

**COVID-19 Guidance**

# As stipulated in the government guidance, [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures) (last updated 17th August 2021):

# *‘Settings are also responsible for planning and implementing appropriate protective measures to reduce coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission. Section 3 of this guidance sets out the public health advice which early years settings must follow. It also includes the process that should be followed if anyone develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while attending. This guidance has been developed with advice from Public Health England (PHE).’*

### ‘*The*[*system of controls*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/actions-for-early-years-and-childcare-providers-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic#system-of-controls)*in this guidance create an environment for children and staff where the risk of spread of COVID-19 is substantially reduced. Settings will need to continue to implement these controls to the fullest extent possible’*:

### **‘System of controls**

This is the set of actions early years settings must take. They are outlined in more detail below:

**Prevention:**

You must always:

1. minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the setting

2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/actions-for-early-years-and-childcare-providers-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak#face-coverings)

3. Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual

4. Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.

5. Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.

6. Consider how to minimise contact across the setting and maintain social distancing wherever possible.

7. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

In specific circumstances:

8. Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.

9. promote and engage in asymptomatic testing.

**Response to any infection**

You must always:

10. Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

11. Manage and report confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst the setting community.

12. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.’

**Ashdene Pre-School will refer directly to the Government guidance for further information and updates.**

**Government Guidance re our Responsibilities**

***‘****If you cannot remain open, you should work together flexibly with other settings and local authorities to agree the provision needed locally to support the needs identified. Settings are responsible for the following:*

* *safeguarding - local agencies, services and settings should work together to actively look for signs of harm given the greater risk of harm that some children may have been exposed to through COVID-19*
* *supporting children’s learning, development and wellbeing - continue to follow the*[*early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2)
* *supporting vulnerable children - early years providers should continue to encourage these children, particularly those with social workers, to attend regularly and notify their social worker if they stop attending*
* *implementing the*[*system of controls*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/actions-for-early-years-and-childcare-providers-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic#system-of-controls)*’* (see above).

**Adaptations to Provision at Ashdene Pre-School**

**We will:**

* Ensure that good hand hygiene and hand washing are undertaken by staff and children. We have adopted a specific handwashing song for the children to sing as they wash, to ensure that washing lasts for 20 seconds.
* Adhere to current social distancing government guidelines with each other, though this does not apply to interactions with children.
* Ensure that all staff wear face masks when necessary.
* Establish a one-way system for drop off and collection of children at Pre-School. The Manager/Deputy Manager/Senior Supervisor will stand at the main front door to receive children who then proceed into their room at drop off, and allow each individual child to leave Pre-School when their parent/carer reaches the front of the collection queue. Children will only leave their room to exit Pre-School when called by the Manager/Deputy manager/Senior Supervisor on the front door.
* Establish and maintain contact with parents and carers. In order to prevent transmission of COVID 19 whilst still maintaining open channels of communication with parents/carers, the Manager/Deputy Manager and Key Workers will contact parents by telephone with any questions, concerns or information to be passed on.
* Termly Parent’s Evenings will be held with parents or carers. Parent’s Evenings may be held via ‘Zoom’ or ‘Teams’, or in the outside area so that we continue to maintain, support and nurture our relationships with parents to ensure that we cater for and address each child’s holistic needs. Stay and play sessions will be organised but adaptable depending on covid restrictions in the area and in the preschool.
* Liaise with outside agencies where required; in doing so we will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children, and their families. The mode of contact may have altered due to the COVID 19 pandemic; however, we will ensure that we continue to communicate and work effectively with outside agencies or health care professionals e.g., Health Visitors as per our children’s requirements, either in person, via telephone or email.
* Ensure that we help to support our children and their families’ well-being; for example, providing resources and activities for families to engage in at home to support learning and development, or providing families with details of local support such as food banks, if they are struggling financially. This will be continued in the event of closure due to an outbreak of COVID 19.
* Support our staff. We appreciate that family circumstances or child care arrangements may have changed during the COVID 19 Pandemic, which may require flexible working as far as possible whilst meeting the needs of the Pre-School. Staff well-being is promoted through creation of opportunities to voice any concerns or issues to the management team, through staff meetings, one-one discussions and Supervision Meetings.

**Other Measures**

We will continue to follow Government COVID 19 advice and guidance, and take advice from Cheshire East Council and Public Health England health protection teams re the limitation or suspension of the following events, though below are our current procedures:

* **educational visits** - we have currently suspended any indoor educational visits. We are still able to take the children on road safety walks, or outdoor walks to observe seasonal environmental changes.
* **Open Days** – we are currently offering appointments for prospective parents and their children to come to visit the Pre-School. These are booked by our Administrator, and are for one child family at a time.
* **settling-in days** - we are currently holding settling-in days for new starters, to be accompanied by the parent, by allocation of specific times for each parent and their child to attend a ‘settling-in day’. The child must only be accompanied by one parent. The day will be organised according to room ‘bubbles’ as the child will already have been assigned a Key Worker and a particular room.
* **transition or taster days with Primary Schools** - we will be guided by the Primary School’s policies and procedures re children attending transition or taster days in person.
* **performances in settings** - currently any performances will not be attended in person by parents, carers or their families; after seeking the required and appropriate consent, we will film the performance and the video will made available to watch for parents and carers.

