



COVID-19 Policy Sleepy Hollow Group – Early Childhood Centre

(updated 16th August 2021)

Principle

The COVID-19 policy has been implemented to ensure the health and safety of children and staff within our settings. It is vital that this procedure is practiced and strictly adhered to during this pandemic. This is for the benefit of children, staff, and our wider community.

Statement of Intent

We have followed government guidelines in the development of this policy and the policy is subject to change. We will liaise with the Early Years Team of the Health & Social Care Trusts immediately if any incident arises. Whilst we understand that we are amid a global pandemic, we at Sleepy Hollow Group still believe in the importance of play and in providing a safe and happy environment for children.

Procedures

On Arrival & Departure:

All children in upstairs room enter by main front door, children in downstairs rooms enter by afterschool's door. All staff will enter by the back entrance. This is to minimise contact and possible transmission.

- All staff and children will have their temperature checked and recorded on arrival to the setting, anyone with a **temperature over 37.8°** will not be allowed to enter the setting.
- Parents should adhere to social distancing rules and stand 2 meters away. Only one parent should be at the door at any one time.
- Parents will not be allowed to enter the setting and children will be dropped off and greeted by staff at the point of entry. We would encourage that only one parent should drop off or collect their child.
- A staggered approach may be implemented if deemed necessary.
- Staff will wear face masks during arrival and departure periods, detailed daily feedback will be sent via Family.

During COVID-19 all settings will close 15 minutes earlier than normal to allow for cleaning.

Children:

Any child who displays symptoms or become unwell, parents will be contacted to collect their child, without delay and seek medical advice. This child will wait with a member of staff in the designated area until the parents arrive. Staff will wear all necessary P.P.E during this time with windows open for necessary ventilation.

Children will be supported in an age appropriate way to help them understand the social distancing, handwashing and hygiene requirements that are being used during this time. Children's emotional requirements will be of paramount concern to Sleepy Hollow during this time and we would ask that only essential comforters are brought in from home during this time.

Children will no longer be required to remain in consistent pods, but where possible Sleepy Hollow will continue, as always, to care for children in one main room.

Staff:

Only staff who are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or have achieved a negative COVID-19 test result can attend the setting. Sleepy Hollow also participate in weekly lateral flow testing for staff. Staff are required to inform their manager of any changes in their health as soon as possible.

Staff will for the most part remain with the same group, where possible.

Staff will wear a clean uniform each day.

Staff members will avoid contact with each other including handshakes, hugs and will adhere to social distancing rules.

Where possible training and meetings will be held via virtual conferencing facilities.

All staff have received training in COVID-19 prevention and infection control.

Sleepy Hollow Group recognise this is a difficult time and will continue to support their employee's wellbeing - any staff with concerns should approach their managers as soon as possible. We are putting in a lot of measures to protect staff and children's welfare.

Parents:

We would encourage that only one parent should drop off or collect at any one time.

If any member of your household develops symptoms (high temperature, new continuous cough, loss or change to sense or smell or taste) of COVID-19, or is waiting for a coronavirus test result, has tested positive you must isolate for a period of 10 days from the first day any person in your home displayed symptoms. (reference: www.nhs.uk)

Parents are invited to either text, family app, e-mail or phone with concerns or queries rather than discuss with staff face to face at the setting. Please be aware that this is very much a temporary arrangement during this time.

We ask that parents do not leave travel accessories including prams and car seats in the nursery during this time.

Visitors:

We have suspended all visits at the present time. Attendance will be restricted to children and staff only. Any essential building maintenance will be done outside operational hours unless extremely urgent. All viewings are being suspended and parents can request a virtual tour of our facilities.

Hygiene and Health & Safety:

Ventilation – windows will be open during the day to ensure good ventilation.

