

# **Coronavirus (Covid-19) Policy and Procedure**

*Please note this policy is subject to change frequently due to the Coronavirus situation, therefore the latest update can be found at the end of the policy.*

**(\*\* For Areas marked with a double asterix, please see final section entitled 'Step 4 has commenced')**

## **Statement of Intent:**

To prevent the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) within our setting.

## **Aim:**

To protect all employees, parents\*, children and visitors from coming into contact with Covid-19 within our setting. (\*the term parents throughout this policy relates to parents and carers)

## **Method:**

To ensure we (The Management) follow current UK Government guidelines throughout this pandemic.

Guidance: *Actions for early years and childcare providers during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak*

## **\*\* Showing symptoms or testing positive:**

Parents must keep children showing symptoms at home, and all other household members must isolate, either until a negative test result is received or for a period of 10 days\*

Should your child develop symptoms please inform the preschool immediately via text or email.

In the event of another household member showing symptoms or testing positive, the child must remain at home for 10 days\* unless a negative result is obtained.

\*Unless alternative Government guidance for household isolation states otherwise

Any children returning to preschool within 10 days\* of showing symptoms will only be permitted to do so if evidence of a negative test for that child can be shown as proof. We appreciate that due to GDPR a parent is entitled to refuse to show proof of a negative test, however if this were the case then we would ask the child to refrain from attending for a period of 10 days from the onset of symptoms or in the event of a child testing positive without symptoms the 10 day non-attendance period will run from the date the test was carried out.

All children returning, either within or following, an isolation period will only be admitted if they are completely symptom free and appear to be 100% fit and healthy.

Anyone showing Covid-19 symptoms in setting will be sent home immediately and advised to follow the current government guidelines as outlined above.

In the event of a child or staff member testing positive we will follow the UK Government guidelines and use the flowchart 'Guidance for Childcare and Educational Settings in the Management of Covid-19' as our information guide alongside any further advice given from PHE (Public Health England).

Please note: Our usual policy is to have three members of staff in attendance at all times, however this may be reduced to two members of staff on occasions if this is unavoidable. In this situation ratios would still be strictly adhered to and no compromises would be made.

### **Test and Trace:**

As part of our commitment to the test and trace procedure, a record will be kept of who drops off and collects the child each day and names and phone numbers of any visitors to the setting will be obtained and shared with anyone with a legitimate interest for this information.

Ideally we would request that the same parent/carer drops off and collects the child each time the child attends however we do appreciate that this is not always possible, therefore we ask that the alternative minimum number of adults escort each child to and from preschool.

In line with The Collection of Contact Details regulations amended 29 March 2021, we understand our obligations to:

- Display an official NHS QR code poster – this is displayed by our landlord Waypoint Church
- Request that all customers and visitors scan the NHS QR code or provide their contact details – we hold contact details for all our parents and request contact details from visitors on arrival
- Keep a record of all staff including shift times – all staff dates and times of attendance are recorded in our daily register and our staff signing in book
- Provide an alternative method to collect contact details which doesn't require ownership of a smartphone – for visitors we provide a visitor's signing in book and we keep a record of who drops off and collects each child every day
- Keep information securely for 21 days before destroying it, and provide it to NHS Test and Trace if requested – all records are kept in accordance with our Data retention regulations and these exceed the 21 days requested

### **Covid-19 Agreement:**

All staff, committee, parents, carers and visitors must sign a covid-19 agreement stating that they have no symptoms and have not knowingly been in close contact with anyone showing symptoms.

**\*\* Entry and Exit:**

On arrival parents/carers are asked to ring our doorbell to announce their arrival and while maintaining social distance from other parents come around to the back garden gate, we ask that only one parent/carer drops off/picks up, ideally this is the same person each time, however we appreciate this may not be possible for our working parents.

We request that anyone dropping off or collecting a child wears a face covering. Any other adult or children over the age of 11 years, accompanying an adult at this time must wait by the bike racks and not approach the gate.

On arrival at the gate, all adults and children must sanitize their hands at the station provided.

