**St Mary’s Preschool Covid-19 Operational Plan for Parents and Children – written 9th September 2021 in line with changes to Government Guidelines from the 19th July and 16th August 2021.**

The fundamental principle of this plan is to ensure physical distancing between groups and to implement good hygiene practices. Our primary aim is to keep the preschool as safe as possible from the transmission of COVID. We know the working environment will be different however, children should not feel a significant change in their preschool experience despite having reduced access to some resources.

As the country moves to Step 4 of the roadmap, the government will continue to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. We are slowly moving forward, away from stringent restrictions on everyone’s day to day lives and the government are advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk.

The Operation Plan below, contains guidance from the Department of Education and the government to create protective measures for all children, their families and the staff working in the preschool.

St Mary’s Preschool will inform the Local Authority and Public Health England Health Protection team of any confirmed case of COVID in staff or children.

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| **FOCUS** | **AREAS OF CONSIDERATION** | **RECOMMENDATIONS** |
|  | **Attendance** | • Only children who are symptom free of COVID and have completed the required isolation period should attend the preschool • Children must be symptom free for 48hrs before returning to the setting and well enough to attend. • The garden side gate will be used to drop off and collect children in this current climate. • Masks must be worn by adults in confined spaces and if social distancing is not possible. • All staff, parents and children to sanitise their hands before entering the preschool and before pressing the door bell – if necessary.  |
|  | **Physical Distancing/Grouping** | • Use of the toilet and communal internal areas will be restricted and monitored and kept clean at all times |
|  | **Health and Safety** | • Staff have guidance on appropriate PPE and the operating procedures we have in place in the preschool • Staff can make their own choice to wear a mask in the preschool under current government guidance. • Public Health England have produced a flowchart for the preschool staff to use which must be followed in the event of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID in the preschool • Staff are to ensure that they sanitise their hands when entering and exiting rooms to avoid transmitting the virus. • If your child has been given Calpol prior to coming into the preschool and requires 1:1 care due to being unwell, they should stay at home, as we are not able to give them the attention, they require throughout the session with one adult attending to their needs. In line with the Statutory Framework, we must adhere to strict ratios within the rooms and as we all know the best place for a sick child is at home with their main parent/ carer. • There is appropriate PPE to be worn which is kept in a plastic drawer found in the ladies cloakroom. This is to be used if a child displays COVID symptoms. • All areas of the preschool will be kept well ventilated, with door and windows open. • Any confirmed COVID cases will be reported to Ofsted and Public Health England. • If you collect your child from preschool with suspected COVID symptoms, you will be requested to seek medical advice as to whether to obtain a COVID test (PCR) and are asked to keep the setting informed of the outcomes. If a child or member of staff have been sick, have had a high temperature or diarrhoea, they must not return to the setting for at least 48 hours after symptoms last showed and they feel well enough to attend. • Important note: Whilst teething is known to cause such side effects as rosy cheeks and sore gums, NHS guidelines do not consider a high temperature to be a side effect of teething, as such it is not to be considered when suspecting COVID. • Public Health England and Early Years Services advise that if a child’s temperature reaches 38 and above the parent will be asked to collect the child and asked to seek medical advice. • A child should be well for 48 hours before returning to the preschool, as per our Managing Sick Children Policy, which can be found on our website at www.stmaryswoottonpreschool.co.uk, parents may also ask for a copy. • If a child’s temperature reaches 38 degrees and is showing symptoms of a fever, we will take the child’s temperature using a digital thermometer and contact the parent• Symptoms of a possible suspected case of COVID: Most people with coronavirus have a least one of the following symptoms and you will need to be aware of this if your child becomes unwell: A high temperature – hot to touch on chest or back. A new continuous cough – coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours. A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything or things smell or taste different to normal. Please note the infectious period is from two days prior to the onset of symptoms, or positive test result if asymptomatic, to 10 days after. • As of the 16th of August 2021, we will follow the revised Government Guidance in relation to self-isolation. Where this will no longer be required for children or those adults who have received both of their vaccinations – providing they do not have symptoms and are well. • Close contacts who are fully vaccinated or those under 18 years and 4 months will not need to self-isolate. • All close contacts will be advised to take a PCR test. These can be booked online through the NHS website. • Individuals identified as close contacts will not need to self-isolate while they are awaiting the results of their test. • If the PCR result is positive the individual must isolate and will be advised by NHS test and Trace. • Under 18s will be advised to take a PCR test, but this will only apply to Under 5s if the positive case is a household contact. • Single vaccinated/non vaccinated adults will be advised to self-isolation. • Double vaccinated adults will be advised to take a PCR test. • Circumstances that may require a child/family to self-isolate even though they are not displaying symptoms such as having travelled to a destination on the government list requiring isolation on return. You may like to refer to the document below: When to self-isolate and what to do-Coronavirus (COVID-19)-NHS([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)). • All toys and resources that are used by the children during the day must be cleaned using Milton or anti bac spray daily or placed in quarantine • All soft furnishings/soft toys and dressing up clothes will continue to be washed regularly. • Sand play is closely monitored, and sand changed regularly. Children wash hands before and after play in the sand tray • If a member of staff develops suspected COVID symptoms whilst working at the preschool they will be sent home immediately and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance and seek medical advice in regard to testing. |
