



6.11 COVID-19/Pandemic & Social Distancing policy

This policy was written during the COVID-19 pandemic and can be referred to should any future pandemic outbreaks occur until there is clear guidance from the government.

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

- The government has decided that at the time of writing this policy that all educational staff do not require PPE. Woodlands does however provide PPE for the day-to-day running of the setting, such as gloves and aprons for nappy changes and dealing with bodily fluids, these remain essential.
- The rigorous hygiene practices that are already established within our setting, including hand hygiene, will continue to provide an effective level of protection where no symptoms are present.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

During the COVID-19 pandemic the EYFS still applies, however, there are some areas which have been changed to help with these exceptional circumstances.

Ratios

Ratios remain the same for all early year's providers. Exceptions can be made during the COVID-19 crisis, as the EYFS already allows for changes to ratios in exceptional circumstances (section 3.30). "Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made."

Change for COVID-19:

- **Providers should use their "reasonable endeavours" to ensure that at least half of all other staff (excluding the manager) hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification. However, meeting this will not be a legal requirement.**
- **Providers that have remained open during the crisis may need to get back to full staffing levels once the period of temporary changes has ended. For these providers, there will be a transitional period of up to two months, where the relaxed requirements around qualification levels will be allowed to continue.**

The safety and well-being of each child and member of staff are at the heart of any decision to reduce our ratios during Covid-19 we will:-

- Try and meet the existing EYFS ratio requirements
- Where this is not possible use "reasonable endeavours" to ensure that at least half of our team holds at least a relevant Level 2 qualification to meet staff:child ratios.
- ensure that there is always a member of staff in setting who holds at least a full and relevant Level 3 qualification.

DBS checks

- These are still required for new staff, If an application had been made but the DBS disclosure has not arrived, new staff and volunteers can still care for children as long as they are supervised by someone with a DBS check.
- Under no circumstances can an unchecked member of staff be left alone with children.

Social distancing Procedure when dropping off or collecting children

The government guidance has been used to help ensure that the risk of virus spread for both staff and children is as low as possible. Woodlands will use the following procedure: -

- Staff and parents should wear face coverings when dropping off and collecting their children at all times.

- Staff will be taking the children's temperatures on arrival, anyone with a high temperature reading will not be allowed in setting.
- Tell parents that children displaying any symptoms of coronavirus are to remain at home for 10 days isolation period, Woodlands will refuse a child entry if we feel that the child may be infectious.
- A child will not be allowed back into setting until they have a negative PCR test result or completed the 10-day isolation period.
- Children will enter the setting via the side gate.
- Parents and visitors will not be allowed into setting to prevent the spread of the virus, on late arrival or collection of a child. Parents will be greeted at the front door by staff wearing face masks.
- Discourage parents from gathering together while waiting outside, markings will be on the floor showing 2 meters spaces to ensure that parents follow the government guidelines.
- Stagger lunch and snack times to reduce large groups of children gathering together at one time.
- Staff will try to follow the social distancing guidelines inside the setting as much as possible.
- In addition to our normal hand hygiene, children will wash their hands for at least 20 seconds when they arrive at the setting and before they leave.

Woodlands understands that social distancing is a difficult concept within an Early Years setting. Where necessary we may consider:

- Suspending circle time activities, or working with fewer children so we can space them 2m apart.
- Changing the sleep/rest area so that children are at least 2 metres apart.
- Open out or stop using areas that are usually enclosed i.e. book corner or home corner.
- Suspend activities such as sand and water play or cooking that pose a higher risk of cross-contamination.

Staffing

It is a government requirement that during the pandemic for some or all identified non-essential services to be cancelled or postponed. Employees in positions who are available to work and who are not temporarily furloughed may be redeployed to assist others who are providing an essential service to areas that are experiencing staffing shortages while still maintaining the EYFS guidelines.

Childcare practitioners who are pregnant, who are otherwise immunocompromised or who have any other conditions that place them at high risk of acquiring COVID-19 infection compared with other childcare practitioners who do not, alternative arrangements will be made with them. Woodlands primary concern will be the health and well-being of each member of our staff, we will take all the necessary steps to ensure that those who are deemed high risk will remain safe during this pandemic.

Woodlands will make every possible effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government for the all employees, We will:-

- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full due to the nature of our business, we will take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission of infection between our staff.
- Staff who are unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) should not travel to or attend the workplace.
- Any member of staff who develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) (a new, continuous cough and/or a high temperature) should be sent home and stay at home for 7 days from onset of symptoms.
- Staff should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds more frequently and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues
- Staff will be required to frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using your standard cleaning products.
- Ensure employees who are in an extremely vulnerable group and should be shielded are supported to stay at home
- We will make sure managers know how to spot symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and are clear on any relevant processes, for example sickness reporting and understand the procedures they need to follow in case someone in the workplace is potentially infected and the appropriate action needs to be taken.
- Make sure there are places to wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water, and encourage everyone to do so regularly.
- Provide hand sanitiser and tissues for staff, and encourage them to use them
- Follow the government guidelines that state

- where it is not possible to remain 2 metres apart, staff should work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face if possible.
 - where face-to-face contact is essential, this should be kept to 15 minutes or less wherever possible.
 - as much as possible, keep teams of workers together (cohorting), and keep teams as small as possible so that where contact is unavoidable it is happening between the same individuals.
- regulate entry so that the premises do not become overcrowded

