



Eastlea Community Centre

Stockton Road, Seaham, County Durham, SR7 8DX

Children, Young People & Family Services



Tots 'R' Us Nursery

Epidemic and Pandemic Policy

Last Updated: 10th June 2020

Eastlea Community Centre – A Registered Charity: 1160391
Ofsted Registered Nursery: EY489173

Epidemic and Pandemic Policy

(In response to COVID-19 outbreak)

Eastlea Community Centre (the Centre) and Tots 'R' Us Nursery (the Nursery) intend to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the setting during an epidemic or pandemic. This policy has been adopted to support staff, children and service users to return to the Nursery/Centre in a safe way.

This policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within the setting that assures compliance in accordance with: Government Guidelines, Local Authority (LA), and Department for Education (DfE) and has regard to Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance where appropriate. This information builds upon our current policies and procedures for areas such as Safeguarding, Child Protection, Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity, however new practices may emerge as the situation continues.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, parents, service users and families of the Centre and Nursery. It is the responsibility of the Trustees' and Centre/Nursery Managers to ensure that all staff and volunteers read and fully understand the content of the policy before signing it. This policy is to be made available to parents and service users. Parents, carers and service users must follow this policy; failure to do so may result in them or their child not being able to attend as these procedures have been put in place to safeguard all children, staff, volunteers and families attending.

During the COVID-19 outbreak and until otherwise communicated; this policy will over-ride any existing policies where information is different to that contained within this policy.

Method

Effective Infection Protection and Control

As a charitable organisation and early year's provider we ensure to offer a continuum of very high standards of practice across all of our services. The fundamental principles to be outlined in this policy are set out to ensure physical distancing is enabled and good hygiene practices are implemented, as well as avoiding coming into contact with infected children and adults or anyone displaying symptoms. It states the protective measures put in place for children, parents and staff as best as possible to ensure the risk of transmission is reduced. We will continue to follow our other policies as long as they do not conflict with this policy and be guided by the EYFS as best as we can. The main areas we will be considering are:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or someone in their household who does, do not attend the Centre or Nursery
- Maintaining personal and respiratory hygiene (washing hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly and promoting the '**catch it, bin it, kill it**' approach
- Ensuring regular cleaning of the environment, using antibacterial cleaners and disinfectants (especially frequently touched surfaces)
- Minimising general contact and mixing (creating bubbles and limiting numbers)
- The use of Protective and Personal Equipment (PPE)
- Testing

Preparations for reopening

This policy informs of our plans to prepare for reopening and the measures that will be put in place for the health and safety of all persons attending the Nursery and accessing the Centre.

Our approach is to work on a daily/weekly basis as guidance, recommendations and updates emerge. In preparing to reopen the Nursery, parents are asked what their childcare needs are, and their intentions regarding returning their child to Nursery. This will allow more flexibility and help to reduce the number of children attending initially. We expect demand to be lower than normal, which will allow us to welcome children back gradually and maintain smaller groups of children.

Where premises have been temporarily closed during the lockdown period or where they may need to temporarily close during future lockdowns appropriate Health & Safety checks should be conducted prior to reopening.

Managing Risk and Transmission

Risk Assessment

The Chair, Centre and Nursery Managers are responsible for completing a risk assessment relevant to their service, addressing the risks associated with COVID-19, ensuring best endeavours are in place to control risks for staff, volunteers, parents, service users and families, and ensuring all are aware of and fully understand its content.

The Risk Assessment must cover all areas of this policy, be setting specific and detailed and adhered to at all time.

Group Sizes and Availability

A phased return is being implemented to support the safe reopening of the Nursery/Centre. One of the protective measures we can take to reduce transmission is to have smaller group sizes. We know that unlike older children and adults, early years children cannot be expected to remain two metres apart from each other and staff.

It is however still important to reduce contact between children and staff as far as possible. For children in Nursery, the staff to child ratios within the Early Years Foundation Stage continues to apply.

