

Covid-19 Policy and Procedures



Principle

The COVID-19 policy has been implemented to ensure the health and safety of children and staff within our settings. It is vital that this procedure is practiced and strictly adhered to during this pandemic. This is for the benefit of children, staff, and our wider community.

Statement of Intent

We have followed government guidelines in the development of this policy and the policy is subject to change. We have taken our guidance from the Department of Health, Public Health Agency and Early Years. We will liaise with the Early Years Team of the Health & Social Care Trusts immediately if any incident arises. Whilst we understand that we are amid a global pandemic, we at Wee Chicks still believe in the importance of play and in providing a safe and happy environment for children.

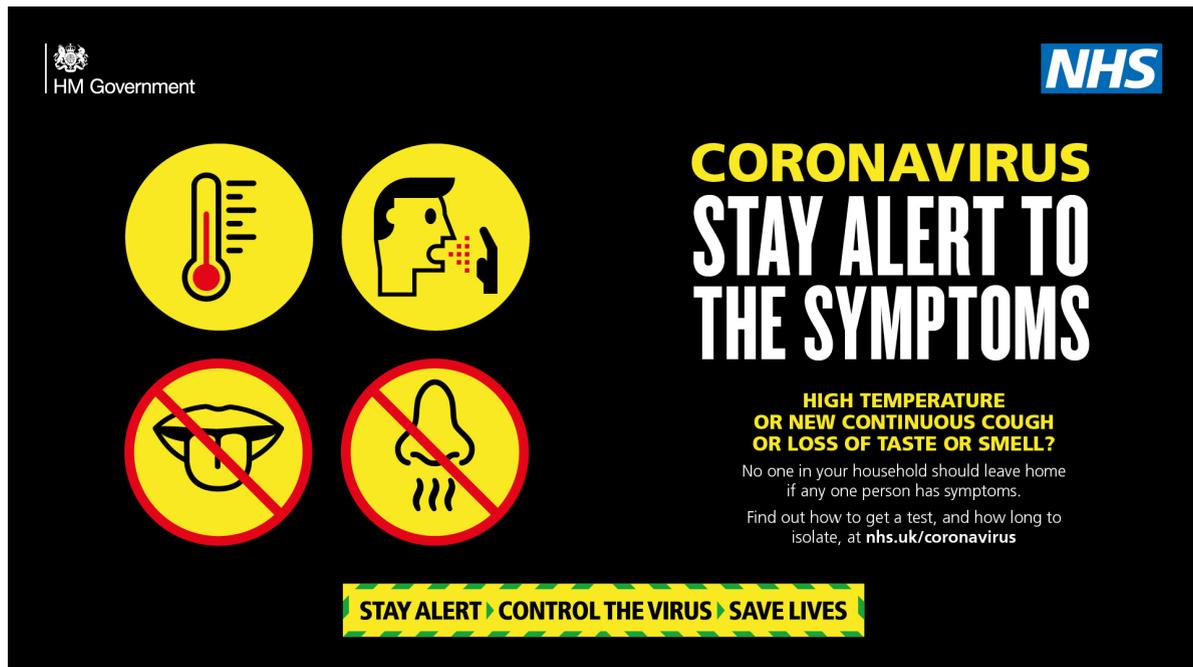
Procedures

On Arrival & Departure:

**We will have a designated arrival and departure door.

- All staff and children should be fit and well when attending our setting. If a staff member or child is unwell and showing Covid Symptoms they will not be allowed to enter the setting.
- Parents should adhere to social distancing rules and stand 2 meters away. Only one parent should be at the door at any one time. Parents are requested to wear a mask during drop off and collection.
- Parents will not be allowed to enter the setting and children will be dropped off and greeted by staff at the point of entry. We would encourage that only one parent should drop off or collect their child.
- A staggered approach may be implemented if deemed necessary Parents to ring when they arrive in the carpark. A member of staff will meet your child at the door.
- Staff may wear face masks during arrival and departure periods, detailed daily feedback will be sent via text, phone call or communicated at the door.

During COVID-19 all settings will close 30 minutes earlier than normal to allow for cleaning.



Children:

**Only children who are symptom free and or have completed the required isolation period and received a negative test result can attend the setting.

Parents will be contacted to collect their child without delay and seek medical advice on showing symptoms of Covid 19. This child will wait with a member of staff in the designated area until the parents arrive. It is important that if you get this call that you arrive as quickly as possible to collect your child This will be the room across the hallway. Staff will wear all necessary P.P.E during this time with windows open for necessary ventilation. In the event of an emergency, staff will call 999.

Please use the Covid Symptom Checker for guidance.

<https://check.covid-19.hscni.net/SymptomChecker/Introduction>

Parents are required to keep Wee Chicks informed if someone has tested positive for Covid 19 in your home.

Children will be supported in an age appropriate way to help them understand the social distancing, handwashing and hygiene requirements that are being used during this time. Children's emotional requirements will be of paramount concern to Wee Chicks during this time and we would ask that only essential comforters are brought in from home during this time.

Children will stay in smaller groups each day and each group will eat and play together to avoid any possible transmission. These are called Play Pods and a play pod will be no more than 16 children.

Staff:

**Only staff who are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period (if symptoms have presented) or have achieved a negative COVID-19 test result can attend the setting.