A member of staff will open the gate to allow children through. No adults are permitted to enter the garden, unless prior permission to do so has been granted by a manager, and the gate must not be opened by anyone other than preschool staff. Children need to carry their own possessions.

Once a child is in the garden, their parent/carer must leave while still social distancing from other parents.

A similar system will operate when children are collected. A staff member will bring each child out to their parent.

A daily record will be kept of who drops off and collects each child.

Please note: NO TOYS from home will be allowed in setting, the only items permitted are a dummy or a comfort item.

Staff will keep a 2 metre distance from parents/carers at all times, only coming closer than this at parental request if their help is needed to assist with a child that is having difficulties separating from their adult.

In the event of paperwork needing to be completed, a table or clipboard will be provided and we request that adults ideally provide their own pen. However a pen and antibacterial wipes will be provided and should you use our pen please ensure you wipe it thoroughly after use and place the wipe in the bin provided.

Please note: We are only able to accept payment of fees by BACs bank transfer for the foreseeable future, no cash can be taken in setting. Uniform orders will also need to be paid for by BACs transfer, we apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Our bank details can be found on an invoice or please ask a staff member for details.

**\*\* Health and Hygiene:**

All staff are asked to follow the measures set out in the 'system of controls' section of the latest government guidance.

All adults and children must use the hand sanitizer provided on arrival at the preschool gate. Children will not be permitted to enter the garden unless they have done so. We also strongly advise that parents wash their hands and their child's hands thoroughly for a minimum of 20 seconds, before leaving home.

Sanitizer must be available at all times in the preschool room for children and staff to use regularly throughout the day and hand washing of at least 20 seconds must take place at regular intervals, with staff giving extra help to those children who need it.

When coughing or sneezing children are encouraged to use their elbow or to use a tissue and follow the good respiratory advice of 'catch it, bin it, kill it'.

All children and staff are expected to arrive in a fresh set of clothing each day.

Staff must wear a protective face shield or mask when dealing directly with parents, carers or visitors, however face coverings will only be worn by staff within the setting when dealing with an unwell child. A staff member may wear a face covering, in addition to an apron and gloves, when dealing with a child's intimate care if they wish to do so.

In the event of a child becoming unwell in setting, the staff member staying with them must be in full PPE including an apron, gloves, a mask and a face shield. The child must be kept away from others, preferably in a separate well ventilated area or room, until collected. The room must then be thoroughly cleaned in accordance with UK Government guidelines.

#### **Toilets:**

Staff are only permitted to use the disabled toilet situated in the foyer and must not access any other toilets in the building.

No general toileting facilities are available to parents/carers or visitors but they may access the disabled toilet only, in the case of an absolute emergency.

#### **Cleaning:**

The building is cleaned weekly by a professional cleaning company, however due to the pandemic all cleaning regimes within the building have been intensified. Staff will continually clean throughout the day as part of their routine paying particular attention to high touch areas such as door handles and taps. These will be disinfected regularly.

There will be an intense cleaning schedule of toys daily and any toys that cannot be washed will be rotated in order to allow time for the virus to evaporate from the materials.

A declutter of toys and resources will take place to aid the cleaning process and to eliminate the risk of infection.

**\*\* Snack and Lunch:**

Children will be spaced apart and sat side by side at these times of the day and only two children will access snack at any given time.

Staff are to wear an apron (and gloves and mask if they wish) when preparing and serving snack and to use tongs when handling the fruits.

Parents are asked to provide food items in a way that the children can access themselves, for example unwrapped and in a plastic pot as opposed to in a packet that the child cannot open.

In the event of children needing assistance with their packed lunches, staff must use hand sanitiser between dealing with each individual child and should avoid touching the food when removing wrappers where possible.

**\*\* Social Distancing:**

As recognised by the Government in their guidance for Early Years, young children are not capable of understanding the need for social distancing however measures will be put in place to minimise contact and to eliminate risk where we can.

Staff will adhere to socially distancing guidelines with other adults within the setting, especially in common areas such as the kitchen and toileting area.

