



GROWING AND LEARNING TOGETHER

Pandemic Policy (In response to COVID-19 outbreak)

Little Jesters intend to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the setting during an epidemic or pandemic. It also states ideas for continuity of business if allowed.

Legislation and leading authorities which have guided and influenced this policy are: Coronavirus Act 2020, Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Government Briefings, Public Health England (PHE) and World Health Organisation (WHO). Advice from but not limited to, The Secretary of State, The Chief Medical Officer, Local Authority (LA) and Department for Education (DfE). The policy also has regard to Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance where appropriate.

Aim of Policy

This policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within the preschool that assures compliance to the Government and leading bodies requirements with relation to the outbreak of a pandemic such as Covid-19. This information builds upon our current procedures for areas such as Safeguarding, Child Protection and Equality and Diversity, however new practices may emerge as the situation continues. The policy and considerations may evolve and be built upon as the situation deepens and new precautionary measures have been introduced and practices have been reflected upon.

Method

As early years providers we ensure to offer a continuum of very high standards of practice of childcare and education. The fundamental principles to be outlined in this policy are set out to ensure reasonable social distancing are enabled and that good hygiene practices are implemented as well as avoiding coming into contact with infected children and adults or anyone displaying symptoms. It states that the protective measures put in place for children, parents and staff reduces the risk of transmission. We will continue to follow all our other policies as long as they do not conflict with this policy and be guided by the EYFS as best as we can. The main areas we will be considering are:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell
- Maintaining personal and respiratory hygiene (handwashing, catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Ensuring cleanliness of the environment (especially frequently touched surfaces)
- Minimising general contact and mixing (creating small groups and placing a temporary cap on our numbers)
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE)
- Testing

Focus/Areas of consideration/Recommendations

Children

➤ *Attendance*

- Only children who are well and symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting.
- It is recommended that children only attend 1 early years setting but this is not mandatory. Parents should minimise this if they can but the DfE realise that this isn't always possible.
- Extremely vulnerable children should continue under government advice (to shield).
- Staff will be taking temperatures of children on arrival and risk assessing with regular health questionnaires for returning children.
- Children will be required to use hand sanitiser before entering the preschool main room.

➤ *Social Distancing/grouping*

- Care routines including provision of meals, nappy changing and toileting will be carried out within the space allocated within preschool.
- We will not have access to any communal spaces within the primary school.
- Outdoor play will be as normal.

➤ *Wellbeing and education*

- Children should be supported in age appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves safe including regular hand washing and sneezing into a tissue.
- Children should be supported to understand the changes and challenges they may be encountering as a result of Covid-19 and staff need to ensure they are aware of children's attachments and their need for emotional support at this time.
- EYFS framework will continue to be delivered through play and adult led activities.

➤ *Local Authority Funding during a pandemic*

- Government funded places are paid by the Local Authority. The Local Authority alone decide if a child qualifies for government funded hours in any setting. In the event a parent voluntarily removes their child for an extended period and the Local Authority refuses to fund your child's place in the setting, we reserve the right to charge a retainer fee to secure your child's place at Little Jesters. This fee will be 50% of the monthly cost.
- If a parent chooses not to pay the retainer fee and the Local Authority does not fund your child, this will then result in the child's place being removed.

Illness (specific to COVID-19 pandemic) for CHILDREN and WORKFORCE

- With the increase of concern regarding everyone's wellbeing and the increase of the COVID-19 infection. We are asking that if your child is feeling unwell with ANY ILLNESS e.g. runny nose, chesty cough etc that you keep them at home until they are better.
- If a Staff Member is feeling unwell with ANY ILLNESS they must also stay home.

Workforce

➤ *Attendance*

- Staff should only attend the nursery if they are well, symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result.
- We will take the temperature of staff on arrival and carry out risk assessments with regular health questionnaires for returning staff.
- Consideration should be given to limiting the number of staff in the nursery at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day.

➤ *Staff absence during a pandemic*

- A staff member who needs to isolate and is following the government guidelines will be paid.
- A staff member who is ill with **ANY** illness during a pandemic and who must stay home for infection control and to prevent the spread, will be paid.
- A staff member who needs to take time off to care for a dependant and is following government guidelines will be paid.

➤ *Social distancing/ grouping /safety*

- Emergency revisions to the EYFS have been implemented which provides some flexibility on ratios and qualifications to make this feasible.
- Social distancing must be maintained during breaks. This may be achieved through a range of strategies including the staggering of breaks and subdivision of spaces allocated to team breaks where possible.
- Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc.

➤ *Training*

- Where possible, meetings and training sessions should be conducted through virtual conferencing.
- Online training may be available to allow staff training levels to be maintained if appropriate.
- All staff members must receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating.

