

Policy statement

Jiminy Crickets Pre-school 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.

Policy aims

This Policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within the pre-school 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.

Procedures

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 physical distancing is implemented as far as possible alongside good hygiene practices whilst avoiding coming into contact with infected children and adults or anyone displaying symptoms. It states the protective measures put in place for children, parents and staff as best as possible to ensure the risk of transmission is reduced. We will continue to follow 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 bubbles and limiting numbers)
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE)
- Testing

Focus/ Areas of Consideration / Recommendations

Children

- Attendance

Only children who are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result should attend the setting.

Providers may consider taking temperatures of children on arrival and risk assessing with regular health questionnaires.

Extremely vulnerable children should continue under government advice to shield.

Families who attend at least two settings should choose only one for the remainder of the term to ensure their 'bubble' remains small.

- Physical Distancing/grouping

To start, we will be operating as one 'bubble'.

As we progress children may be organised into small individual groups or given designated spaces within the setting, this will also involve the outdoor area. Wherever possible these small groups or 'bubbles' should not mix during the day as best as possible. This is to minimise contact with others and mixing. Staff may exercise their own judgement during the day for the high standards of safety for all children.

Children in small groups should have the same staff team caring for them wherever possible to limit the amount of people coming into contact with each other.

Smaller amounts of children in the whole setting may be advised or preferable. As we usually run to capacity most days this could be achieved by, but not limited to:

A temporary cap on the amount of children in the setting at any one time.

Temporarily limiting hours to only 15 hours per child, to try to give all children access to some preschool time.

Changing children's hours to all mornings or all afternoons or 2 and a half days.

Grouping children to certain days, such as in groups of children moving to next school, this would help with transitions.

Prioritising children such as those who are vulnerable, those with special educational needs, those from households where both parents work, or work full time, and those children of keyworkers.

The use of communal internal spaces should be restricted as much as possible and outdoor spaces should be utilised as much as possible and used by 'bubbles' in different areas during the day.

A phased return may be best to ease their transition back into preschool if the preschool has been closed for quite a while.

Sunscreen should be applied by the parents / carers before the child arrives at the preschool. Use of the 8 hour sunscreen would be preferable, if not T-shirts covering shoulders and leggings would be preferable to minimise how much additional sunscreen the preschool staff will need to reapply.

- 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, coughing into an elbow, using a tissue and adopting a catch it, kill it, bin it regime.

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.

Snack times will continue but children will be asked to bring their own snack and own water bottle, which of course can be refilled by us throughout the day.

Lunchtimes will continue as usual and children will be encouraged to open their lunches themselves. If they do need assistance, staff will be on hand to help, using a pair of single use gloves per child. Staff will wash any of our used resources in very hot soapy water, using rubber gloves.

Workforce

- Attendance

Staff should only attend preschool if they are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result. Anyone is now eligible for testing if they display symptoms.

Providers may consider taking temperature of staff on arrival and risk assessing with regular health questionnaires for returning staff.

Consideration should be given to limiting the number of staff in the preschool at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day.

Staff hours, days they work and length of day may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy.

- Physical distancing/ grouping /safety

Staff will complete a risk assessment before opening to address any risks from the virus, ensure sensible measures are in place to control risks.

Staff to be informed of measures in place and sign a disclaimer to state they have read and understood the preschool policies and procedures.

Wherever possible staff should remain with the small group of children, the 'bubble' of children who they are allocated to and not come into contact with other groups.

Emergency revisions to the EYFS may have been implemented which provides some flexibility on ratios and qualifications to make this feasible.

Staff have been advised by the government not to wear PPE such as facemasks during their day, but should continue to wear PPE at the usual times such as personal care and wear disposable gloves and apron if completing one to one care. If supporting an ill child a face mask and visor should also be worn if a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained.

After dealing with an ill child who displayed symptoms of Covid-19 the staff member should continue to wear PPE and clean the affected area with disinfectant.

All PPE should be removed and disposed of following current government guidelines, the staff member should then wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.

The staff member who supported the unwell child does not need to go home unless they are developing symptoms themselves.