Children will be spaced apart when sitting at tables, sitting next to each other rather than face to face.

Children will be spaced 2 metres apart where possible when singing, dancing etc and the room will be well ventilated during activities such as these.

The room will be well ventilated with windows and doors open and our outdoor space will be used to a maximum when possible.

Our preschool room is not currently being used by any other groups outside of our operating hours and no student placements will be permitted for the foreseeable future.

No visitors are to be permitted to enter the preschool room during our opening hours.

Any prospective parents wishing to have a tour of the premises are encouraged to access the virtual tour on our website. However any prospective parent expressing a preference to view the setting in person can do so if necessary but only after 3pm. Only one adult and child will be allowed to enter and the adult must wear a mask. Neither the adult or the child will be permitted to touch anything, however a staff member may provide a specific toy for the child to play with. If this is the case, the toy must be thoroughly cleaned once the visiting child has left.

If a visiting parent has no option but to bring a child's sibling/s when visiting, only siblings over the age of 11 years will be permitted to enter the garden but will be unable to touch

anything. Siblings over the age of 11 years will be asked to wait outside the gates by the bike racks.

Visits must be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes in length.

### **Travel:**

Anyone planning to travel outside of England must inform us of their intention to travel prior to travelling and inform us of their expected arrival date back into England. We will then follow the UK Government guidelines with regard to quarantine for staff or children returning from certain foreign countries and will inform you of the date you can return to setting.

### **Meetings:**

In relation to staff and committee meetings, UK Government guidelines regarding gatherings will be followed and meetings will take place virtually until further notice.

### **Communication:**

We appreciate these are very unsettling times for us all and therefore feel it is essential that social distancing has no impact on our communication with parents and carers. Our member of staff who greets parents daily will deal with any concerns or questions they may have and can pass on any messages to their child's keyperson. Parents are also welcome to call us at any time throughout the day if they wish to check in on their child's wellbeing or wish to speak to a member of staff or their keyperson about any other matter.

Parents will still continue to receive regular updates regarding their child's progress and development.

### **Mental Well-Being:**

As already mentioned we appreciate these are very trying times for us all, therefore we aim to keep in contact with those who are self-isolating and are available to provide help and guidance for anyone who needs it. We monitor the well-being of our staff through regular supervision sessions.

### **General Well-being:**

We appreciate the cough and cold season is on the way and under normal circumstances a child or staff member with a tickly cough or a runny nose would be permitted to attend providing they seemed well in themselves and had no signs of a high temperature. However during this pandemic we cannot afford to take any chances, therefore we politely request that children and staff do not attend preschool unless they appear to be 100% fit and well.

Any child or staff member showing symptoms of being unwell, even if the symptoms are not Covid-19 related, will be sent home.

We apologise in advance for any inconvenience this may cause, but please respect we are currently operating during very uncertain times and protecting our children, our staff and their respective families is our utmost priority.

**In the event of a National Lockdown:**

The staff and committee of Little Sunbeams Preschool are fully supportive of complying with Government advice. As prevention is always better than cure, we request parents and carers to seriously consider the need for their children to attend preschool during a National Lockdown whilst schools are open to keyworker and vulnerable children only.

However if you wish for your child to attend, or return to preschool after staying home for a period of time, please note the following information:

- We require 7 days notice before a child can return
- Our current opening hours are determined according to the actual childcare needs of our keyworker parents, therefore children with a non-working parent will be allocated days and times of attendance determined by us.
- We endeavour to provide full funded hours to any child attending that qualifies for universal or extended funding, however this may not always be possible in the event of staff shortages or staff isolation.
- The places of children attending during a National Lockdown will be prioritised in the following order:
  - Vulnerable children
  - Children of keyworker parents
  - 3-4 year olds, in particular those who will be transitioning to reception
  - Younger age groups

Clarification of keyworker: For a child to be deemed as a 'keyworker' child within our setting, both parents/carers (or one parent/carer in the case of a single adult household) must be actually attending work or working from home.

