



Extraordinary policy - Safeguarding children, staff and Parents during COVID 19 and any other pandemic

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents, the community and staff to ensure the rights and safety of children, staff and parents, are protected during any such outbreak. We will closely follow Government, Early Years Alliance and Somerset County Council's Early years team's advice regarding closure, reopening and operating.

Procedures

We will remain operational if safe to do so. If appropriate the setting may remain open to Key worker children or vulnerable children only, or if closed will signpost key worker children to another setting

Key worker children are parents who work in these areas:

Critical workers

Health and social care

Education and childcare

Key public services

Local and national government

Food and other necessary goods

Public safety and national security

Utilities

Transport

This is not an exhaustive list and cases will be reviewed at the time

Generally, the advice would be even if you are a key worker, if your children can stay home then please keep children at home

Vulnerable children are included in

Child in need plan

Child protection plan

Looked after child

Have an education, health and care plan (EHC)

Children receiving social care

Children in temporary accommodation

And any other reason deemed to be that a child is vulnerable

If the setting is closed parents will be kept informed of changes via email, tapestry and the preschools Facebook page

Closing the setting

If the setting is to close, it will be thoroughly deep cleaned, sorted and tidied.

Weekly checks will be made by the council flushing water, checking the fire alarms and utilities. The council will also continue with routine Legionnaire's checks.

An answerphone message will be left informing callers of closure and informing people of how to get in touch.

Staying in touch with parents

This will be done primarily by Facebook and Tapestry for support, activities and challenges during any kind of lockdown.

Parents can contact staff through tapestry and email stoweybearspreschool@outlook.com and any official updates will be done by the manager via email or telephone.

Staff

Staff will either remain contactable and working or be furloughed. Once furloughed they will not be able to undertake any work for the preschool, however online training through Educare or any other means may be undertaken by furloughed staff and staff will be expected to carry out some training while being furloughed to continue with their CPD.

Staff can be recalled from furlough at any point and at the committee's discretion. If a member of staff is requested to return to work, they should agree to this unless there is a medical reason why they cannot. Staffs wellbeing and mental health will be taken into consideration at all points.

If staff cannot return to work, for any other reason than a medical reason for example caring for a dependant, they must discuss with the committee/manager and will be required to take the leave unpaid. Staff will be expected to return when asked to do so and any unauthorised absence following this may result in disciplinary action.

Staff are expected to adhere to all government social distancing rules that are in place.

Reopening preschool

If the setting is to reopen using the current government guidelines and advice there will be many things to consider

- If the preschool will be financially viable to open
- If facilities and staffing allow for the safe reopening in adherence to guidelines
- How the building will be utilised and secured for distancing
- Recalling staff from furlough, staff will be asked to return and talk about any worries that they may have
- Canvassing parents to gauge the uptake
- Agree a cap on numbers and staff for sessions if appropriate

- Offer sessions to children, maybe in a 'bubble' so children only attend with the same children for the interim

Children Wellbeing and Education

Only children who are symptom free and or have completed the required isolation period / have a negative test result will be allowed to attend the setting. We reserve the right to only accept children who are not using another setting, complying with guidelines for minimising mixing of children and risk of infection transmission. Children may be organised into small groups 'bubbles' and be required to attend certain sessions, we would expect parents to work with us to make this possible as children may be required to attend on certain days. These 'bubbles' will be staffed by the same members of staff where possible, limiting contact. Bubble groups will be in different areas of the setting and use different spaces, toilets and garden wherever possible. We will work with a maximum of 16 children within 2 bubbles of 8, we may limit this further due to age of children. We will work on grouping the bubbles within the cohort year, where possible, siblings however will have to be within the same group. The two groups will have separate entrances and exits, staggered drop off and pick up and we will require parents to observe any social distancing recommendations set by the government, there will be guide markings on the ground for this if appropriate.

We will still plan to cover all areas of the EYFS within the room and gardens, and will put out activities to cover the areas. The resources will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised before use and after or switching between groups.

Our children will be accepted into the preschool on a priority basis, vulnerable, key workers, parents that have to return to work, school starters, all others. We ask that parents work with us to let us know of changes in their circumstances and when their children may need a space.

We will encourage good hygiene routines, and good handwashing, catch it, bin it, kill it regimes. We ask that parents reinforce this at home. We also would like children to be as independent as possible to do toileting routines. Nappies will be changed, and the staff member will use appropriate PPE to do this. Bathrooms, toilets, sinks, taps, door frames and handles will be sanitised regularly throughout the day.

Snack and meal times will be spread out around a table and within a child's bubble. No school lunches will be provided during the period of distancing measures to stop any unnecessary contact between the school and preschool settings, therefore packed lunches should be provided for all children, where possible in disposable packaging / containers to limit the movement of items between the setting and home environment.

Parent Responsibility

Children should be fit and well to attend preschool, only one parent/carer to drop off and collect at any one time, and all parents/carers must be fit and well and not showing any signs of the virus.

If any member of the household has symptoms or is positive then the whole household should self-isolate, as per government guidelines. No child should be brought in until the isolation period has passed and the member of the household receives a negative test result.

If staggered drop off and pick up times are in place, we ask parents adhere to these to assist with minimising contact.

There will be distance markings and drop off points at the setting which you will be required to follow.

If a child will not settle, we will work through each individual case and work out solutions, it may be that a parent waits and settles in the garden with a member of staff.