Staff may be required to be in charge of specific areas including the outdoors to minimise their contact with surfaces etc. This includes potentially working from one particular table if table top toys are available. Staff will be responsible to ensure appropriate cleaning takes place and enough ventilation is in the room such as opening windows. If doors are open ensure the safety of the children is maintained.

Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc.

Staff to wear fresh, clean clothes for each session.

Advise staff to take a shower immediately on returning home, to remove any germs they may have picked up.

- Training

Where possible, meetings and training sessions should be conducted through virtual conferencing.

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.

Online training will be available to allow training levels to be maintained if appropriate.

Parents

- Physical distancing

Only parents/carers who are symptom free, have completed the required isolation periods or achieved a negative test result will be able to drop off or collect their child.

Aim to minimise the 'pinch points' during the day and limit drop off and pick up to one parent per family.

Stagger the drop off and collection timings where possible which will avoid a queue of families waiting to enter the preschool.

Arrange drop off and pick up at the preschool middle gate to avoid parents entering the preschool unnecessarily.

When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained in a safe area sticking to government social distancing policies.

Consider allowing some parents to enter the preschool for the purpose of a settling in session if not doing so would cause a child distress, this will take place in the outdoor environment. The provider should consider measures to minimise contact between the parent and other children and staff members.

- 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.

Parents may be needed to support the running of the preschool by providing extra resources and consumables the preschool may not be able to source or afford such as cleaning wipes or products, tissues, toilet rolls etc. This is to ensure the safe running of the preschool is not hindered by lack of equipment and resources.

- 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 emergency 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.

- Travel

Wherever possible staff and parents should travel to preschool alone, using their own transport or if possible walk.

If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed.

Parents should be encouraged to ensure they do not leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, scooters in the setting premises or grounds.

Hygiene and Health & Safety

- Hand Washing

All children and staff must wash their hands upon arrival at the preschool for at least 20 seconds.

Children and staff members should be encouraged to wash their hands frequently, this includes before and after eating food, after activities, after visiting the toilet or playing outdoors, after sneezing, blowing their nose or coughing into their hand and dealing with unwell people.

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 and all staff are responsible in their area of work.

Communal area, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly and cleaned thoroughly throughout the day and before leaving every night.

A deep clean will be needed after a child has become ill in the area they were waiting.

- Waste disposal

All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner following government guidelines.

Tissues must be immediately disposed of and placed in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal.

Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal.

If a case of COVID-19 is suspected, any PPE used dealing with this case will be double bagged & put in a suitable and secure place marked for storage for 72 hours before disposing of in the usual refuse bins.

- Laundry

All items within the setting requiring laundering must be washed in line with NHS laundry guidelines.

Disposable cloths, paper towels will be used at all times, where possible

- Risk assessment

The setting and all activity should 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.

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 (dough, clay) and the suspension of the sharing of food and utensils.

Cut down on the available resources out in the preschool.

Remove anything which cannot be easily wiped down or washed at the end of the day.

Play food, play cutlery and crockery etc. should be removed or anything else which may be 'mouthed' by many children.

Baking, food play and finger painting should be avoided.

- PPE

Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early years settings to protect against COVID-19 transmission.

PPE should continue to be worn and disposed of as normal for nappy changing, one to one care and the administration of first aid.

If a child shows symptoms, staff should wear a face mask, visor, disposable gloves and apron if a 2-meter distance cannot be maintained at all times. PPE should be disposed of following government guidelines, as detailed above.

- Premises/Building

Where premises have been temporarily closed during the lockdown period or where they may need to temporarily close during future lockdowns appropriate Health & Safety checks should be conducted prior to reopening including legionnaires checks.

Keep windows open where possible to ensure good levels of ventilation. If doors are opened ensure the children's safety is maintained with locked gates.

- Resources

Children should not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Anything that is brought in from home should remain in the child's bag.

All resources required for play and learning experiences of children should be regularly washed and/or sterilized.

Any resources which are difficult to clean should be removed.

Equipment used by staff such as stationary, tablets etc. should be allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly.

- Supplies Procurement & monitoring

The preschool should ensure an adequate supply of essential supplies and contingency plans such as additional suppliers are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies.

