

ALDERSHOT GARRISON PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS



TOYEBOX EARLY YEARS CENTRE

Epidemic and Pandemic Policy and Procedure (Management of Covid-19)

Statement of Intent

Aldershot Garrison Pre-school Settings (Toyebbox Early Years Centre) intend to use this policy to set out the measures we will take to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 and minimise the risks posed to all children, families and staff using our settings.

This policy will be shared with all staff and parents and carers who are accessing the preschool premises or who choose to send their child to preschool. It has regard for Government and Local Authority guidance, Ofsted guidance and other relevant publications, such as the Early Years Foundation Framework (EYFS). Please note that this policy may be susceptible to changes as the Government issues further Guidance and in the light of experience gained. Management will update staff and parents of any changes as soon as possible by email or Tapestry. Parents should make sure that they can access Tapestry and, if not, they must inform the preschool manager immediately. This policy will also be placed on the Aldershot Garrison Pre-school Settings website. The preschool's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Risk Assessment and Guidance document supports this policy statement.

You will be able to find up to date information about Coronavirus at www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public

Focus and Areas of Consideration

Parents, Visitors, Drop Off, Collection & Communication

- We are implementing a phased return for children and staff members as recommended by the Department of Education. Guidelines state that where social distancing is not possible, such as in an early year's environment, a cap on numbers and reduction of children is recommended. Further information can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-setings
- It has been necessary to shorten the preschool day for the full-time children or those doing full days for the time. Parents will be informed individually of what this means for their child.

- We kindly request that all children are dropped off and collected by one parent only from the household on each drop off/pick up; as a social distancing measure, this should ideally be the same person on each occasion and siblings should not accompany the parent wherever possible.
- Parents must not congregate outside the main preschool gate or surrounding areas to support social distancing rules.
- Where possible please leave pushchairs, car seats, bikes, scooters etc. at home to reduce the amount of personal items being stored on site to minimise cross contamination.
- Parents will **not** be permitted to enter the preschool grounds. Children will be collected from the main gate/front door by a senior member of staff during allocated drop off times (parents will be notified of these individually) and escorted to their bubble room where they will be met by a familiar staff member from their room. This is to minimise the amount of people on site. Our staff will be welcoming, positive and have a smile on their face and they will be ready to greet children and offer a hug or cuddle as we understand that some children may experience anxiety about returning to preschool. Room staff will give a courtesy call to update parents if their child appears upset or distressed at drop off as soon as they have settled and parents are welcome to phone preschool throughout the day to check on their children. (01252 325307)
- On arrival at preschool, all children will be taken to their allocated bathroom to wash their hands following recommended procedures (wet hands, apply soap, rub all surfaces of hands for at least 20 seconds, rinse thoroughly and dry)
- There will be a designated hand sanitising station by the gate and we ask that parents use the sanitizer provided before handing over any bags/coats etc. to staff responsible for handovers.
- Children should bring a named plastic bag containing a spare set of clothes, a sun hat and sun cream, which will remain at preschool. Any soiled clothes will be returned at pick up time and fresh clothes should be provided (in a plastic bag) for the next occasion the child attends preschool.
- Children are not allowed to bring any toys, teddies or dolls (apart from a comforter e.g. for sleep if this is needed) and should not wear dressing up clothes to preschool to minimise the spread of germs.
- Social distancing must be followed when dropping off and collecting children. Two metre markers have been placed along the floor to assist with ensuring the correct recommended distance is maintained.
- Collection of children will also occur during allocated times. Again, handovers will be undertaken by senior staff. If a parent wishes to collect their child *before* their allocated pick-up time, please phone the preschool beforehand.
- Daily handovers for all children will, on a temporary basis, be made via an entry on Tapestry. If you wish to speak with a member of staff, please phone and we will arrange a time suitable to all for you to chat over the phone. (01252 325307)
- Accident/Incident forms will be completed as normal and will be countersigned by management. You will receive an email to inform you of what has happened and your child will bring a copy of the form home with them.
- You are asked to email the preschool to notify us of any existing injury that your child has sustained. We will contact you by phone if we notice anything and this information has not been shared beforehand.