Parents

➤ *Social distancing*

- Only parents who are symptom free will be allowed to drop off and collect.
- Please limit drop off and pick up to 1 parent not siblings under 16 per family.
- When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained and facial covering must be worn.
- We will open the gate early so that you can wait in our play area to maintain social distancing.
- Staff will wear face coverings when seeing children in and out/ please can we ask that parents maintain their distance when dropping off children and when speaking to staff.
- No visitors are allowed in preschool.

➤ *Communications*

- Parents should receive clear communication regarding the role they play in the safe operating procedure and all measures being taken to ensure the safety of their children and themselves.
- Parents should inform preschool of their circumstances and if they plan to keep their child away, this helps preschool to conform to our safeguarding policy.

Visitors

- Attendance to the setting should be restricted to only children and staff as far as practically possible and visitors should not be permitted to the preschool unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance).
- Where essential visits are required these should be made outside of the usual preschool operational hours where possible.
- As far as possible parents and carers should not enter the premises or the pavilion unless there is an emergency.
- We can at any point stop all visitors into the setting if we feel this will ensure the protection and safety of our staff and children.

Travel

- Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to the nursery alone, using their own transport.
- If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed.
- Parents will not be able to leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, scooters in the setting premises.

Hygiene and Health & Safety

➤ *Hand Washing*

- All children and staff must wash their hands upon arrival at the nursery using sanitiser.
- Children and staff members should be encouraged to wash their hands frequently.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for all children and staff to use regularly.
- Bodily fluid spills should follow the correct procedures as normal.

➤ *Cleaning*

- An enhanced cleaning schedule must be implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children's toys and equipment.
- Communal areas, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly.

➤ *Waste disposal*

- All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner.
- Used tissues must be immediately disposed of.

➤ *Laundry*

- All items within the setting requiring laundering must be washed in line with NHS laundry guidelines.
- Items such as towels, flannels and bedding must not be shared by children.

Risk assessment

- All activities should be risk assessed and due consideration given to any adaptations to usual practice. It is expected that would include, but not be limited to, the suspension of learning experiences involving materials which are not easily washable such as malleable materials and the suspension of the sharing of food and utensils.
- The setting will be risk assessed before opening or going ahead to address the risks from the virus and due consideration given to any adaptations to usual practice. Sensible measures should be put in place and policies and procedures followed.

PPE

- Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early years settings to protect against COVID-19 transmission.
- PPE will be worn as normal for nappy changing, if a child has a toileting accident, the administration of first aid and if a child becomes ill.

Premises

➤ *Building*

- Health & Safety checks have been conducted prior to reopening including legionnaires checks, all areas have been given a deep clean and resources.
- Windows will be kept open to ensure ventilation.

➤ *Resources*

- Children should not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Where this is the case items should be appropriately cleaned upon arrival.
- All resources required for play and learning experiences of children should be regularly washed and/or sterilised.
- Equipment used by staff such as stationery, tablets etc, will be cleaned regularly.

Supplies

➤ *Procurement & monitoring*

- The setting should ensure an adequate supply of essential provisions and that contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies. The setting will not be able to operate without the essential supplies required for ensuring infection control.
- A monitoring system for the usage of PPE is essential to ensure that a supply of stock is available to all who require it and when it is required to meet the operational needs of the setting. When stocks are low, other options may be considered, such as the use of washable tabards. These items will be washed at a high temperature and separate to any other nursery washing.
- In the case of the supply of food being interrupted, procedures must be implemented to ensure that appropriate food alternatives are sourced and normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed.
- If a child shows symptoms, staff should wear a face mask, visor, disposable gloves and apron if a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained at all times. PPE should be disposed of following government guidelines.

Responding to a suspected case

- In the event of a child developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the setting, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance. Staff will engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.
- Whilst waiting for the child to be collected they should be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation.

- The staff member responsible for the child during this time should be a staff member from their 'bubble'. The provider may consider suitable PPE for this staff member.
- The area should be thoroughly cleaned, immediately if the area cannot be left unvisited, and if the area can be left unvisited then cleaned after 72 hours.
- The person responsible for cleaning the area should wear appropriate PPE.
- In the event of a staff member developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst working at the nursery, they should return home immediately and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance. They should also follow current testing advice for themselves and their household.
- We ask all parents and carers to ensure they organise a test for their child, in the event that they develop coronavirus symptoms, and notify us immediately of a positive test. Parents can access a test for under 5's by contacting 111.

Monitoring of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the setting managers/Committee. New government legislation and policies will be incorporated appropriately as and when required or informed.

This policy has been adopted by Little Jesters Preschool