

Covid-19: Measures

Effective Infection Protection and Control

There are important actions that children, parents and staff should take during the covid-19 outbreak, to help prevent the spread of the virus.

At Little Pumpkins Nursery, preventing the spread of covid-19 involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces). A range of approaches and actions should be employed to do this, to substantially reduce the risk of infection. These include:

- minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have covid-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend childcare settings
- cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene - promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
- minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Including Face Coverings and Face Masks

Wearing a face covering or face mask in a childcare settings or other education settings is not recommended. Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained. This does not apply to schools, childcare or other education settings. The Nursery does therefore not require staff or children to wear face coverings. Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

The majority of staff in childcare settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work (e.g. nappy changing), even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

- children whose care routine already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue in the same way.
- if a child, becomes unwell with symptoms of covid-19 while in the Nursery and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn

Shielded and Clinically Vulnerable Children

For the vast majority of children, covid-19 is a mild illness. Children and young people (0 to 18 years of age) who have been classed as **clinically extremely vulnerable** due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. It is not expected that these children attend Nursery but should continue to be supported at home as much as possible. **Clinically vulnerable** (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe

illness from covid-19. A small minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

Shielded and Clinically Vulnerable Adults

Clinically extremely vulnerable

It is strongly advised staff, who are **clinically extremely vulnerable** should not attend work. This includes those with serious underlying health conditions which put them at very high risk of severe illness from covid-19 and have been advised by their GP or through a letter.

Please refer to the Government website as follows for more advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Clinically vulnerable

Clinically vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions) should take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible.

Living With a Shielded or Clinically Vulnerable Person

If a child or member of staff lives with someone who is **clinically vulnerable** (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend Nursery.

If a child or staff member lives in a household with someone who is **extremely clinically vulnerable**, as set out above, it is advised they only attend the Nursery if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend, however, Little Pumpkins Nursery will endeavor to support the learning from home.

Class or Group Sizes

We know that, unlike older children and adults, young children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. Little Pumpkins Nursery are taking this into account and have therefore set out measures below:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, and we can achieve this and reduce transmission risk by ensuring children and staff, where possible, only mix in a small, consistent group and that small group stays away from other people and groups.

For pre-school children at Little Pumpkins Nursery, the staff to child ratios continue to apply as set out by the Early Years Foundation Stage.

If Little Pumpkins Nursery cannot achieve these small groups at any point, for example, because there are not enough classrooms or spaces available in the setting or because there is not enough staff available to supervise the groups, solutions could involve children attending a nearby Nursery. If necessary, settings have the flexibility to focus first on continuing to provide places for priority groups and then, to support children's early learning, settings should prioritise groups of children as follows:

- early years settings - 3 and 4 year olds followed by younger age groups

How We Will Be Implementing Protective Measures

At Little Pumpkins Nursery, we are implementing new protective measures in our setting to prevent the spread of covid-19 before opening. Below are the following steps we are taking:

- refresh our risk assessment and other health and safety advice for children and staff in light of recent government advice, identifying protective measures (such as the things listed below).
- inform children, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, that they must not enter the Nursery if they are displaying any symptoms of covid-19
- ensure that all health and safety compliance checks have been undertaken before opening
- consider which lessons or classroom activities could take place outdoors
- stagger drop-off and collection times – only one parent must attend
- plan parents' drop-off and pick-up protocols to minimise adult to adult contact - parents will be allocated drop off and collection times
- parents cannot gather at entrance gates or doors, or enter the site (unless they have a pre-arranged appointment, which should be conducted safely)
- handovers will no longer occur face to face – all communications will be shared via our new online nursery system, Famly (more information on this to follow)
- consider how children and staff arrive at the Nursery. Parents and staff should familiarise themselves with the recommendations on transport including avoiding peak times and encouraging walking or cycling where possible. Guidance will shortly be available on the Government website on safe travel
- Little Pumpkins Nursery will have early communications with contractors and suppliers that will need to prepare to support our plans for opening the Nursery, for example, cleaning, catering, food supplies, hygiene suppliers, etc. Cleaning contractors and staff will be made aware of the additional cleaning requirements.
- keep small groups of children together throughout the day and avoid larger groups of children mixing
- ensure play equipment is appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously
- remove unnecessary items from classrooms and other learning environments where there is space to store it elsewhere
- remove soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts)

How Little Pumpkins Nursery Will Operate Once Open

Once Little Pumpkins Nursery reopens, where possible we will ensure:

- the same staff are assigned to each group and, as far as possible, these stay the same during the day and on subsequent days.
- children are in the same small groups at all times each day, and different groups are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days
- children use the same classroom or area of a setting throughout the day, with a thorough cleaning of the rooms at the end of the day

Cleaning and hygiene:

- ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. Where a sink is not nearby, provide hand sanitiser in classrooms and other learning environments
- clean surfaces that children are touching, such as toys, books, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters, more regularly than normal
- frequently wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly ensure - help will be available for children who have trouble cleaning their hands independently
- clean hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing
- encourage children not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose
- use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it')
- consider how to encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition
- ensure that bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day
- where possible, all spaces should be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units
- prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation
- there is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in the Nursery

Reduce mixing within the Nursery by:

- accessing rooms directly from outside where possible
- considering one-way circulation, or place a divider down the middle of the corridor to keep groups apart as they move through the setting where spaces are accessed by corridors
- staggering lunch breaks - children should clean their hands beforehand and enter in the groups they are already in, groups should be kept apart as much as possible and tables should be cleaned between each group. If such measures are not possible, children should be brought their lunch in their classrooms
- ensuring that toilets do not become crowded by limiting the number of children or who use the toilet facilities at one time
- noting that some children will need additional support to follow these measures

Use of outside space:

- for exercise and breaks
- for outdoor education, where possible, as this can limit transmission and more easily allow for distance between children and staff
- although outdoor equipment should not be used unless the setting is able to ensure that it is appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously.

Reduce the use of shared resources:

- by limiting the amount of shared resources that are taken home and limit exchange of take-home resources between children and staff
- by seeking to prevent the sharing of stationery and other equipment where possible. Shared materials and surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected more frequently