Handwashing – all children and staff must wash hands using liquid soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds and dry with disposable hand towels (where hand washing facilities are not readily available hand sanitiser 70% ethanol will be used):

- on arrival
- frequently throughout the day
- before and after mealtimes
- before and after administering medication
- after any coughing or sneezing
- to remove any physical dirt
- after administering any first aid
- after using the bathroom, nappy changing and handling bodily fluids, waste or soiled items
- after handling waste baskets
- when moving from one play area to another
- after physical contact with others
- prior to departure

P.P.E – government guidance states that P.P.E is not required for general use in early years settings to protect against COVID-19 transmission at this time. However, P.P.E (gloves and aprons) will be used as normal during nappy changing, first aid and food preparation & distribution.

Masks will only be used during handover (when parents meet with staff on arrival/departure) or in the event of a child becoming unwell.

We will ensure good respiratory hygiene by implementing the ‘cough or sneeze, elbow please’ approach. Tissues are available throughout the setting.

Cleaning – we have an enhanced cleaning schedule implemented and recorded daily, that includes furniture, surfaces, toys, and equipment.

- Toilets: cleaned twice daily using standard cleaning materials followed by disinfectant spray after each use (including touch points of surfaces in the bathroom). Toilet cubicles are colour coded and allocated per pod
- High contact surfaces: touch points of light switches, faucets, door handles, tables, handrails, bannisters, doorbells will be disinfected twice daily.
- Electronic devices: tablets, phones, computers, laptops projectors & lightboxes, will be disinfected before and after each use.
- Children's toys & equipment: will be cleaned at the end of each day, any toys/equipment that are not easily disinfected will be put away until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Laundry: will be washed daily at 60° minimum with disinfectant added to the washing machine alongside standard washing powder. Laundry including bedding, blankets etc. will not be shared between children. Soiled items will be placed in a sealed, waterproof bag and returned to parents for washing.
- In the event of a child being unwell – staff will wash their hands thoroughly and clean the affected area with disinfectant to reduce any risk of passing infection on to others.
- We use a fogging machine each evening to sanitise all area.

Food/Meals:

- Kitchen/food preparation areas - dishwasher will be set at 70° for each cycle, where washing dishes by hand, dishes will be washed with warm soapy water and dried with disposable paper towel. All surfaces will be cleaned & disinfected before and after each use.
- Lunch boxes/water bottles – must be in a sealed, labelled container, will be stored on arrival until lunchtime and returned at the end of the day.
- Any items that meet mouths such as cups, bottles and straws, cutlery will not be shared.
- Children will eat within their allocated group and meals will be brought to them in their designated area.
- Our cook will wear gloves and aprons when preparing and handling food.
- All staff have received food hygiene training.

Play & Activities:

Young children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other.

We aim for children will be outside as much as possible to play.

Children will stay in their own group and use their own play area at any one time, all play areas will be sanitised before and after use.

If a member of staff becomes unwell at a childcare setting

If a member of staff in childcare becomes unwell with a new persistent cough or high temperature, or shows any of the normal symptoms of the virus, they will be send home immediately and advised to follow the COVID19 guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID19) infection guidance.

A child with nasal or other cold symptoms may continue to attend childcare provided: the child is otherwise well and active; the child does not have any of the above symptoms of COVID-19; and no other person in the child's household has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

Children with gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhoea do not therefore require a COVID-19 test. However, they should not attend childcare until after their symptoms have resolved for at least 2 days (this means they should not have been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days before they return to childcare).

If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive (we will follow the steps below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

In the event of a positive COVID-19 case:

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, they will have to self-isolate for 10 days (or whatever the current guidance is from PHA).

We will contact the Public Health Department and seek further advice in the event of a positive case and liaise with relevant parties/persons.

Close contacts of COVID-19

From Monday 16 August, adults who are fully vaccinated (more than 14 days since you received the second dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine), no longer need to self-isolate for 10 days if someone they have been in close contact with tests positive for COVID-19. Instead of staying at home and isolating, they should get a PCR test on day two and day eight of the 10 day period following last contact with the positive person.