Attendance

Anybody with any COVID-19 symptoms must not attend Nursery or the Centre for any reason. Parents/carers must notify us as normal if their child is unable to attend due to illness.

During this time, our Sick Child and Medication policies will be superseded by this policy and where children display a temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss of taste and / or smell they will not be admitted for 14 days, unless they have been tested. Following a negative test result the child/adult can return, however, must provide the test result to the Nursery/Centre.

All families attending must follow the Public Health England guidance on self-isolating if they or members of their household develop symptoms of coronavirus. The most common symptoms of coronavirus are a new, continuous cough, a high temperature (over 37.8 degrees) and / or a loss of taste and / or smell.

The Department for Education (DfE) have launched a data collection process. The Nursery Manager must ensure this information is collated and submitted as per the requirements of the relevant Local Authority – Durham County Council and within the required time frames. This is to ensure the DfE has up to date information on available early years provision and to ensure providers are following the guidelines effectively for the children they can care for.

Physical Distancing/grouping (Children)

- Children will be organised into two small groups within the Nursery room, this will also involve the outdoor area. Wherever possible these small groups or 'bubbles' should not mix during the day as best as possible. This is to minimise contact with others and mixing. Staff may exercise their own judgement during the day for the high standards of safety for all children
- Children in small groups should have the same staff team caring for them wherever possible to limit the amount of people coming into contact with each other
- Smaller amounts of children in the whole setting may be advised or preferable. As we usually run to capacity most days this could be achieved by, but not limited to:
 - A temporary cap on the amount of children in the Nursery at any one time
 - Changing children's hours to all mornings or all afternoons

- Grouping children to certain days, such as in groups of children moving to school, this would help with transitions
 - Prioritising children such as those who are vulnerable, those with special educational needs, those whose parent(s) are critical workers and those who are moving on to primary school
 - The take up on places may be small so there may be no need to change children's hours
- Care routines including provision of meals, nappy changing and toileting will be within the space allocated to each 'bubble' wherever possible
 - The use of communal internal spaces will be restricted as much as possible and outdoor spaces utilised as much as possible and used by 'bubbles' in different areas during the day
 - Sunscreen should be applied by the parents/carers before the child arrives at the Nursery. T-shirts covering shoulders and leggings would be preferable to minimise how much top up of sunscreen the Nursery staff will do
 - Children should not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Anything that is brought in from home should remain in the child's bag which is kept outdoors in the green bag tub.
 - The sharing of resources between the home and Nursery will be temporarily suspended

Responding to a suspected case (children)

- In the event of a child developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the setting, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolated at home in line with the current NHS guidance
- Whilst waiting for the child to be collected they will be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation
- The staff member responsible for the child during this time should be a staff member from their 'bubble'. The member of staff must wear suitable PPE, such as the addition of face mask, visor, disposable gloves and apron
- The area should be thoroughly cleaned immediately if the area cannot be left unvisited, and if the area can be left unvisited then cleaned after 72 hours
- The person responsible for cleaning ideally should be the person dealing with the ill child and should continue to wear their PPE. This should then be disposed of according to current Government guidelines

Wellbeing and education - Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Government has temporarily dis-applied and modified certain elements of the EYFS Statutory Framework. This means that whilst we should try and meet existing requirements as far as possible. It is recognised that these are extraordinary times and there may be occasions where it will not be possible to provide activities and experiences across all seven areas of learning for all children all of the time. We will use our 'best and reasonable endeavours' to meet the existing learning and development requirements, instead of this being something we 'must do'. Our ratio requirements will remain the same, in line with the EYFS. We will still remain alert to any emerging concerns about a child in our care and endeavour to provide or seek additional support if needed.

We will:

- Support children in age appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves safe including regular hand washing, coughing into an elbow, using a tissue and adopting a catch it, kill it, bin it regime
- Support children to understand the changes and challenges they may be encountering as a result of Covid-19
- Staff will ensure they are aware of children's attachments and their need for emotional support at this time

- Continue to support children via our closed Facebook page, whose parent/carer chooses not to return their child to Nursery
- Snack time will continue, with each child having their own labelled utensils, social distancing in place and staff wearing the normal PPE – gloves and apron.

