

COVID-19

NURSERY POLICY & PROCEDURE

This policy will be reviewed regularly and amended pages will be circulated as required by the Managing Director.

Staff are requested to keep a copy of this policy, and to ensure that they have familiarised themselves with its contents

Signed:

LR Merrison

Ian Merrison, Manager Director,
Updated 24th February 2022

54 St James Street, Liverpool, L1 0AB;

Tel: 07831 508 365;

e-mail: admin@firststepsenterprise.co.uk

Company Registration Number: 08918285

COVID-19 NURSERY POLICY & PROCEDURE

Please note that advice regarding symptoms and self-isolation may change rapidly. For the most up-to-date advice, go to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

It is our policy to encourage and promote good health for all the children, staff and visitors to our nursery. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 we will follow guidance from the Public Health Agency on infection control.

Responsibilities

The footprints@childcare settings this document covers are operated by First Steps Enterprise Limited. Responsibility for these settings and their practice is the ultimate responsibility of First Steps Enterprise Limited. The company has delegated operational responsibilities to the footprints@childcare settings as follows:

footprints@childcare settings are responsible for the safeguarding and care of all children who attend. We will support their development as set out in the early year's foundation stage statutory framework. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>.

We will work closely with local agencies, services and settings to actively look for signs of harm given the greater risk of harm some children may have been exposed to through the Covid-19 outbreak.

footprints@childcare settings are responsible for planning and implementing appropriate protective measures to reduce Covid-19 transmission. This also includes the process that should be followed if anyone develops Covid-19 symptoms whilst attending or working in our settings. This guidance has been developed with advice from Public Health England (PHE)

footprints@childcare settings will work closely with the local authorities who are responsible for coordinating a response to the arrangements, working alongside early years settings to ensure settings are able to open and that demand for places and capacity is sufficient for those in priority groups as well as meeting local need.

Infection Prevention and Control

Keeping children, staff and visitors to our settings safe is our utmost priority. This section of our policy sets out the public health advice early years settings must follow to minimise the risks of Covid-19 transmission. It also includes the process we will follow if anyone develops Covid-19 symptoms whilst attending.

- **Risk Assessment** – A full health and safety risk assessment has been carried out for each of our footprints@childcare settings. This allows us to identify and assess risks and put in place

proportionate control measures. The full details of the risk assessment for each of our footprints@childcare settings are available upon request.

- **People who are at increased risk from Covid-19** – People who have been previously classed as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else but CEV people may wish to think particularly carefully about the additional precautions they may take.

In some circumstances, staff or children may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice, this includes pregnant women.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-review-of-disparities-in-risks-and-outcomes>.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-women-of-childbearing-age-currently-pregnant-planning-a-pregnancy-or-breastfeeding>

- **Staff and Children travelling from abroad** – All staff and children travelling to England must adhere to the current travel legislation <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

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.

- **Mixing** – It is no longer recommended that it is necessary to keep groups apart as much as possible. footprints@childcare has an Outbreak Management Plan in place to cover the possibility that in some local areas it may become necessary to reintroduce keeping small groups apart for a temporary period or if there is an outbreak in the setting.
- **Tracing Close Contacts and Self-Isolation** – From 24th February, close contacts are no longer required to self-isolate or advised to take part in daily testing. Contact tracing has ended.

If there is a substantial increase in positive cases in the setting, footprints@childcare will follow their established outbreak management plan and seek advice from their local health protection team as appropriate.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

- **Protective Measures and Procedures** – These are the systems of control that footprints@childcare settings will take to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 in our settings:

Control Measures:

- 1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by strongly advising those who have Covid-19 symptoms, do not attend the setting.**

To reduce the risk in our settings we seek to strongly advise that staff, children or other adults do not come into the setting if they have Covid-19 symptoms <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/> and to self-isolate and book a PCR test.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts>

We reserve the right to refuse entry to the nursery to any member of staff, student, volunteer, child or visitor who is symptomatic of Covid-19 as is policy for any infectious illness.

If anyone in the setting becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), we recommend they be sent home and advised to book a PCR test.

