



67. Coronavirus Pandemic

EYFS: 3.4, 3.44, 3.47,

At St. Patrick's Nursery we promote the good health of all children attending through maintaining high hygiene standards and reducing the chances of infection being spread. We will always seek to follow the latest Government advice on the Coronavirus Pandemic. From Wednesday 3rd June 2020, St. Patrick's reopened its doors after temporary closure during the Coronavirus Lockdown in England.

As guided by the Government, there are several controls that we will adopt to reduce the risk of transmission. This includes:

- minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend nursery.
- continuing to clean hands more often than usual. Hands will be washed 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 by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard cleaning products.
- minimising mixing by altering the environment to provide care in small room groups or "Bubbles".

Minimising Contact

Staff and children should not attend nursery if they have symptoms or if they are self-isolating due to any of their household members showing symptoms. On arrival at the setting we feel it is reasonable to ask whether parents, children or any member of the household have any of the symptoms of Covid-19 (high temperature or a persistent cough – as per current government guidance). Families will be encouraged to notify the nursery if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason for non-attendance. Children's temperatures will not be routinely recorded every morning. However, if a child becomes unwell or if there is reason to record their temperature this will be done so using a contact free thermometer or an ear thermometer with disposable earpiece.

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough, loss or change in sense of smell or taste, or a high temperature in the nursery, they will be sent home. While this child is awaiting collection, they will be moved, to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people and will have adult supervision. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, the bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else. PPE will be provided for staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. As is usual procedure, in an emergency, staff will call 999 if the child or other staff member is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk.



If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or the child subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. To reduce the risk of passing on the infection, we will attempt to clean the affected area with normal household disinfectant as soon as possible.

After being sent home, children and staff will be advised to self isolate for ten days. Siblings and other members of their household should also self-isolate for fourteen days. All staff and children will be encouraged to be tested for Coronavirus if they show symptoms. The nursery will send out guidance to parents/ staff members on how to get tested.

If a staff member or child has a negative test result then they will be allowed to return to St. Patrick's as long as they are well enough to do so (please see Sickness and Illness policy and Medication policy). At this point, their household members can also end self-isolation.

In the event of a positive test result, the child or staff member will be asked to self isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and will only be able to return if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste. We will contact our local health protection team who will work with us to carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the infected person. Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their group/ bubble and anybody they have been in close contact with (see Government guidance) will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of the child or staff member do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms. If advised, then a larger number of children may be asked to self-isolate as a precautionary measure and if necessary, the whole nursery may close. To assist us with this we will aim to keep a record of the staff and children in each group on a daily basis. Staff and parents will be advised to engage with the NHS Test and Trace process. The setting will also work with the NHS Test and Trace process if we are contacted in relation to a child or member or staff who has tested positive for COVID-19. Following a confirmed case of Coronavirus, we will swiftly report the case(s) to Ofsted.

DfE Helpline- 0800 046 8687- option 1 for advice on the action to take in response to a positive case.

Vulnerable Staff and Children

The Government has advised that all children and young people currently identified as clinically extremely vulnerable do not need to shield at the moment unless in a high risk area as specified by the Government. St. Patrick's Montessori Nursery will keep up to date with the latest local restrictions and precautions. Staff who fall into this category will be regularly risk assessed and should take extra precautions such as more frequent



handwashing. They will also be advised to maintain a one metre plus distance from all other adults at all times.

Pregnant staff members will be risk assessed prior to their return to work and regularly throughout their pregnancy. When pregnant member of staff reaches 28 weeks of pregnancy; a more thorough risk assessment should be undertaken to determine whether it is still suitable for the member of staff to continue working in the nursery environment.

Cleaning Hands

We will ensure that all adults and children frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly. Everyone will clean their hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, when returning from the garden, after cleaning and after sneezing or coughing. Children will be assisted with washing their hands when they are not able to do so independently, and we will encourage good hand hygiene through songs and games. Through learning and activities, children will be encouraged to not touch their mouth, eyes and nose. Hand washing stations will be available at each drop off point. Staff will be asked to use their own pens and only one person will sign staff in and out of the nursery.