- If you need to discuss any matter with the preschool manager or any staff members, please email or telephone the preschool with your request and a suitable time will be arranged as soon as possible. (01252 325307)
- Government guidelines recommend that where possible, parents and staff members travel to preschool alone using their own transport or else walk or cycle. If public transport is used parents and staff should have regard for the relevant government guidance www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-transport-and-travel-guidance
- Visitors to the preschool will be not be permitted unless essential and, where possible, these visits will be conducted outside of operating hours to minimise the amount of people in the preschool, to support social distancing and minimise the spread of germs.
- As a temporary measure there will be no parent events to support government guidelines of no group gatherings.
- At present we will not be able to offer any extra sessions as a means of controlling the number of children in the preschool and arranging staff working hours. Children must be collected at the allocated time to enable staff to undertake a thorough cleaning of the premises, resources and equipment before they leave. *Any late pick-ups will be subject to our normal late collection policy.*
- If a child or staff member tests positive all children in their 'bubble' will be required to isolate for 14 days. As per our terms and conditions, childcare fees will be required to continue to be paid.
- All parents will be required to sign a parent declaration form to confirm they have read this policy and agree to comply with the measures implemented by the preschool, as detailed, and also agree to implement and follow government guidelines **before** their child can return to preschool. This should be returned to preschool by email, using an electronic signature.
- All parents will be asked to complete a 'More about Me' My Experiences during lock-down form for their child before they can return to preschool. This should be returned by email.
- Parents must disclose if their child or anyone in their household is unwell or displaying any symptoms or has been tested for COVID-19 with a positive result.
- As a temporary measure payment of fees and/or catering charges should be made online rather than in person at the setting. Details of the preschool's bank details are as follows:
- Account no. 11753426 Sort code 16-19-26 quoting child's surname & invoice number
- Alternatively, payment can be made via go cardless, with whom the company has made an arrangement. For further information or help in setting this up, please contact our accountant on 07887 504256 or by email finance@aldershot-nurseries.com.

Changes to how we operate the preschool

- The management team will work together to implement adequate plans to support small group interactions within the preschool by arranging children into smaller groups or 'bubbles' (up to a maximum of 16 per group as recommended in government guidelines). As far as possible each 'bubble' of children will be cared for and supported by the same allocated staff members who will continue to provide the same high standard of care, love and opportunities for learning as we would normally do.
- Room layouts and outdoor areas will be adjusted as necessary to create sectioned off areas for groups of children to prevent mixing with other groups and staff members (unless there is an emergency). Any areas that may be used by different groups (at different times) will be cleaned thoroughly before the next group arrives.
- Outdoor play and learning will be maximised as government research shows the spread of the virus is significantly less outside. All groups will have allocated outdoor play

opportunities and all areas will be cleaned prior to the next group entering the area if the same area is used.

- Outdoor areas and all equipment will be sprayed with a child friendly antibacterial cleaning product at the end of each day with a pressure sprayer.
- Rooms will be deep cleaned with antibacterial child friendly products at the end of each day to minimise the spread of germs; this will include chairs, tables and all surface areas. Carpets and rugs will be steam cleaned.
- The preschool is cleaned daily by staff working for Aspire, who will continue to carry out their normal duties. The preschool manager will liaise with cleaners as necessary (as per our normal procedure) for instance with regard to products used and to ensure attention to detail.
- Throughout the day staff members will clean all toys, resources, equipment and surfaces, frequently with antibacterial, child friendly products. Toilets will be cleaned after each use.
- There will be sufficient staff working in each 'bubble' to both ensure children are fully supported in their play and learning and that necessary cleaning can take place.
- It is not intended that resources will be shared by different groups; however, if this happens, items will be cleaned before and after each use.
- Equal opportunities will remain for all children of all ages.
- The staff will clean taps, door handles, light switches and frequently used areas in communal areas several times throughout the day to maintain the strictest of hygiene levels.
- Children who are old enough will be taught about personal hygiene through age appropriate songs and stories.
- Children will be encouraged and supported in washing their hands on arrival at preschool, before and after mealtimes, before and after outdoor play and after toileting to promote maximum good hygiene practices.
- Comforters may be brought into preschool but must remain at preschool and taken home only at the end of each week to be cleaned and returned the following week (some parents may require to buy two of the same comforter).
- Some soft furnishings will be removed as a temporary precaution to minimise germs spreading such as pillows, cushions, throws and rugs, as recommended in the DFE publications.
- Dressing up clothes and items that are not able to be washed on a daily basis such as fabric books and teddy bears or items that cannot be easily cleaned will also be removed as they can harbour germs, as recommended in the DFE publications.
- Malleable materials such as sand and water play and playdough will be available to individual 'bubbles' and will be discarded or cleaned at the end of the day. The preschool reserves the right to make changes to this intention if it proves difficult to manage.
- Tents, enclosed play areas such as cardboard box play and sensory ball pits will also be temporarily removed to avoid close contact between children in enclosed spaces. *(This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis).*
- There will be no junk modelling play at present to prevent germs being brought into the preschool rooms.
- All rooms must have a window or door open at all times to enable ventilation throughout the preschool, normal safeguarding and health and safety measures will be followed.
- Government guidelines which are explained in full detail below will be strictly followed if any child or staff member or a family member displays any symptoms of COVID-19.