A keyworker child attending outside of their parent's actual working hours will be deemed a child of a non-working parent for those specific hours of attendance, therefore the day and times of those attendance hours will need to be flexible and determined by us.

Visitors will only be permitted where absolutely essential.

New starters will be postponed from starting unless they are classed as a vulnerable child or they are the child of a keyworker and no other form of childcare is available.

**Pathway out of National Lockdown – March 2021:**

Following the Government's announcement regarding the pathway out of Lockdown beginning 08/03/21, we have made the following changes to our procedures:

Children are permitted to attend two settings

We will allow a student placement if required, providing the student in question is actually working towards a relevant childcare qualification.

Visitors: Essential visits will now be allowed to take place but only when absolutely necessary. Apart from prospective parents, these visitors will be limited to parents of new

children who are settling in, external professionals and representatives of organisations such as Ofsted.

All visitors must wear a face covering, stay a limited period of time, ideally no longer than an hour, remain outside where possible and avoid close contact with all other children and staff. All visitors must sign a covid agreement and be made aware of the system of controls.

#### **\*\* Lateral Flow Testing:**

Staff will be offered the opportunity to use lateral flow testing kits, provided by the Government, twice a week as from 22/03/2021.

Staff will be made aware that all results must be recorded with the NHS Test and Trace and in the event of a positive lateral flow test result, they must book a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test. The member of staff and their household must self-isolate until the PCR test result is obtained and in the event of it confirming a positive result, government guidelines must be followed.

#### **STEP 4 Has Commenced:**

The pathway out of lockdown, known as Step 4 commenced on 19/07/2021 and due to this the following changes have been made within our setting:

- Social distancing is no longer required, however we still encourage our parents to keep a respectful distance from each other when waiting at our gate and within the setting our staff are still very aware of not invading each other's personal space.
- Staff are no longer wearing face shields, unless they choose to do so, and parents are allowed to make their own choice as to whether they choose to wear a face covering or not due to the fact drop off and collection of children takes place outdoors.
- As from September 2021 parents of new starters will be permitted to enter the setting premises if necessary to help their child settle.
- Prospective visits will still be held out of hours but are no longer limited to one adult only per child and siblings can attend if necessary. Wearing a face covering is optional for visitors, however visits will still be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes.
- Children are no longer spaced apart for activities and are now sat around a table face to face for snack, lunch and tabletop activities.
- All staff continue to use lateral flow tests twice weekly during term time and all permanent staff have chosen to be vaccinated.

Changes to the guidelines relating to Test and Trace as from 19/07/2021:

- The close contacts of a positive case will now be identified via Test and Trace and as setting we are no longer expected to undertake contact tracing therefore as from Sept 2021 we are no longer recording who drops off and collects a child each day.
- A positive case within our setting no longer poses a closure threat to the setting and only those individuals contacted by Test and Trace need to isolate (if unvaccinated) or take a PCR test if advised to do so.
- Following a positive lateral flow test only other members of the household, aged 18 years and above, who have not been vaccinated need to isolate until a PCR result is obtained.

From 16 August 2021:

- Children under the age of 18 and double vaccinated adults will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive Covid-19 case. Instead they will be informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. As a setting we will actively encourage these individuals to take a PCR test if they have been advised to do so.

Outbreak Management:

- In the event of an outbreak within our setting we will call the DfE helpline on 08000468687 and select option 1 for advice on the action we should take in response to a positive case. We would also consider bringing back the wearing of face coverings for both staff and parents as a temporary measure.
- In the event of an outbreak in our local area we would review our Covid-19 policy and risk assessment and put in place any additional control measures we felt were necessary.

As a setting we still have the following Control Measures in place despite Step 4 commencing;

- We ensure good hygiene for everyone; Frequent and thorough hand cleaning is now regular practice. We encourage hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, hand sanitiser is available in setting and both children and parents are still encouraged to use the hand sanitiser placed at the gate before entering the setting. With regard to respiratory hygiene, the 'catch it, kill it, bin it' approach is actively encouraged within our setting.
- We maintain an appropriate cleaning regime, regularly sanitising equipment and resources and using products such as detergents.
- We keep occupied spaces well ventilated ensuring windows and doors are open at all times.
- We follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of Covid-19.