Respiratory Hygiene

We will continue to advise children and staff to use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it'). These bins will be emptied throughout the day. After using a tissue, hand washing will be encouraged. We will ensure that the rooms are well ventilated by opening windows and doors where possible, during the cooler months we will also need to ensure that the nursery is also kept at an appropriate temperature. Opening doors will also limit the use of door handles but will only be done with fire safety and safeguarding concerns in mind.

Cleaning Frequently Touched Surfaces

Resources and materials used in the nursery will be assessed for their suitability. Unnecessary items will be removed from access and so will soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts). Play equipment will be cleaned between groups using it and frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned more regularly than normal. Staff will clean and disinfect these throughout the day. This includes tables, chairs, resources, equipment, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, toilets, taps, and sinks. Disposable gloves used for cleaning will be disposed of immediately after cleaning. Access to Montessori activities will be available to one group of children at a time and the equipment will be thoroughly clean or quarantined for a suitable period before being used by another group or bubble.

Outdoor space will be used regularly and will be limited to one group/ bubble at a time. Outdoor play equipment will be cleaned between use. I pads and Kindles will only be used by one member of staff per day and wiped down before and after use. Children should not be



permitted to bring items from home into the nursery (if your child requires a comforter, we request that they have one that remains at nursery).

Minimizing Mixing

We understand that social distancing will be a near enough impossibility to uphold whilst caring for the children at St. Patricks. However, it is still important to reduce contact between children and staff as far as possible, and we will take steps to reduce transmission by ensuring children, and staff where possible, mix in a small group and keep that small group away from other people and groups.

Children and staff will be allocated to small and consistent groups and bubbles. We will reasonably endeavour to ensure that children are always in their group or bubble and are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days. The same staff will be assigned to each group/bubble and, as far as possible will stay the same during the day and on subsequent days. Groups/ Bubble's will use the same nursery room throughout the day and the rooms will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of the day. Brief, transitory contact such as passing has been considered as low risk but we will try to avoid this situation where possible. We request that children do not attend any other childcare setting at the moment, in order to reduce mixing with other groups of children and adults.

Staff breaks and lunches will be separate from others as much as possible. Staff who leave the building for a break will be advised not to socialise with any staff outside of their Bubble. Staff will avoid physical contact with other staff e.g. hugs and handshakes. Staff training and meetings will remain online even after the reopening of the setting.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We will continue to use PPE only for intimate care routines, serving food and first aid situations. The exception for this is if a child becomes unwell when a staff member will care for them using gloves, apron and a facemask. Eye protection may be worn if there is significant risk to the eyes. Following the nursery day there has been reported to be no need for anything other than normal hygiene and washing of clothes. Staff are to wear their staff aprons for work, but not to wear on breaks or when leaving the nursery. Staff will wash their hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds. They will also wash them after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning. Children and staff will remove coats before entering the room and these will be stored apart if possible. PPE kits will be available from the office if a child becomes unwell with COVID-19 symptoms.

Face coverings

As recommended by the Government, the staff will not universally use face coverings. The children will also not need to wear a face coverings as it can inadvertently increase the risk of transmission and may have negative effects on communication. Staff can wear face coverings if they request to, this may be more applicable to communal areas etc. The nursery will have an emergency supply of face coverings. We will outline a process for the



removal of face coverings when they are worn and when entering the settings, this will advise washing of hands before and after touching and removing to store in a sealable plastic bag between use.

In line with the most recent rise in COVID-19 cases, from 1st October 2020, staff will be required to wear a face shield when conducting handover at the door with the parents. Staff will be provided with individual face shields and will be responsible for ensuring the cleanliness and storage of their face shield. Parents will also be asked to wear a facemask on arrival (and when queuing) to the nursery unless exempt from wearing one in which we will ask parents to make us aware of this exemption.

Early Years Foundation Stage

At St. Patrick's we will strive to use reasonable endeavours to deliver the learning and development requirements set out in The Early Years Foundation Stage. Children will continue to benefit from a broad range of educational opportunities. Keyworkers of two year old children will attempt to complete the two year progress check but in some cases this may not be possible. Our staff however will continue to be alert to any concerns about any child. Parents will be asked to complete a "Returning to the Journey" Form on return to the nursery. This will help the staff to ensure a smoother transition back into nursery.