If a child with Covid-19 symptoms is awaiting collection, they should be moved to designated isolation bay in each setting with appropriate adult supervision. This area should, if possible, provide ventilation and be at least 2 meters away from other people. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should be taken to a separate toilet if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided and must be worn by staff caring for the child while they wait collection if a distance of 2 meters cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

As is usual practice, in an emergency, call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Anyone with Covid-19 symptoms should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any children who have been in close contact with them **do not** need to go home to self-isolate. However, they **are advised** self-isolate if they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test).

Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must

be cleaned with normal disinfectant after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection to other people. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

2. Use of face coverings.

We **strongly recommend** face coverings be worn by staff:

- At drop off and collection times, when staff have interactions with the child's parent/carers and a times when they may physically need to separate a child from their carer.
- We recognise that face coverings may have a negative impact on interactions with children, and their use when interacting with children in settings should be avoided. However, if an individual staff member deems a situation appropriate to wear a face covering and/or face shield, it shall be left to the individuals discretion. An individual member of staff is permitted to wear a face shield (not mask) in the setting more generally if they wish to do so.

Children under the age of 12 are not required to wear face coverings.

The process of safe removal of face coverings should be clearly communicated to all staff and visitors in certain situations where face coverings are worn in the setting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own#how-to-wear-a-face-covering>

Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the staff storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where the face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.

Footprints@childcare settings will stock a small supply of face coverings to be used in situations where PPE is required when supporting symptomatic children and for emergency use where an adult cannot supply one of their own.

3. Clean hand thoroughly more often than usual.

Covid-19 is an easy virus to kill when it is on the skin. This can be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser.

footprints@childcare settings will ensure that children and staff clean their hands regularly and **will ensure there remains a good stock of hand gel, hand soap and disposable paper towels.**

We endeavour to build these routines into our setting culture and help ensure younger children and those with complex needs understand the need to follow them.

4. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach is very important and footprints@childcare settings will ensure they have enough tissues and bins available in the setting to implement it. All bins should be lined and sealed and emptied daily. As with hand washing, younger children will be supported to get it right and it is built into setting routines.

5. Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products.

In addition to the standard daily cleaning, setting staff will maintain a timetable of cleaning throughout the session of main contact areas such as door handles, taps, toilets, sinks and regularly used toys and resources.

6. Keep Occupied Space Well Ventilated.

When settings are operational, ensure that the space is well ventilated and that a comfortable environment is maintained. Poorly ventilated spaces should be identified, and steps taken to increase the flow of fresh air. Consideration should be made when visitors are present in the setting to increase the flow of ventilation, for example, show rounds, parent meetings etc

7. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

The majority of staff will not wear (PPE) beyond what they would normally need for their work, e.g. changing nappies, cleaning. PPE is provided in all our footprints@childcare settings and is only needed in a very small number of cases, including:

- Where a child becomes ill with Covid-19 symptoms while in the setting, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.
- Where a child has complex needs and physical support is needed.

8. Contain any outbreak by following local protection team advice.

Footprints@childcare will action the Outbreak Management Plan if either of the following thresholds are met:

- a higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to COVID-19 infection
- evidence of severe disease due to COVID-19, for example if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital due to COVID-19
- a cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students within the affected group

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings>

9. Notify Ofsted

It is no longer a requirement to notify Ofsted of a positive Covid-19 case for staff or children.

Visitors and non-staff members

Visitors are now permitted in the setting. However, footprints@childcare will continue to risk assess this to ensure that safe practice is maintained, by:

▪ **New Admissions**

- Prior to the visit, ensure that parent/carers are made aware of our system of controls.
- Ensure visits take place outside of operational hours. If this is not possible, then to select a time when there are minimal children are in attendance and the outside area can be used.
- Ensure that visitors sanitise and/or wash their hands upon arrival and departure.
- Limit the time allocated for each visit.

▪ **Parents settling children**

Parents/carers are discouraged from entering the setting. However, there may be times when a child will require enhanced support in settling in, especially with younger children and babies.

- Parents/carers are aware of our system of controls and their responsibilities in supporting it when visiting a setting with their child.
- Stay for a limited amount of time (ideally not more than an hour)
- Avoid close contact with other children.