It is recommended that on return from preschool, clothes are washed and children showered/bathed, we would encourage all parents to adhere to this with their children. We ask that children wear a fresh set of clothing each day to minimise infection risk.

Parents should inform the preschool of any changes in their personal circumstances and preschool will endeavour to accommodate to the best of their ability. All correspondence to parents will be sent via email and tapestry, parents are asked to reply and help us to plan for changes in numbers or anything else that occurs.

Visitors

Attendance in the setting will be restricted to staff and children, as far as practically possible.

Council staff will still do weekly building checks, and will be expected to follow strict hand washing, hygiene and safeguarding routines. Council staff will be asked to attend the setting when closed to children wherever possible. Committee officials, can enter the building if needed for operational purposes, where possible this will be when no children present.

As far as possible parents and carers should not enter the building whilst transmission risks remain significant. Enquiries for new starters will be addressed by telephone and will be sent forms via email together with a video clip of room and practices. Where possible a virtual visit / tour may be undertaken.

Health, Hygiene & Safety

Hand washing

- All children and staff must wash their hands when entering the setting, for at least 20 seconds
- Children and staff must wash their hands frequently, before eating, after using the toilet, after coughing, sneezing, when transferring from indoor to outdoor and visa versa.
- Body fluid spills will be cleaned as normal and cleaning material disposed of as appropriate (a child that is poorly any spillage from them will be cleared up using blue roll tissue – do we need this?)

Cleaning

- An enhanced cleaning schedule must be implemented, that includes furniture, surfaces and children's toys and equipment.
- Communal areas, touch points and handwashing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly and thoroughly every night.
- A deep clean will be carried out on the room, when would this be? Weekly / daily? especially any areas if a child has been unwell

Waste disposal

- All waste will be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner following government guidelines.
- Tissues must be immediately disposed of and placed in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal
- Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal

Laundry

- All items within the setting, dish cloths, tea towels, cleaning cloths, will be put into a lidded bucket containing Milton

- They will be washed at high temperature ~~and left to air dry~~
- No children or staff to share cloths, once used, they will be put into the bucket.
- Staff should wash their clothes as soon as returning from work and shower, if possible, they should change at work and take clothes home in a sealed bag.

Risk Assessment

- The setting and all activities should be risk assessed before opening, and any adaptations should be made to reduce the risk of spreading infection.

Adjustments

- We will temporarily suspend the use of malleable materials (dough, clay, sand) as this cannot be cleaned effectively, unless they are single use.
- We will cut down on the daily available resources to ensure that what is used can be cleaned effectively
- Baking and cooking will not take place, snack will be prepared into individual bowls and given to children.

PPE

- We will adhere to Government guidance regarding general use of PPE in early years settings
- PPE will be worn for nappy changing, cleaning and care of a sick child
- If a child shows symptoms a member of staff will isolate with that child away from the other children, wear full PPE and try to maintain a 2-meter distance until the child is collected.

Building

- The building when closed will be continually monitored by our landlords the council, regularly testing the fire alarms, boilers, and flushing water and testing for legionnaires
- Before the setting opens staff will return and run through all the water system, flush all toilets and complete a thorough building, equipment and garden check to ensure safety.
- During sessions the windows and doors will remain open as much as possible to maintain fresh air circulating around the building

Resources

- Children will not be permitted to bring toys from home.
- All soft furnishings and rugs will temporarily be removed
- Dressing up clothes will temporarily be removed from the setting
- All resources will be thoroughly cleaned and sterilised before and after a session, carpets will be steam cleaned after vacuuming
- Staff will have their own stationery and tablets for assessments, if a tablet is to be shared between staff, it will be wiped over with a sanitising wipe

Supplies

- The preschool should ensure an adequate supply of essential supplies and have several companies that they can order from in times of shortage.
- The preschool will not operate without having the essential supplies required for insuring infection control

- Staff will constantly monitor cleaning supply and PPE stock levels and report to the manager or administrator if levels are getting low.

Responding to a suspected case

- In the event that a child is suspected of developing symptoms of the virus, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home and follow the current government advice
- While waiting for the child to be collected they will be isolated with a member of staff, in a different room within the building.
- The staff member should be from the child's bubble group and should wear PPE.
- The area that the child is kept while waiting should be thoroughly cleaned using bleach, steam and sanitiser, the room should then be left clear for 72 hours, if possible
- If a staff member becomes ill while at work they should go home immediately and follow government guidelines as appropriate regarding testing and isolation
- If a positive case is confirmed within a bubble it may be necessary as determined by government guidance for the entire bubble to isolate. If this is the case, any chargeable fees will be at the committee's discretion and charges during isolation will be avoided where financially feasible for the setting, but may be unavoidable.
- Staff and children will only return to the setting if they are symptom free and have completed the isolation period or got a negative result.

Legislation and leading Authorities which have guided and influenced this policy

Coronavirus Act 2020

Health and safety at work Act (1974)

Health and safety Executive (HSE)

Government Briefings

Public Health England (PHE)

World Health Organisation (WHO)

Early Years Alliance

Somerset Early years Team

Advice from but not limited to The Secretary of State, The Chief Medical Officer, Local Authority (LA),

Department of education (DofE)

This policy also has regard to Ofsted and the Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance

This policy was adopted by

Stowey Bears Preschool

(name of provider)

On

(date)

Date to be reviewed

(date)

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)