Ratios

Child to Adult Ratio will be adhered to as per advice from the Department of Education. Staffing levels will be monitored as usual on a daily basis. The availability of staff may change during this time and if St. Patrick's are unable to provide sufficient staffing levels, then the Nursery Manager or Operations Manager will act to take the following steps:

- Ensure all supernumerary nursery management are used in ratio
- Consider moving staff between groups to provide adequate cover if possible
- Call in staff who are not rostered on duty for that day
- Cap the number of children in attendance

St. Patrick's will not use Agency or Temporary Staffing during this time. There will always be a member of staff in the building with a level 3 qualification and we will endeavour to ensure that at least half of our staff hold a level 2 qualification or above. As our setting meets the Millies Mark Criteria, there will always be at least one member of staff who holds a Paediatric First Aid Certificate. There will always be a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSL) available, the DSL can work from home but should always be contactable.

Attendance and Occupancy



The situation with Coronavirus is ongoing and therefore situations may arise where the demand for places is higher than the setting's capacity when measures to allow physical distancing between groups are in place. Therefore St. Patrick's may need to temporarily cap the number of children in attendance. This may also be the case in the event of staff absence (see Ratios).

St. Patrick's will prioritise spaces for children in the following order:

- Vulnerable children, including those who have a social worker or those who have an EHCP plan
- Children of critical workers
- 3 and 4 year old children (in particular those who are transitioning the reception in September).

The management team will continue to monitor the situation and will update parents with any changes as necessary and with as much notice as possible.

Training

Staff were all trained on how germs are transmitted and on hand hygiene before the setting reopened. All childcare staff received a food hygiene refresher before returning to nursery.

Transportation

We will aim to advocate that the use of public transport is minimised when considering the travel of both staff and children to St. Patrick's. We will encourage the use of walking, cycling or own transportation where possible. There will be no on-site parking facilities for parents due to the prioritised need for outdoor space. We advise that all staff and parents follow Government guidance regarding public transport at all times.

Visits and Outings

Here at St. Patrick's our children thrive on being able to use the outdoor space on a regular basis. A timetable has been put in place to ensure all groups/bubbles have access to the garden during the day. Local outings in small groups and the Daily Mile are now taking place following successful risk assessments, staff are aware to return to the nursery if concerns regarding social distancing arise.

Food

Parents will be asked for up to date advice on their child's dietary requirements when returning to nursery. We will continue to ensure we provide a healthy and nutritious menu for the children. The menu, however, may change on a daily basis due to food supplies. Online contactless delivery will be used when possible.

Parents and Visitors



Bakerloo and Jubilee/ Piccadilly children should be brought to and collected from the front door. Victoria School House children should be brought to and collected from the playground gate. No parent or unnecessary visitor will enter the building. Parents will leave their child with a member of staff at the door/gate. Their child will be handed back to them by a member of staff. Only one adult per family will be able to drop off or pick up their child. When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained in a safe area (Markings will be outlined on the floor at a appropriate distance). We ask that parents leave the site promptly after dropping off children. Alcohol gel will be available for children and parents on arrival in the courtyard, carpark and buggy shed.

In the event that external professionals need to visit the nursery for the wellbeing of a specific child they may enter if their visit has been previously arranged. They will be asked to follow setting guidance, wash their hands-on arrival, where possible maintain social distancing.

Temporary changes to settling in sessions will be made to ensure that parents do not enter the building. Socially distanced garden visits will be offered along with Zoom calls prior to new children starting. Paperwork for new parents will be communicated via email or via the Royal Mail postal service. Outside of opening hour virtual nursery tours are available to prospective parents. Contractors may enter the building outside of opening hours but extra precautions must be taken, e.g. social distancing must be adhered to and mask and shoe covers to be worn.

Further advice

This policy has been put together with the guidance of the following Government documents:

- Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications (4th September 2020).
- Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (22nd September 2020)

Please also see guidance on Staying alert and safe (22nd September 2020) and COVID-19: guidance for young people on shielding and protecting people most likely to become unwell if they catch coronavirus (4th September 2020).

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>29th September 2020</i>		<i>TBC</i>