If the PCR test is positive, the person should complete a period of 10 days self-isolation from the date of symptom onset, or the test was taken if there were no symptoms.

Anyone identified as a close contact of a confirmed case who is fully vaccinated, is advised not to visit hospitals or care homes for 10 days and to minimise contact with those known to be at higher risk if they contract COVID-19, such as the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Group (CEV) for 10 days. This applies to close contacts only. Anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), whether vaccinated or not, should immediately isolate and book a PCR test.

Children and young people (aged five to 17) who are not fully vaccinated and are identified as a close contact should self-isolate and book a PCR test as soon as possible. If the PCR test is negative, they can end their self-isolation and should arrange to take another PCR test eight days after the last known contact. If the child or young person who is a close contact develops symptoms at any time they should immediately self-isolate and book a PCR test, even if the earlier PCR tests were negative. If any of the PCR tests are positive, this means they have the infection and they should self-isolate for 10 days, in line with advice for confirmed cases.

Children no longer need to self isolate, following PCR negative result, if a close family member or close contact tests positive. However the family member or close contact will not be able to drop off or collect from our settings during their period of isolation.

Children under the age under the age of five will be encouraged, but not required, to take a PCR test. They do not need to isolate unless they develop symptoms or have a positive PCR result. Children no longer need to self isolate if a close family member or close contact tests positive. However the family member or close contact will not be able to drop off or collect from our settings during their period of isolation.

A close contact who is fully vaccinated, or under the age of 18 and has had a positive PCR test within 90 days of the date of contact with a person testing positive for COVID-19, does not need to isolate and does not need to book tests at day two and day eight. However, if symptoms develop, they should isolate and book a PCR test.

We will continue to review this policy as new guidance is issued. (updated August 2021)

Contact Details:

If parents have any concerns, they can contact the manager directly via phone or:

Head Office (mornings only) info@sleepyhollowgroup.com tel: 02894339031/07719550094

Dee Edwards, Regional Manager dee@sleepyhollowgroup.com tel: 07908538401

COVID Officer : Bronagh Creery, Director, bronagh@sleepyhollowgroup.com tel: 07920111417

See attached step by step guide to coronavirus related absences.



Step by Step Guide to Coronavirus absences at Sleepy Hollow

What to do if	Action Needed	Return to Sleepy Hollow when...
My child has coronavirus symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Do not attend Sleepy Hollow ⇒ Contact your child's GP or call 111 ⇒ If advised by your GP or 111 Arrange for a test www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test Or call 119 ⇒ All household members need to self-isolate until test results are returned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Inform Sleepy Hollow immediately of test result 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ If you have been advised to take a test your child can return when the test returns negative and it has been 48 hours since child last had a temperature of 37.8 or above. ⇒ If you have been advised not to have your child tested then your child can return 48 hours since child last had a temperature of 37.8 or above
My child tests positive for coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Inform Sleepy Hollow immediately ⇒ Do not attend Sleepy Hollow in person ⇒ Child to self-isolate for 10 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Child can attend after 10 days providing it's been 48 hours since they have had a temperature of 37.8 or higher ⇒ Other symptoms such as cough, loss of smell or taste can linger but children can still return with these symptoms after 10-day period of isolation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somebody in my household has tested positive for Coronavirus or • Test, track and trace scheme has identified my child as a close contact of someone who has a confirmed case of coronavirus or • Staff member or other children in child's pod has tested positive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Child (over 5) to self isolate and arrange PCR test ASAP ⇒ Do not attend Sleepy Hollow until after negative PCR test ⇒ Children under 5 are recommended to get a PCR result but this is not mandatory (children under 5 deemed low risk of transmission PHA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Follow PHA advice ⇒ Child can return to Sleepy Hollow after clear PCR result ⇒ Children under 5 do not need to self isolate pending results
Child has travelled abroad and has to self-isolate as part of the quarantine process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Follow guidance in place at time of travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ When quarantine period has been completed