All other dis-applications and modifications will cease once the temporary changes are no longer in force at the end of the Covid-19 outbreak. At that point we will resume and follow existing EYFS Statutory guidance. We will be notified when the period ends via official Government channels.

Use of outdoor space

The outdoor space should be used as much as possible whilst adhering to the grouping of children rules. We will ensure different groups of children will not access the same area of outside spaces at the same time.

Outdoor equipment will not be used unless it is effectively cleaned and disinfected between each group of children using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously as detailed in the Government guidance 'cleaning of non-healthcare settings'.

Transport

We are encouraging staff, volunteers, parents and children to use their own transport or walk to the Centre or Nursery where possible and to avoid using public transport at peak times. Parents/carers are encouraged not to leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, and bikes in the Centre's premises or grounds.

Visitors

Visitors to the Centre/Nursery are restricted to only children and staff as far as practicably possible. Visitors should not be permitted to the Centre unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance). Where essential visits are required these should be planned in advance and made outside of the usual Nursery operational hours where possible. As far as possible parents and carers should not enter the premises.

Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Nursery/Centre's supply of full PPE will consist of: aprons, gloves, face masks and face shields to use should anyone start to display symptoms of COVID-19 whilst on the premises. Scientific advice indicates that Nursery staff do not require additional personal protective equipment above what is normally used throughout each day. However, all staff must ensure they increase hand washing, use of hand gel (sanitiser) and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting routines within the Nursery/Centre setting.

Staff will wear disposable gloves and aprons at meal times within the Nursery/Centre and disposable gloves and aprons will be worn by all staff whilst changing children's nappies.

Workforce

Attendance

- Staff should only attend the Nursery/Centre if they are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result. All staff and their household are eligible for testing if they display symptoms
- In the event of a staff member developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst working at the Centre/Nursery, they should return home immediately and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance. They should also follow current testing advice for themselves and their household.
- We may consider taking temperature of staff on arrival and risk assessing with regular health questionnaires for returning staff

- Consideration will be given to limiting the number of staff in the Nursery at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day. Those who are not required in Nursery will continue to support families via Facebook, who have chosen not to return their child to Nursery
- Staff hours, days they work and length of day may change in order to meet childcare demands and considerations within this policy

Paediatric First Aid

All of our Nursery staff has a full paediatric first aid certificate. The Nursery also has the Millie's Mark accreditation.

Safeguarding and Welfare

All aspects of the safeguarding and welfare section of the EYFS framework still apply, including requirements relating to child protection arrangements.

The Nursery Manager is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will continue to take responsibility for safeguarding.

Physical distancing/grouping /safety

- Wherever possible staff should remain with the small group of children, the 'bubble' of children who they are allocated to and not come into contact with other groups
- Emergency revisions to the EYFS may have been implemented which provides some flexibility on ratios and qualifications to make this feasible
- Staff have been advised by the Government not to wear PPE such as facemasks during their day, but should continue to wear PPE at the usual times, such as intimate care and wear disposable gloves and apron if completing one to one care
- If a child shows symptoms, staff should wear a face mask, visor, disposable gloves and apron if a 2-meter distance cannot be maintained at all times. PPE should be disposed of following Government guidelines
- After dealing with a symptomatic child the staff member should continue to wear PPE and clean the affected area with disinfectant
- All PPE should be removed and disposed of following current Government guidelines; the staff member should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds
- The staff member who supported the child displaying symptoms does not need to go home unless they are developing symptoms themselves
- Social distancing must be maintained during breaks. This will be achieved through a range of strategies including the staggering of breaks and subdivision of spaces allocated to team breaks where possible
- Staff may be required to be in charge of specific areas including the outdoors to minimise their contact with surfaces etc. Staff will be responsible to ensure appropriate cleaning takes place and enough ventilation is in the room such as opening windows. If doors are open ensure the safety of the children is maintained.
- Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other and children in their care, including handshakes, hugs etc.
- Staff to wear fresh, clean clothes for each session
- Staff are advised to remove their work clothes before they enter their home and take a shower immediately to remove any germs they may have picked up
- Offices are not to be used for breaks where possible and staff breaks should be staggered
- Staff breaks – if using staff rooms (IT suite set up), then staff should adhere to the two metre social distancing rule, and the numbers of staff accessing such areas must be limited
- Use of communal internal spaces should be restricted as much as possible

