

# play-to-learn

MONTESSORI NURSERIES AND PRE-SCHOOLS



## December 2021 – Parent Update

We are really pleased that so many of the restrictions have been lifted by the Government and that life will begin to seem much more normal. However, we would like to mitigate against any potential closure of the pre-school and so cannot emphasise enough the need for parents and children to follow our request for compliance with this updated guidance.

### **What will we do?**

As a pre-school we are aware of the dangers of being exposed to Covid -19 and will do our utmost to ensure the safety of every person that enters our setting.

The children will be spoken to regularly about why we need to wash hands more often, why their teachers are wearing gloves and protective clothing. This will be explained in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of understanding. We want to ensure that the children feel safe and secure while in our care but have as much fun as they normally would while at pre-school.

### **How do we know if someone has the symptoms?**

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

Please **do not** send your child to pre-school if:

- they are showing [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#)

[Arrange a test](#) if your child develops symptoms. Inform the pre-school of the results.

If the test is positive, follow [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#), and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

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It is important that parents and carers help nurseries, childminders, schools, and colleges to implement these actions by following the advice set out here and wider public health advice and guidance.

For up to date information please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

## **What will we do if we suspect a child or member of staff has COVID-19 but it's not been confirmed?**

If the child or staff member is displaying the symptoms as above, they will be sent home and should take a PCR test. If it is positive, we will thoroughly clean the setting. If it is negative, then the child or staff member can return to pre-school.

## **What will we do while we wait for a child to be collected?**

If a child is awaiting collection, they will be moved, if possible and if appropriate, to a room where they can be isolated with a staff member.

We will always be mindful of individual children's needs – for example, it would not be appropriate for younger children to be alone without adult supervision. Ideally, a window will be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, we will move them to an area which is at least two metres away from other people. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, we will take them to use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom will be cleaned afterwards.

## **What are the rules for self-isolating?**

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated.
- they are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons
- **December 2021 – Government update-** to reflect changes to self-isolation requirements for contacts of people who have been identified as a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. These contacts must stay at home and self-isolate even if they are fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months. As with other contacts legally required to self-isolate, they must complete their full isolation period even if they receive a negative test result during this period. The public health advice for people with symptoms of, or a positive test result for COVID-19 remains the same for everyone.

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## Close Contacts

- contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.
- Children who are aged under 5 years old who are identified as close contacts will only be advised to take a PCR test if the positive case is in their own household.
- Staff who do not need to self-isolate, and children who usually attend the setting, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend the setting as normal.

## What can we do to prevent the spread of the virus?

Good hygiene and handwashing are essential and very important in childcare anyway but encouraging children to wash their hands thoroughly on a regular basis will be an extra precaution. Asking parents to drop off and collect children from the main entrance gate will help to reduce the risk of the virus entering the building. The staff will also wear protective clothing such as gloves and aprons where appropriate.

## What if we travel abroad during this time? Will my child be able to attend pre-school upon our return?

All children and staff travelling to England must adhere to [travel legislation](#), details of which are set out in [red, amber and green list rules for entering England](#). Parents and carers should bear in mind the impact on their child's learning and development which may result from any requirement to quarantine or isolate upon return.

## Additional onsite procedures at your pre-school. Please see below

### Parents/Carers

Only adults who are symptom free and or have completed the required isolation periods will be able to drop off or collect their child.

Only 1 adult per family to drop off/collect child

**Morning drop off** - Parents to drop their children at the bottom of the slope and the staff will take them into the pre-school as per the current arrangement.

**Lunch time/ End of day Pick up** – Please come up the slope to the main entrance door

**Nursery room – Pick up at 1pm** – please wait in the reception area for your child to be brought to you. **Pick up at 4pm** – Parents are welcome to come into the classroom to pick up your child but please do wear a face mask and use the hand sanitiser provided.

**Pre-school Room - Pick up at 1pm or 4pm** - Parents are welcome to come into the classroom to pick up your child but please do wear a face mask and use the hand sanitiser provided.

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Parents should not leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, scooters, bikes at the setting premises

## Handwashing

The staff will wash their hands on arrival and will follow strict hygiene routine throughout the day. The children will be asked to wash their hands with soap and water more often than they normally would, as well as using the hand sanitizer displayed in all rooms on arrival and departure.

## Mealtimes

Mealtimes will operate as usual

## Packed lunches

Please ensure that all contents of your child's lunch box are healthy and nut free. We discourage packed lunch contents that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products such as cakes or biscuits, in line with our Healthy Eating policy.

We ask you pack only products which can be opened easily as children struggle with some items such as frubes and little pots.

Remember all fruit such as grapes and blueberries and cheese must be cut into tiny pieces to avoid choking.

## Children's daily requirements

All children to wear short sleeve tops to make the increase in hand washing easier for them to manage independently.

Parents to ensure that their child's bag contains enough spare clothes/ underwear, nappies, cream & wipes, where appropriate, to last for the whole day or session attended.

## Sharing providers

We would prefer that children only attend 1 setting but appreciate that this will not always be practical for working parents and carers.

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## Unwell Children

If we consider your child is unwell and displaying some of the COVID symptoms, just to be on the safe side, we will ask you to keep them at home and take either an LFT test or a PCR test. Please provide the results to the pre-school.

## Emergency Contacts

Parents must ensure all the emergency contacts are up to date and are able to collect children in the event of an emergency or they become ill.

Parents must be able to collect children within 30 minutes of receiving a telephone call.

## Advice for Parents, Carers and Families

And the most important...exercise good hygiene procedures!

1. Wash your and your child's hands regularly using hot, soapy water for at least 20 seconds
2. Avoid touching your and your child's face
3. Use tissues when coughing and sneezing and dispose of safely.

## Catch it, Kill it, Bin it!

## Additional information

We have completed a setting risk assessment and provided updated guidance to all our staff.

We have employed a specialist cleaning company who will provide a regular deep sanitiser application to the setting.

We have reduced our available resources and will be cleaning items and rotating daily to ensure increase hygiene between usage.

We will continue to clean up during the day as usual and at the end of the day complete a thorough clean.

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Equipment such as blankets, soft toys, dough, water, sand etc. will be limited and only single use by each child

**The setting COVID-19 Operational Plan and Risk Assessment will be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary. All our current policies and safeguarding procedures are still maintained as standard.**