**Update following the Government's announcement on 08/12/2021 that the country has now been forced to put Plan B of The Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 into action as from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021:**

- Face coverings must now be worn in communal places therefore staff must wear them when moving around inside the church outside of our room and visitors will be requested to wear them in setting.
- Visitors are still permitted to visit during opening hours and parents are currently welcome in setting, however this is subject to change. All adults entering the setting will be asked to take a lateral flow test before doing so.
- All control measures remain in place and ventilation of the room is now being monitored by a CO2 monitor that the local authority has supplied us with.
- Twice weekly lateral flow testing by all staff remains in place.
- Staff, parents and visitors are requested to sign a covid agreement.
- PPE must be worn, if a child displays symptoms, by the adult dealing with the child.
- All positive cases of Covid 19 are reported to Ofsted inline with current requirements and if the setting had to close this too would be reported.

- Children who are absent due to Covid are encouraged to access home learning websites, details of these are available on request.

Following the outbreak of the latest Covid 19 variant; Omicron, our outbreak management plan would remain the same and in the event of staff shortages, closure of the setting would be a very last resort. However should we be faced with a staff shortage, our priorities of children able to attend would be as listed under ‘In the event of a National Lockdown’. (Please note a two year funded child would fall into the category of a vulnerable child). We will aim to give parents and carers as much notice as possible should their child be unable to attend, however we cannot guarantee this will always be possible and we apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused.

### **Living with Covid-19 Plan:**

Following the Government’s Living with Covid-19 Plan on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 we have amended the following procedures:

- Face coverings are no longer required, however if visitors wish to wear them by choice, they are welcome to do so.
- Staff are no longer required to undertake twice weekly asymptomatic testing.
- Adults visiting the setting will no longer be asked to take a lateral flow test prior to doing so.
- Confirmed cases of Covid no longer need to be reported to Ofsted.
- Self isolation is still recommended as a guidance for anyone testing positive but is no longer a legal duty.

All other procedures listed above under Plan B of the Autumn and Winter plan 2021 remain in place.

**This policy will be reviewed monthly and is subject to change according to the current UK Government guidelines.**

**IMPORTANT: This policy overrides all other policies and procedures in place at Little Sunbeams Preschool.**

Version	Changes Made	Author	Date
1.0	Policy implemented	Lyn	29th July 2020
1.0	Reviewed, no changes made	Lyn	26 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
1.1	Entry and Exit: paragraph added regarding face coverings and additional persons waiting away from the gate Social Distancing: reference to visiting adults bringing siblings when coming to view the setting	Lyn	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020

1.2	Social Distancing: No visitors due to lockdown	Lyn	5 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2020
1.3	Changes made due to DfE Actions document being updated re moving from lockdown to tier 2. Changes: Outside visits reinstated, Singing inside permitted and the term 'System of Controls' being introduced	Lyn	3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec 2020
1.4	Footnote added below Signs and Symptoms regarding number of staff in attendance	Lyn	14 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2020
1.5	Government guidance re isolation days changed from 14 to 10 Paragraph added re Lockdown Jan 2021	Lyn	11 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2021
1.6	Amendments made to paragraph re In the event of a National Lockdown	Lyn	2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 2021
1.7	Paragraphs added relating to the Pathway out of Lockdown March 2021 and Lateral Flow Testing for staff	Lyn	17 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
1.8	Additional text added under Test and Trace to reflect The Collection of Contact Details Regulations	Lyn	4 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
1.9	Section added entitled Step 4 Has Commenced	Lyn	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2021
2.0	Added reference to the fact we no longer record who drops off/collects a child each day	Lyn	13 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
2.1	Update added following Government announcement re: Plan B of the Autumn and Winter Plan 2021	Lyn	13 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2021
2.1	Reviewed, no changes made	Lyn	17 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2022
2.2	Update added following Government announcement re: Living with Covid-19 Plan 2022	Lyn	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2022