- Staff are required to inform their manager of any changes in their health as soon as possible.
- Staff will remain with the same small Play Pod depending on business needs.
- Staff members will avoid contact with each other including handshakes, hugs and will adhere to social distancing rules.
- Where possible training and meetings will be held via virtual conferencing facilities.

- All staff have received training in COVID-19 prevention and infection control.
- Testing – anyone experiencing symptoms can avail of COVID-19 testing.

Wee Chicks recognise this is a difficult time and will continue to support their employee's wellbeing, any staff with concerns should approach their managers as soon as possible.

Parents:

****Only parents who are symptom free and or have completed the required isolation period can attend the setting or who have received a negative test result and followed guidance..**

We would encourage that only one parent should drop off or collect at any one time.

If any member of your household develops symptoms (high temperature, new continuous cough, loss or change to sense or smell or taste) of COVID-19, or is waiting for a coronavirus test result, has tested positive you must isolate for a period of 14 days from the first day any person in your home displayed symptoms. (reference:<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>)

Parents are invited to either text, e-mail or phone with concerns or queries rather than discuss with staff face to face at the setting as we have reduced the number of people into our building to reduce the spread of infection, please be aware that this is very much a temporary arrangement during this time.

Hygiene and Health & Safety:

Ventilation – windows will be open during the day to ensure good ventilation.

Handwashing – all children and staff must wash hands using liquid soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds and dry with disposable hand towels (where hand washing facilities are not readily available hand sanitiser 70% ethanol will be used):

- on arrival
- frequently throughout the day
- before and after mealtimes
- before and after administering medication
- after any coughing or sneezing
- to remove any physical dirt
- after administering any first aid
- after using the bathroom, nappy changing and handling bodily fluids, waste or soiled items
- after handling waste baskets
- when moving from one play area to another
- after physical contact with others
- prior to departure

P.P.E – government guidance states that P.P.E is not required for general use in early years settings to protect against COVID-19 transmission at this time. However, P.P.E (gloves and aprons) will be used as normal during nappy changing, first aid and food preparation & distribution. If employees choose to wear face coverings then they will be supported in the workplace.

Masks will be used during handover (when parents meet with staff on arrival/departure) or in the event of a child becoming unwell. We will support any staff member who wishes to wear a mask at all times in work.

We will ensure good respiratory hygiene by implementing the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

Tissues are available throughout the setting.



Cleaning – we have an enhanced cleaning schedule implemented and recorded daily, that includes furniture, surfaces, toys, and equipment.

- Toilets: cleaned using standard cleaning materials followed by disinfectant spray after each use (including touch points of surfaces in the bathroom).
- High contact surfaces: touch points of light switches, faucets, door handles, tables, handrails, bannisters, doorbells will be disinfected twice daily.
- Electronic devices: tablets, phones, computers, laptops projectors & lightboxes, will be disinfected before and after each use.
- Children's toys & equipment: will be cleaned at the end of each day, any toys/equipment that are not easily disinfected will be put away until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Laundry: will be washed daily at 60° minimum with disinfectant added to the washing machine alongside standard washing powder. Laundry including bedding, blankets etc. will not be shared between children. Soiled items will be placed in a sealed, waterproof bag and returned to parents for washing.
- In the event of a child being unwell – staff will wash their hands thoroughly and clean the affected area with disinfectant to reduce any risk of passing infection on to others.

Food/Snack:

- Kitchen/food preparation areas - dishwasher will be set at 70° for each cycle, where washing dishes by hand, dishes will be washed with warm soapy water and dried with disposable paper towels. All surfaces will be cleaned & disinfected before and after each use.
- Please send lunch in a plastic bag so it can be disposed of after lunch/water bottles – must be in a sealed, labelled container, will be stored on arrival until lunchtime and returned at the end of the day.
- Any items that meet mouths such as cups, bottles and straws, cutlery will not be shared.
- Children will eat within their allocated Play Pods and afternoon snacks will be brought to them in their designated area.
- Staff will wear gloves and aprons when preparing and handling food.
- All staff have received food hygiene training.

Play & Activities:

Young children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff, with this in mind we will adapt existing games and introduce new activities that will allow for as much social distancing as possible, however we acknowledge that this cannot always be adhered to.

We aim for children to be outside as much as possible to play.

Children will stay in their own play pods and use their own play area at any one time, all play areas will be sanitised before and after use.

If a member of staff becomes unwell at a childcare setting

If a member of staff in childcare becomes unwell with a new cough or high temperature, or shows ANY one of the normal symptoms of the virus, they will be sent home immediately and advised to follow the COVID19 guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID19) infection guidance.

For further/'real-time' information, please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

In the event of a positive COVID-19 case:

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19) they should be sent home, advised to self-isolate for 7 days, and arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19. Further information is available at <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19#testing-for-essential-workers>

Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff who are attending the childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario

Where the child is 5 years and over, a young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their Play Pod within their childcare setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 10 days. The other household members of the Play Pod do not need to self-isolate unless the child, or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms. Further information is available at

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19#testing-for-essential-workers>

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, the Public Health Agency will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger number of other children may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole pod or setting. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary. **Further information is available at:**

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/contact-tracing>

Unfortunately we cannot refund fees in case of an outbreak of COVID19 unless our setting has been advised to close and we can not provide our service. If your child or your household has been asked to self isolate you will be required to continue to pay your child's fees.

Contact Details:

If parents have any concerns, they can contact the manager directly via phone or:

Kelly Molloy tel: 07746169489 email: info@weechicks.com