|  | **Food Preparations** | • We will continue to provide healthy snacks. • Staff will wear appropriate PPE to minimise the risk of contamination to the food. • Staff must ensure that they wash/ sanitise their hands before and after snack and lunch breaks.  |
|  | **Well-being and education** | • Children will 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 will be supported to use sanitiser/ handwashing where necessary. • Children will be supported to understand the changes and challenges they may be encountering as a result of COVID. • Staff need to ensure they are aware of children’s attachments and their need for emotional support at this time. • Through imaginative play staff will teach children about social distancing and the importance of changes we are now experiencing in our lives. • Activities will support and nurture children in developing their social and emotional well-being and resilience. • Drop off and collection will continue to take place at the side gate in the garden (weather permitting) • Any parents/ carers who have symptoms or have been requested to self-isolate are politely reminded not to attend the setting. • Feel free to contact us through telephone and email if you have any questions or queries during the day. |
|  | **Personal Hygiene** | •Staff and children are expected to wash their hands for 20 seconds with running water and soap and then dry thoroughly. Handwashing is encouraged throughout the day at regular intervals. • Staff, parents, and children should sanitise their hands on arrival at the preschool as they depart at the end of the day. • Hand sanitiser is provided in the main hall and areas around the preschool. • Nappies will continue to be disposed of in a hygienic manner (double bagged)• All gloves and PPE will be disposed in a nappy sack immediately after use placed in a closed bin. • Please discourage your children from bringing in toys from home unless essential. We understand that some children require a comforter, and we will endeavour to ensure that these are accessible to the individual child only. This will help prevent children becoming distressed when another child wants their toy, as well as preventing loss, damage, or transfer of viruses. • Posters are displayed in the preschool to demonstrate good hygiene practices. • Staff are encouraged to sneeze in the collar of their clothing. • Windows are to be opened throughout the day to ensure good ventilation in the rooms prior to the children entering the preschool. • Staff use their own mugs and no washing up is to be left in the sink area. • Staff lunches are kept in sealed containers or bags only. • Regular spot checks will be carried out by the staff to ensure cleaning is of a high standard throughout the preschool. |
|  | **Cleaning** | • An enhanced cleaning schedule is in place to include all furniture, surfaces and children’s toys and equipment. • Touch points and handwashing facilities are cleaned and sanitised regularly throughout the day. • A cleaner is employed to come into the preschool after close to ensure all areas are cleaned to a high quality. |
|  | **Risk Assessment** | • We have a risk assessment in place where consideration has been given to any adaptations to usual practice. • Our risk assessment highlights any risks in the COVID pandemic, and the safety control measures currently in place throughout the preschool. |
|  | **PPE** | • Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in Early Years settings to protect against COVID transmission. • PPE should continue to be worn as normal for nappy changing and the administration of first aid. |
|  | **Communications** | • Parents will receive clear communication regarding the safe operating procedure and measures being taken to ensure the safety of their children and themselves. |
|  | **Transport**  |  • Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to the preschool alone, using their own transport. • Parents should not leave car seats, scooters, or buggies in the setting premises due to space restrictions and transmission of viruses. • Outings from the setting into the local community are risk assessed and in line with government guidelines. |
|  | **Visits** | • Attendance to the setting is restricted as far as practically possible to staff and children unless there is essential maintenance that needs to be carried out. Essential work will be carried out, as far as possible, when the preschool is closed to the children. |
|  | **Resources** | • Children should not bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their well-being. • All resources required for play and learning experiences of children should be regularly washed and/or sterilised where appropriate. |
| **Supplies** | **Procurement and monitoring** | • The setting ensures an adequate supply of essential supplies and plans are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies. Supplies are needed for the infection control. • PPE is monitored to meet the operational needs of the preschool. |
|  | **Lateral Flow Testing** | • All staff are offered and encouraged to participate in twice weekly Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests, these are free and available to all staff in the preschool. They are used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals and therefore support us in making our environment as safe as possible. • Staff may conduct the test at home, before coming into work, twice a week. • Anyone who proves positive as a result from the testing will self-isolate immediately for a 10- day period and will be required to inform the setting with immediate effect. |