- In the event of children attending more than one setting, as recommended by the local authority, parents must decide which **one** setting they wish their child to attend for the foreseeable future to minimise the number of children the child is exposed to and mixing with.

Food & Mealtimes Safety

- Children will remain in their groups with their allocated practitioners for all mealtimes. Groups will be kept apart to maintain social distancing.
- Self-serving of food, pouring of drinks and setting the table will be temporarily suspended and food will be served by an allocated staff member wearing PPE (gloves, apron and hairnet).
- Eating utensils and equipment will continue to be washed at a high temperature after each use to kill all germs and meet health and safety requirements.
- Only one member of staff will be allowed in the kitchen at any one time to avoid cross contamination and the spread of germs. Staff will be responsible for cleaning any surfaces they touch.
- Children's drinking cups/bottles will remain at preschool. Staff will sterilise these daily and closely monitor to ensure that children do not access another child's cup to minimise the spread of germs. As a temporary measure, for older children only staff will fill cups/bottles from the water fountain rather than children doing this independently. No shop purchased plastic water bottles will be permitted to reduce the risk of spreading germs.
- Parents to provide a snack/packed lunch in a disposable bag and that can be opened by the children. Also, parents to provide food that the children can eat with minimal help or intervention from the staff.

Staff Actions

- All staff members have completed Infection Control and 'Coronavirus Pandemic Awareness' training courses prior to returning to work to ensure they are completely up to date with all aspects of knowledge in relation to COVID-19 including symptoms, preventative measures and procedures in place.
- All staff members must read and sign a declaration via email to agree to comply with the measures listed in this policy (and other guidance materials and paperwork requested by management) before returning to work.
- Staff must agree to keep themselves up-to-date with any new guidance issued by management.
- Staff must agree to familiarise themselves and comply with all guidance issued by the government in their personal life to reduce the risks imposed to other staff members and children in the preschool. Failure to do so will result in management having to take further action.
- Staff will return to work in phases to support social distancing. Senior management will make this decision based on several factors.
- Staff will spend time in the preschool before starting work to children to familiarise themselves with the setting's COVID-19 risk assessment and guidance materials.
- Staff will receive clear communication regarding the role they play in ensuring safe operating procedures and will be encouraged to be part of the solution, with their input valued.

- Shielding staff members will not be permitted to work until they are instructed to do so by their GP, we will require this in writing.
- Following government guidelines, we recommend staff members walk or cycle to preschool where possible.
For further information please see www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-transport-and-travel-guidance
- Staff must follow all handwashing/sanitizing measures e.g. before and after meals or serving food, before and after indoor and outdoor play, before entering the preschool and before leaving the preschool etc.
- Staff are encouraged to remain in the building during lunch breaks, or to utilize nearby outdoor areas (an area of the preschool garden not used by children or their cars), whilst implementing social distancing.
- Staff are encouraged to prepare their lunches in advance, to avoid visiting shops during shifts. It is acceptable for staff to eat with the children. No fast food deliveries will be permitted to be brought into the preschool.
- Staff must leave their water bottles in the preschool rather than take them home each day. They must sterilize these regularly. No shop purchased plastic water bottles are permitted to be on the floor to reduce the risk of spreading germs.
- Staff members must implement social distancing measures, even when on breaks. They should limit their contact with colleagues not working in their 'bubble' and avoid physical contact with one another.
- Staff should not move between rooms unless instructed by management.
- As a temporary measure a relaxed approach to uniform is being introduced so that staff can change their clothes daily. Staff should have regard for Aldershot Garrison Pre-school Settings normal dress code when deciding what to wear and ensure that they dress appropriately and are presentable.
- As a temporary measure staff must not wear non-essential jewellery as these items can harbour germs and be difficult to keep clean.
- As a temporary measure staffs nails should be cut as short as possible and false nails must be removed; again to minimise the spread of germs and implement maximum good hygiene measures.
- If staff need to use the photocopier, preschool telephone or a tablet, they are responsible for cleaning these with an antibacterial wipe after each use.
- Mobile phones will now be stored in staff lockers. Staff should still adhere to the setting's mobile phone policy.
- Any essential meetings will be held in the community hall, with the window and patio door open at all times for ventilation purposes. This room may be inaccessible during these times. A sign will be displayed in the event of this occurring.
- Staff must not bring children to the office (unless for isolation purposes). They must remain in their rooms (or outside) at all times with their group. In the event of an emergency and the need for a manager, staff should call for attention. If prescribed medication is required, management will bring this to the room and supervise room leaders administering from a distance in an appropriate area.
- Staff must implement social distancing at all times with other staff members whom are not part of their group. Social distancing must be implemented where possible with group members.