Staff working in the Centre/Nursery must:

- Wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds at the start of each session and frequently throughout the session/day, encouraging children/service users to do the same
- Avoid touching their face and encourage children not to
- Encourage the use of tissues and ensure these are disposed of effectively (catch it, bin it, kill it)
- Implement enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures – to include cleaning of surfaces, door handles, toilet flushes and other high contact areas
- Have own supply of stationary. Shared computers need to be cleaned appropriately between use
- The printer must be wiped with an antibacterial wipe after each use
- Ensure toys and equipment used is cleaned/sterilised frequently
- Only one child to use the toilets at any one time and be supervised. Each bubble has access to a separate toilet, wash basin, soap and paper towels.
- Ensure hand gel is used by all persons on entering and leaving the premises
- Inform all parents of the measures we are taking and ensure they are cooperative in implementing them

In observing social distancing as far as is practicable in the Nursery/Centre, the following can be implemented:

- Moving tables further apart from each other
- Minimise clustering of children such as for stories
- Use the outdoor environment as much as possible

Training

- Where possible, meetings and training sessions should be conducted through virtual conferencing
- All staff members must receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating
- Online training may be available to allow their training levels to be maintained if appropriate.

Communicating our Operational Procedures

To help ensure that the risk of the virus spreading for both staff and children is as low as possible, we will:

- Tell children, parents, carers or any visitors such as suppliers not to enter the Nursery/Centre if they are displaying any of the symptoms of coronavirus
- Inform parents/carers that children should be brought to Nursery and collected by one parent/carer only for drop off and collection, adhering to Government social distancing policies
- Advise parents/carers that they will not be admitted into the Nursery. Staff will collect children from the gate and sign them into the Nursery and they will take the child to the gate at the end of their session
- We will temporarily not be providing Nursery to home books or daily feedback sheets during this time, parents should regularly check our closed Facebook page for any updates or for sharing of key information
- Remove soft furnishings and soft toys from our environments
- Restrict toys and equipment to those that can be easily cleaned at the end of each session and throughout the day as required
- Inform parents/carers to observe the two metre social distancing markings and guidelines when queuing outside the Nursery to drop off or collect children
- Inform parents/carers not to gather at Nursery entrances
- Advise parents/carers to try to avoid using public transport at peak times and should follow all Government guidance when using public transport
- Ensure group sizes reflect the number of staff and are kept as small as possible

- Inform parents/carers that travel items such as car seats and buggies must not be left in the Nursery buildings
- Consider allowing some parents/carers to enter the Nursery for the purpose of a settling in session if not doing so would cause a child distress; this could take place in the outdoor environment. The Nursery will consider measures to minimise contact between the parents/carers and other children and staff members
- As far as is practicable social distancing guidelines should be adopted

Hygiene and Health & Safety

We are following the guidance in the Government publication 'cleaning of non-healthcare settings'. This guidance can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-nonhealthcare-settings.

Hand Washing

- All children, staff and service users must wash their hands upon arrival at the Centre/Nursery for at least 20 seconds
- Children and staff members should be encouraged to wash their hands frequently, this includes before and after eating food, after visiting the toilet or playing outdoors, after sneezing, blowing their nose or coughing into their hand and dealing with ill people
- Bodily fluid spills should follow the correct procedures as normal

Cleaning and disinfection

An enhanced cleaning and disinfecting schedule must be implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children's toys and equipment and all staff are responsible in their area of work, that includes:

- All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in toilets
- Communal area, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly and cleaned thoroughly every night
- A deep clean may be needed after a child/adult has become ill in the area they were waiting

Disposable cloths or paper roll must be used to clean hard surfaces, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, following one of the options below:

- Either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine
- A household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants
- If an alternative disinfectant is used within the Centre/Nursery, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning. Any cleaning materials used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.