**Ashdene Pre-School will remain open to allow all children to attend full time or their usual hours, unless an outbreak occurs (guidance in this instance detailed below).**

**Local Outbreak of COVID-19**

In the event of a local outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), the government will take action to control the spread of the virus. Any providers who are affected by a local outbreak will receive specific guidance for their area. Guidance can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-lockdowns-guidance-for-education-and-childcare-settings](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-lockdowns-guidance-for-education-and-childcare-settings).

Further guidance on COVID-19 related matters, can be found at [www.eyalliance.org.uk/coronavirus-early-years](https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/coronavirus-early-years).

**Outbreak of COVID 19 at Pre-School**

* **Child Displaying Symptoms of COVID 19**

If a child becomes unwell with COVID 19 related symptoms, including a cough, raised temperature, loss of taste, they should be sent home. The following procedures are to be followed:

* Wash hands before applying PPE.
* PPE to be worn, which consists of a surgical face mask, disposable gloves and plastic disposable apron.
* Parents advised to call NHS 111 and follow advice to book a COVID 19 test.
* Child to be isolated in a well-ventilated room/area with supporting member of staff until a parent arrives to collect them.
* If possible, child to sit outside away from others with a member of staff.
* Staff member is not required to go home unless they display symptoms.
* Await results of COVID 19 test before any action is taken re isolation of staff or temporary closure of room/preschool.

If a child sustains a minor injury, requiring first aid treatment, and is also displaying symptoms of COVID 19:

* Wash hands prior to putting on PPE (PPE as listed above).
* Clean wound with antiseptic wipes, dispose of wipes in disposable nappy bag, before placing in main outside rubbish bin. Follow normal first aid procedures for injury.
* Wear gloves to apply a cold compress if required.

Staff exposure to bodily fluids and child is displaying symptoms of COVID 19:

* Wash hands prior to putting on PPE (PPE as listed above).
* Use disposable vomit bowls and put tissues used in a disposable nappy bag before disposing of it in the main outside rubbish bin.

Pre-School will then be guided by Public Health England as to the particulars of closure of the Pre-School in the event of an outbreak.

* **Contingency Framework**

We will continue to operate as normally as possible. However, in the event that we need to help contain the spread of the virus, we will be guided by the Government’s [contingency framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities), which outlines how early years settings should operate in the event of any restrictions, to ensure that every child receives the quantity and quality of education and care to which they are normally entitled.

**The following guidance has been gathered from the above mentioned ‘Contingency Plan’:**

In the event of a localised outbreak of COVID 19, we will seek and implement and follow guidance from Cheshire East Council and Public Health England health protection teams (HPTs) to manage the outbreak.

**Attendance:**

If attendance restrictions are needed, vulnerable children and children of critical workers will be allowed to attend.

**Safeguarding:**

There will be no change to local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, which remain the responsibility of the 3 safeguarding partners:

* local authorities
* clinical commissioning groups
* chief officers of police

If attendance restrictions are needed in Pre-School due to Government advice, or there is an outbreak of COVID 19 in Pre-School, we will be vigilant and responsive to all safeguarding threats with the aim of keeping vulnerable children and young people safe, particularly as more children will be learning remotely.

We will continue to have regard to statutory safeguarding guidance, including:

* [Keeping children safe in education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)
* [Working together to safeguard children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)
* [Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2) - read alongside [Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2/early-years-foundation-stage-coronavirus-disapplications#disapplications-for-the-early-years-foundation-stage-section-3)’

**Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will review our Safeguarding Policy so that it reflects the local restrictions and remains effective.**

**Vulnerable Children:**

Where vulnerable children are absent, we will:

* follow up with the parent or carer, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), to explore the reason for absence and discuss their concerns
* encourage the family to ensure the child attends Pre-School, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), particularly where the social worker and the Virtual School Head (where applicable) agrees that the child’s attendance would be appropriate
* focus on the welfare of the child and ensure that the child is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home
* maintain open channels of communication with the family, providing resources for use at home such as ‘story sacks’, books to read together. The child’s Key Worker will, based on knowledge of the child’s interests and stage of development put together activities and resources for the family to use at home. The Key Worker/Manager will make regular contact (weekly basis) with the family to ensure they are engaging with the provisions.

**In the event that Ashdene Pre-School has to temporarily stop onsite provision on public health advice, we will discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and young people with East Cheshire Council.**

**Ashdene Pre-School is committed to safeguarding the health of our children, and their families.**

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| **This policy was adopted by**: |
| **On (date)**: |
| **Date to be reviewed**: September 2022 |
| **Signed on behalf of the** **Management Committee**: |
| **Name of Signatory**: |
| **Role of Signatory (e.g. Manager)**: |