- Staff will continue to provide the love, care and affection they have always shown children. This includes appropriate physical contact where required. Social distancing is not possible and does not apply to children in the staff members' group. Special measures will be implemented by our staff members during drop off as we understand some children may be feeling anxious about returning to preschool.
- Gloves must be worn for a single use task as per normal procedure e.g. changing a nappy and then disposed of appropriately.
- Government guidance states that face masks or coverings are not required for general use in early years settings. However, it is acknowledged that the wearing of PPE may give some staff confidence and therefore this will be permitted, with the situation monitored by the preschool manager
- One washable cloth face mask has been provided for each member of staff – staff are responsible for washing these daily and must ensure that handling of masks is done in a preventative way to void unintentional contamination.
- Social stories relating to the wearing of face masks will be shared with children. If parents would like a copy of the social story that we will share with children, they should speak with the preschool manager.
- Staff must disclose if themselves or anyone in their household is unwell or displaying any symptoms or has been tested for COVID-19 with a positive result.

Procedures & Further Information

Testing for early years staff

- The government has announced that coronavirus testing has been extended to all essential workers (including education and childcare workers) in England who have symptoms. This is available to critical workers who are worried about symptoms or self-isolating.

There are two routes for accessing the UK Testing Programme:

- The employer portal – this is for employers who wish to assist their employees with registration
- The employee portal – this allows individual key workers to book a test directly themselves.

Guidance on dealing with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

What to do if child or adult becomes unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 (either through travel to a specified country or area or contact with a confirmed case)

- ❖ Call NHS 111, or 999 in an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk). Anyone can do this on their behalf if this is easier. People who become unwell should be advised not to go to their GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- ❖ Whilst you wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, try to find somewhere safe for the unwell person to sit which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If

possible, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a shut door with an open window for ventilation. *(In preschool, we have set aside an area in the office as a designated medical room.)* The unwell person should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin. If no bin is available, put the tissue in a bag or pocket for disposing in a bin later. The room will need to be cleaned once they leave.

- ❖ If they need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if available, which again will need to be cleaned thoroughly after use.
- ❖ Children should tell a member of staff if they feel unwell. Parents can help with this by talking to children about the need to tell their teacher if they feel unwell or sad. *Please note that our staff are very observant and well-used to noticing if children are unwell or seem to be a little under the weather*

What to do if a case of COVID-19 is suspected in the preschool

- ❖ If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case in a childcare or educational setting, no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for COVID-19 are awaited. There is no need to close the setting or send children or staff home. Until the outcome of test results is known there is no action that staff members need to take apart from cleaning specific areas and disposing of waste, as per normal procedure.
- ❖ Once the results arrive, those who test negative for COVID-19 will be advised individually about their return to preschool.

What to do if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in the preschool

- ❖ The preschool will be contacted by the local Public Health England Health Protection Team to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. An assessment of each childcare or education setting will be undertaken by the Health Protection Team with relevant staff. Advice on the management of children and staff will be based on this assessment.
- ❖ The Health Protection Team will also be in contact with the patient directly to advise on isolation and identifying other contacts and will be in touch with any contacts of the patient to provide them with appropriate advice. Advice on cleaning of communal areas such as playrooms and toilets will be given by the Health Protection Team.
- ❖ If there is a confirmed case, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the preschool with advice from the local Health Protection Team. In most cases, closure of the childcare or education setting will be unnecessary, but this will be a local decision based on various factors.