Waste disposal

- All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner following Government guidelines.
- Tissues must be immediately disposed of and placed in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal
- Bodily fluids must be double bagged and disposed of in a bin with a bag, lid and foot pedal

Laundry

All items within the setting requiring laundering must be washed in line with NHS laundry guidelines. Items must not be shared by children or staff.

Any items that require laundering should be done in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items. Do not shake dirty laundry, this minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Clean and disinfect anything used for transporting laundry with your usual products, in line with the cleaning guidance above.

Waste

Waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues):

- Should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full
- The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied
- It should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known.

Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children and not stored in communal waste areas until negative test results are known or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours. If the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste. If the individual tests positive, the waste must be stored for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste.

If storage for at least 72 hours is not appropriate, this waste should be double-bagged and disposed of in the Clinical Waste bin.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Nursery/Centre?

When a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with COVID-19 they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for the required period of time in line with Government guidance (7 days). They will also have access to a test if they display symptoms and are encouraged to get tested. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.

For tests for children under the age of 5 years parents should call 111 to arrange.

Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to work or the setting and fellow household members can end their isolation. We require a copy of the negative test result to enable persons to return to the Nursery/Centre.

Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their group within the Nursery will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. If symptoms present, they should also access a test, in which case, if negative they can return to Nursery (we require a copy of the negative test result to enable persons to return to Nursery).

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise on the appropriate action to take.

COVID-19 Testing

Testing for Covid-19 is now available for all Nursery staff if they or someone in their household is displaying the symptoms of Covid-19 as in a high temperature and/or a new continuous cough, or has loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell.

To be eligible for a test you must:

- Have covid-19 symptoms and be in the first 3 days of the onset of the symptoms, or
- Be living in the same household as someone with covid-19 symptoms and therefore self-isolating for 14 days

If you are self-isolating for other reasons and are not symptomatic, for example, if you have an underlying health condition, you are not eligible for testing.

If a staff member or anyone in their household is experiencing any of the symptoms they must report this to their current line manager as soon as possible and should not attend work – they should initially follow the guidance on self-isolating. They must apply to be tested at the earliest opportunity through booking a test on the www.gov.uk website.

They must arrange to have a test during the first 3 days of the onset of the symptoms. Staff must attend for their test following the guidance they are given at the time of booking. They will receive the results within 48 hours and should remain in self-isolation for the period up until results are provided.

If the test is negative then staff members can return to work safely. If it is positive they must remain in self-isolation and maintain contact with their line manager.

Managers working in settings must ensure they inform the Trustees of any staff member who has had a test for Covid-19 and the results of that test.

Supplies Procurement & Monitoring

The Centre/Nursery must ensure an adequate supply of essential supplies and contingency plans such as additional suppliers are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies. Without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control, we will not be able to operate.

A monitoring system for the usage of PPE is essential to ensure that a supply of stock is available to all who require it as and when required to meet the operational needs of the setting. When stocks are low, other options may be considered, such as the use of washable tabards and facemasks. These items will be washed at a high temperature in accordance with relevant guidelines and separate to any other preschool washing.

In case the supply of food is interrupted, procedures must be implemented to ensure the appropriate food alternatives are sourced and normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed.

Fire Drills and Emergency Evacuations

Normal Fire drill guidelines apply, however staff and children should vacate the building and meet at the designated Assembly point within their own groupings and should maintain two metre social distancing from the other groups at the point of evacuation as well as whilst at the assemble point.

Useful Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

Monitoring of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Chair and Centre and Nursery Managers. New Government legislation and policies will be incorporated appropriately as and when required or informed.