The preschool will not be able to operate without 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 as and when 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 and facemasks. These items will be washed at a high temperature in accordance with relevant guidelines and separate to any other preschool washing.

Normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed.

Our only option is to have packed lunches which the children will bring in, along with their own snack & water bottle.

- 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 current NHS guidance.

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 such as the addition of face mask, visor disposable gloves and apron.

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 ideally should be the person dealing with the unwell child and should continue to wear their PPE. This should then be disposed of according to current government guidelines as detailed above.

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.

- When to self-isolate

The medical advice is clear: you must self-isolate if you have coronavirus symptoms or live in the same household as somebody who does. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or

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)

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

For more information, read the further guidance on symptoms.

If you have one or more of these symptoms, you must self-isolate straight away for 7 days – or longer if you still have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste.

If you live in the same household as someone with coronavirus symptoms, you must self-isolate straight away for 14 days.

- NHS test and trace service

Part 1: for someone with symptoms of coronavirus

1. isolate: as soon as you experience coronavirus symptoms, medical advice is clear: you must self-isolate for at least 7 days. Anyone else in your household must self-isolate for 14 days from when you started having symptoms
2. test: order a test immediately at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access
3. results: if your test is positive, you must complete the remainder of your 7-day self-isolation. Anyone in your household must also complete self-isolation for 14 days from when you started having symptoms. If your test is negative, you and other household members no longer need to self-isolate
4. share contacts: if you test positive for coronavirus, the NHS test and trace service will send you a text or email alert or call you with instructions of how to share details of people with whom you have had close, recent contact and places you have visited. It is important that you respond as soon as possible so that we can give appropriate advice to those who need it. You will be told to do this online via a secure website or you will be called by one of our contract tracers.

Part 2: if you are contacted by the NHS test and trace service because you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus

1. alert: you will be alerted by the NHS test and trace service if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus. The alert will usually come by text, email or phone call. You should then log on to the NHS test and trace website, which is normally the easiest way for you and the service to communicate with each other – but, if not, a trained call handler will talk you through what you must do. Under-18s will get a phone call and a parent or guardian will be asked to give permission for the call to continue
 2. isolate: you will be told to begin self-isolation for 14 days from your last contact with the person who has tested positive. It's really important to do this even if you don't feel unwell because, if you have been infected, you could become infectious to others at any point up to 14 days. Your household doesn't need to self-isolate with you, if you do not have symptoms, but they must take extra care to follow the guidance on social distancing and handwashing and avoid contact with you at home
 3. test if needed: if you develop symptoms of coronavirus, other members of your household must self-isolate immediately at home for 14 days and you must book a test at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access. If your test is positive, you must continue to stay at home for at least 7 days and we will get in touch to ask about your contacts since they must self-isolate. If your test is negative, you must still complete your 14-day self-isolation period because the virus may not be detectable yet - this is crucial to avoid unknowingly spreading the virus
- Monitoring of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the setting manager/chairperson, new government legislation and policies will be incorporated appropriately as and when required or informed.

Legal framework

Coronavirus Act 2020

Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)

Health and Safety Executive (HSE),

Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020 (1st June 2020)

Preparing for the wider opening of early years & childcare settings from 1 June 2020 (24th May 2020)

Actions for early years & childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak (2nd June 2020)

Safe working in education, childcare & children's social care (14th May 2020)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Implementing protective measures in education & childcare settings (1st June 2020)

Use of free early education entitlements funding during Coronavirus (28th May 2020)

Safe working in education, childcare & children's social care including the use of PPE 14th May 2020)

Covid-19: Cleaning in non-healthcare settings (15th May 2020)

Planning guide for early years & childcare settings (24th May 2020)

Early years Foundation stage: Coronavirus disapplications (1st June 2020)

NHS Test & trace: how it works (27th May 2020)

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.

This policy was adopted by	Jiminy Crickets Preschool
On	<hr/> 02/06/2020
Date to be reviewed	<hr/> 02/06/2021
Signed on behalf of the provider	<hr/>
Name of signatory	<hr/> Henrietta Bridgman
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	<hr/> Chair
	<hr/>