What to do if children or staff in the preschool are contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19 who was symptomatic while attending the preschool

The definition of a contact includes:

- ❖ any child or staff member in close face-to-face or touching contact including those undertaking small group work (within 2 metres of the case for more than 15 minutes)
- ❖ talking with or being coughed on for any length of time while the individual is symptomatic
- ❖ anyone who has cleaned up any bodily fluids of the individual
- ❖ close friendship groups
- ❖ any child or staff member living in the same household as a confirmed case

Contacts are not considered cases and if they are well, they are very unlikely to have spread the infection to others, however:

- ❖ they will be asked to self-isolate at home for 14 days from the last time they had contact with the confirmed case and follow the home isolation guidance as per government guidelines
 - ❖ if they develop any symptoms within their 14-day observation period they should call NHS 111 for assessment
 - ❖ if they become unwell with cough, fever or shortness of breath they will be tested for COVID-19
 - ❖ if they require emergency medical attention, call 999 and tell the call handler or ambulance control that the person has a history of potential contact with COVID-19
 - ❖ if they are unwell at any time within their 14-day observation period and they test positive for COVID-19 they will become a confirmed case
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- ❖ Family and friends who have not had close contact (as listed above) with the original confirmed case do not need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities such as attending childcare or educational settings or work, unless they become unwell. If they become unwell, they should call NHS 111 and explain their symptoms and discuss any known contact with the case to consider if they need further assessment.
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- ❖ If a confirmed case occurs in the preschool the local Health Protection Team will provide you with advice and will work with the management team. Outside those that are defined as close contacts, the rest of the preschool does not need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities attending educational establishments or work as usual, unless they become unwell. If they become unwell, they will be assessed as a suspected case depending on their symptoms. The decision as to whether children and staff fall into this contact group or the closer contact group will be made between the Health Protection Team, the preschool and (if they are old enough) the child.

Advice should be given as follows:

- ❖ if they become unwell with cough, fever or shortness of breath they will be asked to self-isolate and should seek medical advice from NHS 111
- ❖ if they are unwell at any time within the 14 days of contact and they are tested and are positive for COVID-19 they will become a confirmed case and will be treated as such.

How to isolate an adult or child

If an adult becomes unwell and believes they have been exposed to COVID-19:

- ❖ If they become unwell in the workplace and have travelled to the affected countries the unwell person should be removed to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If possible, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a shut door, if it is possible to open a window, do so for ventilation.
- ❖ The individual who is unwell should call NHS 111 from their mobile, or 999 if an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk) and explain which country they have returned from in the last 14 days and outline their current symptoms. If the person affected

is not able for any reason to call NHS 111 themselves, then a staff member should call on their behalf.

- ❖ Whilst they wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, they should remain at least 2 metres from other people. They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag, then throw the tissue in the bin.
- ❖ If they need to go to the toilet whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate toilet, if available.

If a child becomes unwell and it is believed they have been exposed to COVID-19:

- ❖ The child must be isolated in the same manner as an adult; however, a familiar staff member should remain with them, as decided by management and they must keep their distance from the child, at least 2 metres.
- ❖ The adult must wear PPE - protective gloves, disposable apron and a face covering.
- ❖ To ensure the child and staff member's safety the child will be encouraged to sit in a chair or lie on a sleep mat in order to maintain their distance from the adult supporting them. They will be provided with a book or their favourite toy or comforter for entertainment.
- ❖ The child's parents will be called to collect the child immediately or emergency contacts if the parents are unreachable. They must collect the child within 30 minutes of the phone call or make arrangements for someone to collect the child within this time frame whilst adhering to current collection of children policies and procedures for safeguarding measures. If the child is struggling to breathe or displaying concerning symptoms 111 or an ambulance must be called immediately, at management's discretion and the parent informed.
- ❖ After the child has left the room used for isolation will need to be deep cleaned, including any objects/items touched.

Guidance on cleaning preschool after a case of COVID-19 (suspected or confirmed)

- ❖ Coronavirus symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath. Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the suspected case has come into contact with must be cleaned using disposable cloths and household detergents, according to current recommended workplace legislation and practice.

These include:

- ❖ • all surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
- ❖ • all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles and telephones
- ❖ Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected, except for as per normal current procedures. If a person becomes ill in a shared space, these should be cleaned as detailed above.

Disposing of waste in the preschool including tissues, if children, students or staff become unwell with suspected COVID-19

- ❖ All waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, aprons, gloves etc., should be double bagged and put in a suitable and secure place, marked for storage until either: the individual tests negative in which case waste can be put in with the normal waste or if the individual tests positive or results are unknown, waste should be stored separately for at least 72 hours and then put in with normal waste.

Guidance

As COVID-19 has only been recently identified, guidance to support professionals is regularly being updated or published. Up-to-date advice can be found through the following links

Guidance for educational settings

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19

Guidance for employers and business

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19
<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

Guidance for the public

www.gov.uk/coronavirus