take place in the areas of the nursery the child had accessed ¹².

¹¹ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

A team member displaying symptoms

In the event of a staff member developing coronavirus symptoms whilst attending nursery, they should leave the nursery as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance. If they are unable to travel alone, they should wait in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation.

Targeted and enhanced cleaning should then take place in the areas of the nursery the team member had accessed.

PPE Equipment

Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in nurseries to protect against COVID19 transmission¹³. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are the most effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Gloves and aprons should continue to be worn as normal for nappy changing and the administration of first aid. Appropriate PPE should however be made available in a small number of cases to operate safely.

A PPE box will be made available if a staff member decides they want to wear a mask, or where they are required to care for a child displaying coronavirus symptoms or when deep cleaning after any person has displayed coronavirus symptoms.

PPE Box Contents:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Face Masks | 4. Tissues |
| 2. Disposable gloves | 5. Hand sanitizer |
| 3. Disposable aprons | 6. Goggles |

Whilst we acknowledge and respect recent DfE guidelines, on this occasion TNG have procured and will make available to its teams additional PPE to include face masks and touchless thermometers, over and above the regular gloves and aprons on site. There are two types of mask: -

IIR Surgical



Optional for staff to use at their own discretion

FFP2/N95 (unvalved)



Mandatory for use in isolation rooms/spaces where employees are dealing with a suspected Covid-19 case.

PPE should be disposed of safely after use and the equipment replenished.

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#essential-workers>

Reporting, testing & tracing

From 1st June all staff members, children, parents, and members of their households are eligible for a COVID-19 test¹⁴, should they display coronavirus symptoms.

We are signed up to the Government Employer Referral Portal for Essential Workers which ensures if our staff need a test, they can have one.¹⁵ Any suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus must be reported to the Nursery Manager as soon as possible.

Responding to a child or adult testing positive for COVID 19

If a positive result is confirmed we will notify the Local Health Protection Team (HPT) immediately. HPT will work with us to carry out a rapid risk assessment and identify appropriate next steps¹⁷.

Positive tests will be reported to Public Health England and Ofsted by the nursery manager. It may be necessary to make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) if a team member is diagnosed with coronavirus and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work¹⁸

¹⁵<https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test>

¹⁷https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/916863/Symptomatic_children_action_list_EAR_LY_YEARS_FINAL.pdf

¹⁸<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-coronavirus.htm>



Advice for parents during coronavirus

Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself.

Whilst it is extremely important to follow Government advice to stay at home during this period, it can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell or injured. Remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still providing the same safe care that they have always done. Here is some advice to help:



RED

If your child has any of the following:

- Becomes pale, mottled and feels abnormally cold to the touch
- Has pauses in their breathing (apnoeas), has an irregular breathing pattern or starts **grunting**
- Severe difficulty in breathing becoming agitated or unresponsive
- Is going blue round the lips
- Has a fit/seizure
- Becomes extremely distressed (crying inconsolably despite distraction), confused, very lethargic (difficult to wake) or unresponsive
- Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass test')
- Has testicular pain, especially in teenage boys

You need urgent help:

Go to the nearest A&E department
or phone 999



AMBER

If your child has any of the following:

- Is finding it hard to breathe including drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs (**recession**) or **head bobbing**
- Seems dehydrated (dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, drowsy or passing less urine than usual)
- Is becoming drowsy (excessively sleepy) or irritable (unable to settle them with toys, TV, food or picking up) - especially if they remain drowsy or irritable despite their fever coming down
- Has extreme shivering or complains of muscle pain
- Babies under 3 months of age with a temperature above 38°C / 100.4°F
- Infants 3-6 months of age with a temperature above 39°C / 102.2°F
- For all infants and children with a fever above 38°C for more than 5 days.
- Is getting worse or if you are worried
- Has persistent vomiting and/or persistent severe abdominal pain
- Has blood in their poo or wee
- Any limb injury causing reduced movement, persistent pain or head injury causing persistent crying or drowsiness

You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.


Please ring your GP surgery or call
NHS 111 - dial 111

The NHS is working for you. However, we recognise during the current coronavirus crisis at peak times, access to a health care professional may be delayed. If symptoms persist for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a GP or 111, then take your child to the nearest A&E



GREEN

If none of the above features are present

- You can continue to provide your child care at home. Information is also available on NHS Choices
- Additional **advice** is available to families for coping with crying of well babies 
- Additional **advice** is available for children with complex health needs and disabilities.

Self care

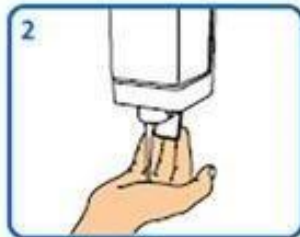
Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, call NHS 111 - dial 111



Hand-washing technique with soap and water



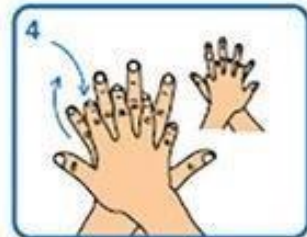
1 Wet hands with water



2 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces



3 Rub hands palm to palm



4 Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand with fingers interlaced



5 Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced



6 Rub with back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



7 Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand using a rotational movement



8 Rub tips of fingers in opposite palm in a circular motion



9 Rub each wrist with opposite hand



10 Rinse hands with water



11 Use elbow to turn off tap



12 Dry thoroughly with a single-use towel



13 Hand washing should take 15-30 seconds

