

CATERPILLARS PRE-SCHOOL (SUSSEX) LIMITED

**17A. Safe Operating COVID-19**

At Caterpillars in these exceptional circumstances we must comply with the latest Government Guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19)

These Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) are based on Public Health of England and DFE guidance for early years.

Preschools/Nurseries play an essential role in society and we must make adaptions to the way we work to keep children, parents, and the team safe during this time. The fundamental principle of this guidance is to ensure distancing between identified groups and to implement enhanced hygiene practices.

COVID-19 appears to affect young children less often and with less severity. The role of the children in transmission is unclear, but it seems likely they do not play a significant role.

Attendance

Children and team members who are not displaying coronavirus symptoms, such as a new continuous cough, high temperature are welcome to attend the setting. Anyone experiencing symptoms must have completed the required isolation period, in line with government guidelines and be symptom free, or achieved a negative test result before returning to the setting.

Children and team members who are classed as clinically vulnerable should follow their own medical advice before attending the setting.

For those children or team members who are classed as vulnerable will require a risk assessment prior to commencing any sessions at the setting.

Drop off and collection of children

To minimise traffic in the setting, parents are asked to drop off and collect their children at the main entrance and not to enter the setting unless necessary. Parents waiting to drop off and collect are asked to maintain social distancing by standing at least 2 meters apart at all times.

Temperature and symptom monitoring

Routine temperature testing is not advised as a reliable method for identifying coronavirus. Parents and team members should follow the national advice on the symptoms to look out for that might be due to coronavirus:

A new continuous cough and/or A high temperature and/or loss of taste and smell

If your child is due vaccinations Caterpillars will ask for evidence of this by sharing the child’s red book to justify a child’s temperature.

Travel to Preschool

If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport should be followed. Face coverings are required on public transport to help protect others.

Travel outside of local area

If you travel internationally to a country not on the green list or to an area of the UK under local COVID restrictions, and are displaying symptoms, then you must be tested and have a negative result before returning to the setting. This is to ensure every possible factor is in place for the staff and the children in our care.

We ask that you are aware of the restrictions in place of any area that you are visiting and follow government guidelines for any travel in and out of your area.

Implementing social distancing

A level of physical interaction within settings is unavoidable. The key to reducing the risk of coronavirus transmission is to maintain consistent groups of children and staff, within their allocated rooms and to minimise physical interaction between groups where practically possible.

Communal spaces & outdoor areas

Meals and snacks should be served in allocated rooms for each group. Outdoor areas are divided so each group has their own space. There is nappy changing facilities within the younger children’s allocated area, and allocated toilets for each room. Regular cleaning is implemented.

Cross Site Working

Cross site working should be avoided wherever possible. Relief team members should not work across multiple sites unless specifically requested to do so.

We will ensure, wherever possible, we have the right balance of experienced teams. Where we my encounter staffing shortages where teams are isolating, we will look to nearby settings before external recruitment.

Hygiene & Safety

Good hygiene and cleaning practices significantly reduce the spread and transmission of the coronavirus Enhanced hygiene and cleaning practices must be implemented, rigorously followed, and validated.

Cleaning

An enhanced cleaning schedule must be implemented. Communal areas, toilets, touch points, shared resources and hand washing facilities must be cleaned regularly. A senior person must be responsible for validating and recording cleaning schedules.

Handwashing

The rate of handwashing must be significantly increased. All team members must wash their hands with soap and water upon each arrival to the setting and children should be encouraged to do the same. Adequate supplies of soap and paper towels are provided at identified handwash stations. Hand sanitizer should only be used in areas where hand washing facilities with soap, water and paper towels cannot be provided ( outside areas). Hand sanitizer is not required after hand washing with soap and water. A hand sanitizer station will be provided for visitors to use.

Fire drills and lockdown practice

If we have to respond to a fire or emergency lockdown, we will continue to maintain social distancing as far as possible. The safety of the children and employees will always come first. We will still be carrying out fire and lockdown drills.

Toileting

The children will be supervised whilst using the toilet facilities, hand washing signs will be displayed to ensure handwashing is thorough, and the adult will support the children to do this.

Risk Assessment

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 should be added to the settings risk assessment process (daily/overall). If a planned activity or action could increase the risk of transmission, the activity should be avoided. If in doubt seek advice from the Senior Manager or other members of the management team.

Resources

Play equipment is provided within the groups allocated outdoor areas, but if shared should be cleaned between groups. Soft furnishings and resources with intricate parts that are difficult to clean should be removed from the rooms. If sand an water play resources are to be used by more than one group, the sand and water should be changed after each group and the container cleaned.

Items brought from home

Families should be discouraged from bringing items from home into the setting where possible. Comforters are permissible if not having them would cause a child distress.

Visitors and meetings

Attendance in the setting should be restricted to children and the team as far as practically possible. All meetings and interactions with professionals should continue using web meeting tools, if professionals do need to visit then measures will be taken to limit contact with other children and adults in the setting during the visit.

Settling in sessions

Parents may enter the setting for the purpose of settling in sessions if not doing so would cause a child distress. Parents should minimise their movement around the setting and only enter the room their child will be attending. Parents should minimise their interaction with other children and team members and adhere to the settings hygiene policy.

Nursery views and tours

Prospective parent viewings and tours will try to be accommodated where practical, out of hours or in empty spaces: or conducted via a ‘virtual tour’.

Interviews

In the event we need to recruit new employees or use supply or agency, we will adhere to all necessary safety precautions, including conducting interviews and inductions online, using questionnaires and where required testing.

Responding to a person displaying symptoms of COVID-19

A child displaying symptoms

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 NHS guidance.

Whilst waiting for a parent/carer to collect the child, they should be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation. The team member most closely associated with their care should care for them on a 1:1 basis. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available for the team member if they feel its appropriate.

If a child becomes very unwell, it may be necessary to call 999. Normal procedures on child illness must be observed. Targeted and enhanced cleaning should take place in the areas of the setting the child has accessed.

A team member displaying symptoms

In the event of a team member developing coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the setting, they should leave the setting as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance. If they are unable to travel alone, they should wait in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation.

Targeted and enhanced cleaning should then take place in the areas of the setting the team member had accessed.

PPE Equipment

Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in preschools to protect against COVID-19 transmission. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are the most effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Gloves and aprons should continue to be worn to change nappies, administration of medication and providing meals/snacks.

A PPE box will be made available if a team member decides they want to wear a mask, or where they are required to care for a child displaying coronavirus symptoms or when deep cleaning after any person has displayed coronavirus symptoms.

Wellbeing

It is very important that at the forefront of this heightened awareness of safe operating procedures, we do not forget that care and consideration must be taken of the need to ensure that everyone in the settings community feels safe and secure.

We are not able to provide lengthy handovers, but we are always available to discuss any concerns you may have.

This policy was adopted by the Manager of Caterpillars Pre-school on 22nd June, 2021

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Name of signatory: Catherine Clark Role of signatory: Manager