▪ **Other visits by parents/carers**

Parents/carers are discouraged from entering the setting unless there is specific need. Children should be dropped off and collected at the nursery door, where the practitioner will discuss any hand over information and take responsibility for the child.

▪ **External Professionals**

In instances where we need to use other professional agencies such as social workers, speech and language therapists or SEND inclusion officers, setting staff will ensure that they closely follow our system of controls in the setting, attend for a limited amount of time (ideally not more than an hour) and the number of attendances will be kept to a minimum.

▪ **Other visitors**

Other visitors to the setting such as contractors will where possible take place outside operational hours. Where there is no alternative but to visit during operational hours, guidance on our system of controls will be communicated. Staff will sign the contractor in and keep accurate records. At no times, will a contractor be left unsupervised.

Attendance

All children who normally access childcare should now attend the setting as normal.

footprints@childcare settings are mindful that many parents may be anxious about sending their child into the setting. Clear communications with parent/carers regarding the measures being taken to ensure the safety of their children will be necessary, including the role they play, as parents, in the safe operating measures that are in place.

Updated guidance will be shared with parent/carers via our website www.firststepsenprise.co.uk and also our Facebook, Twitter and Linked In pages.

footprints@childcare nursery settings welcome children from other nursery settings which are closed. Important information provided by the parents will need to be obtained prior to admittance including emergency contact details, dietary requirements and medical needs to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child. Where possible, we will seek information from the nursery provider on the child's learning and development needs, although, we recognise this will not always be possible.

If one of our footprints@childcare settings needed to close, we would work closely with the local authority to identify alternative provision for our children.

In the case of vulnerable children, we would notify the local authority (and social worker, where relevant) that these vulnerable children need alternative provision. In this instance, we will work closely with local authority and families to support this.

Vaccinations

When offered a Covid-19 vaccination, staff are very strongly encouraged to undertake this. Staff will be allowed time to go to a vaccination appointment should it fall in work time. Staff should report any issues arising from vaccination to management.

Further considerations for operating the settings

- **Supply Staff** – Our priority is to keep staffing as consistent as possible. However, in circumstances where we experience staff shortages, we will take the following steps:
 1. Flex up existing staff from the effected setting, trying to maintain consistency where possible.
 2. First Steps agency staff. Considerations should be made on how to minimise the number of agency staff attend each setting and where possible, agree on a weekly basis rather than daily.

3. Limiting children accessing to vulnerable groups, key worker children and 3 year olds only.

- **Shared Premises** – footprints@childcare settings who operate on shared premises will carry out a full and detailed risk assessment. Where risks are identified, we will work collaboratively with the other provider to share and agree on best practice to following all guidance and measures set out in this document.
- **Wrap around care** – footprints@hattonhill nursery provide wrap around childcare for children under the age of 5 for children who attend Hatton Hill Primary School nursery. We will continue to implement the guidance contained in this policy.

footprints@kingskids after school club provides an after-school club for children attending Kings Meadow Primary School for children of mixed ages between 3 and 11 years. We will have regard to measures outlined in

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

- **Staying in touch with parents/carers whose child is at home**

If a child is unable to attend the setting due to isolating, local restrictions, nursery closure, shielding etc, Footprints@childcare early years nursery settings will make every attempt to stay in touch with the family/child. We will have plans in place of how to:

- Continue to support the learning of children including maintaining contact with their key person.
- Support parents/carers in providing a positive learning environment at home.
- Direct parents/carers to learning resources such as: Hungry Little Minds Campaign that features tips and practical activities that parents can do at home with children. BBC Tiny Happy People and the National Literacy Trust's Family Zone.

Footprints@childcare settings will keep in close contact with the more vulnerable children not attending provision for safeguarding purposes and will seek support of the local authority if needed.

- **Side effects of children taking a vaccination or teething** – Routine vaccines may cause a mild fever in children. This is a common and expected reaction, and isolation is not required unless Covid-19 is suspected. Staff should check with a child's parent/carers if any vaccinations have recently been given or if their child is teething.