Cleaning routines

we strive to maintain high standards of good hygiene and because of this daily cleaning routines will largely remain the same. However, in areas where there are surfaces or objects that would be less likely to cause hygiene concerns and would be infrequently cleaned, we will put the following measures into place:

- ALL frequently used hard surfaces will be cleaned with suitable cleaning and sanitising products each day, more than once a day. This includes, but is not exclusive to; door handles, key fob pads, door release buttons, light switches, computer keyboards, laptops, printers, mouse, telephones, desks, safe, banisters, children's chairs.
- The use of disposable cloths, such as blue and kitchen roll and disposable antibac wipes will be used for cleaning to reduce the spread of potential viral transmission.
- Toys will be sprayed between uses to prevent cross contamination and we will look at toy rotations to allow this to happen more effectively between children who attend on different days.
- Toys that are incredibly difficult to clean at this time will not be available at this time.
- Forms of malleable play, not restricted to sand, water and playdough will also be largely removed at this time to prevent the possible spread of infection, although we can introduce individual trays of small amounts of sensory play, that will be immediately disposed of after use.
- Extra time is provided for adequate cleaning to take place on a daily basis.

Hand washing routines

To ensure staff, children are washing their hands in line with the current guidelines, the following will be put into place:

- On arrival into setting ALL adults will sanitise their hands in the entrance, before progressing on to discard essential personal belongings and washing their hands thoroughly before commencing work.
- Children will enter via the side gate, a member of staff will be positioned in the following places
 - At the side gate to greet the children, mark them in and take their temperature.
 - At the corner
 - At the back door
 - At the coat pegs
 - In the toilet area to assist children with handwashing
- There are hand sanitising around the setting for maintaining on the spot personal hygiene measures.
- Staff will be aware of washing their hands or using hand sanitiser before supporting individual children and the use of gloves will be available to staff should they feel they need to use them.
- There will be times during the day where staff and children will wash their hands, such as delivering intimate care, comfort, going to the toilet, before and after meals or snacks and when transitioning from one area to another or from being outside. Other times to wash hands will be based on the judgement of the practitioners and based on the touching of faces, other surfaces or the activity undertaken.
- Staff should wash their hands before donning any PPE.
- Children's signage for hand washing will be displayed in the toilet area as well as around room.
- Disposable wipes, suitable for sensitive skin, will be used to wipe faces at meal times and will be used and followed by adequate handwashing.
- Any washable objects, such as tea towels, will be bagged up and washed after each day on a 60-degree wash.

Other measures

- All areas, including outside will be cleaned each day.
- Staff will deliver first aid and comfort as and when needed. Emergency first aid will be delivered if needed and should CPR need to be delivered, a mouth guard will be worn. Should an ambulance need to be called, preparations will be made for their quick entrance to the setting.
- Children will be encouraged to be as independent as possible, but staff will be on hand to help with accidents and deliver intimate care using appropriate PPE.
- When administering medication, staff will wear the appropriate PPE. Parents/carers are to ensure all medical forms are up to date and children have in date medications in the setting, such as inhalers, for example.

- Children will not be allowed to bring toys and objects from home into the setting. This includes comforters.
- A spare bag of clothes must be brought into the setting when children come in. This bag will then stay on the child's peg, until it is needed, for example following an accident, such as soiling. The bag will then be sent home for the clothes to be cleaned and changed. A fresh named bag of clothes will then be needed to remain in setting until it is needed.
- Children bringing a home prepared lunch into setting must do so by bringing all food items in a plastic box that can be wiped down or sprayed upon arrival in the setting and is easily cleaned after lunch. Snack boxes will also need to be in a plastic container.
- Drinks will be available during the day for children, Children need to bring in a named drinks bottle.
- SEND children will continue to get the extra support that they need with 1-1 requests being made to LA if needed. 1-1 will be discussed with parents and how best this will be delivered. Contact with parents about their child's needs will be made through phone call, email or video call.
- Any EHCP process will continue to be discussed with other professionals involved and a plan will be made to support the process.
- For equipment, such as laptops, being used by staff, they will be cleaned before use and after.

Wraparound care (including Early Bird & Afterschool club)

As of September 2020, Woodlands will commence their wraparound childcare provisions, this includes Early birds and after school club. All wrap around childcare will run at the same times it previously did. It has already been agreed with the school's the collection process which will be -

- for the school next door children will enter the school and be collected via the back gate meaning that staff are not waiting in line with the schools' parents, this minimises contact and reduces the potential spread of infection.
- Children being collected from the other local school, staff will collect the children from their year group bubble.
- All staff will be wearing face masks
- Early Birds will be delivered in the Kitchen area of the setting fully supervised.
- Children of the school will remain in their year group bubbles, as they are in their school environment as much as practicable.
- We will continue to liaise with the school's about how children access our provisions and the grouping of children.
- The same policy for displaying COVID symptoms is the same for Early birds and After school club children. Any individual displaying symptoms must be isolated in the setting and have their parents/carers called to collect them immediately. Please see below for our procedure, which must be adhered to at all times.

Putting children at the centre of all we do

It is important to note during this time of uncertainty Woodlands will continue to adhere to the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures we have in place to maintain the wellbeing and safety of children in our care. If deemed necessary, we will continue to raise concerns in the same manner we have always done, following procedures laid out by the local authority and in line with the above policies, referring also to the Woodlands data protection policies and procedures and ensuring information is shared in accordance with the GDPR.