

Outbreak Management Plan

Introduction

This plan is based on the contingency framework for managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 and variants, provided by the Department for Education (DfE).

We implement measures in this plan in response to recommendations provided by our local authority (LA), the director of public health (DPH), Public Health England (PHE) our local health protection teams or by following government guidance.

These measures will be implemented to help prevent the spread of infection within the preschool, to manage a COVID-19 and/or other variant outbreak or cluster, to react to high infection rates in the community or when all measures in place are still failing to reduce risk and infection.

It is important that everyone complies with the latest Government guidance on Coronavirus. Compassionate leadership is at the heart of offering continued preschool early education and childcare, and we will do everything we can to be honest, open and to communicate with parent carers, staff, and any relevant partners. There will be a lot of anxieties and we acknowledge that it is okay to feel worried, and that COVID-19, the related variants and the lockdowns have had an impact on everyone. Everyone involved in the day to day running of the preschool will receive appropriate instruction and training on how to operate safely.

Measures to prevent the spread of infection

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, we have been pleased with our COVID Safe Operating Procedures and the adaptations we have made to our everyday practice to ensure we offered, and continue to offer, our staff and children a safe environment. Hygiene and social distancing remain the two key elements of infection prevention and control. We have made the decision to keep the following procedures and measures in place:

- Any child, staff member, parent or visitor with coronavirus symptoms must not attend preschool and must isolate at home.
- Visitors are not permitted into preschool unless essential to a child's development or well-being, or to manage an essential need (i.e., site maintenance). Any visitors that are permitted on site must wear a face covering.
- Children will not be accepted into preschool if they have been given fever reducing medication, at parent's discretion. Children with temperatures cannot return until they have been 48 hours fever free, without the need of medication to assist, in line with PH DfE guidelines.
- Any person displaying symptoms must not return to preschool until they have completed the required isolation period and/or received negative coronavirus tests, in line with government guidelines.
- Increased cleaning processes remain in place.
- Team members continue to socially distance in communal areas and during parent carer handovers.
- We will encourage parent carers and staff members to wear face coverings during drop off and collection at preschool.
- LFD testing kits will be available for staff, students, and committee members.
- Staff members carry out Lateral Flow testing twice a week.
- Ventilation is a key part of infection control, doors and windows remain open and outdoor play / learning is a high priority.
- All persons travelling outside of the UK must adhere to instructions and testing in line with the government guidance.
- Regularly review COVID + Variant risk assessment that reflects the current Government Guidance
- Continue to provide appropriate PPE which is to be used in line with Guidance
- Hand sanitiser is freely available around the preschool

- The Watoto Preschool COVID Operational Response plan will be followed

Management of an outbreak in Preschool

When there are two or more positive confirmed cases of COVID-19 among children or staff members over a 14-day period this may be referred to as a COVID-19 outbreak. Watoto Preschool will take further advice from PHE.

Actions may be:

- A more intense deep clean
- Isolation of identified children or staff members
- Restrictions of people entering the preschool building
- Partial closure of areas in the preschool including reverting to bubbles which would result in attendance restrictions...closure may be considered in exceptional circumstances
- Investigation by the LA Health Protection Team

Actions following an outbreak

Attendance restrictions will only be used as a last resort; however, we recognise that an outbreak may impact staffing numbers which will in turn affect our ability to run the preschool in its ordinary capacity. If this is the case, the following procedure will be followed concerning staff:children ratios.

Staffing ratios are prescribed by OFSTED to ensure the safety of both children and staff. These are currently:

- for under two-year-olds - one practitioner to three children.
- two- to three-year-olds - one practitioner to four children.
- three- to five-year-olds - one practitioner to eight children.

If we are unable to meet these ratios safely, Watoto Preschool will either restrict attendance, which may include reverting back to the bubbles, or as a very last resort close the preschool.

Although the government no longer requires bubbles where we keep groups apart, under exceptional circumstance we could revert back to bubbles.

There must be always at least one member of management on site. If the Preschool Manager is forced to self-isolate, she/he will remain contactable and keep in touch via telephone, TEAM/ ZOOM, and email unless unable to do so. In the case where the managers/deputy and or Senior Practitioners are unable to work, Watoto PreSchool will be forced to close.

If we are forced to reduce provision the level of provision, we offer will be based on staff availability for example 50% reduction could look like this:

- 4 members of staff: 20 children. No more than 6 of these children may be 2-year-olds.
- 3 members of staff: 15 children. No more than 4 of these may be 2-year-olds.
- 2 members of staff: 10 children. No more than 2 of these may be 2-year-olds and only permitted in the afternoon (based on current timetable.)

In the case where Watoto Preschool is forced to run a reduced provision due to minimal staffing, places will be offered to children based on their level of need. This need will be assessed on the following categories:

- **Category 1:** Top priority will be given to children who are considered vulnerable or whose parents are considered Key Workers.
- **Category 2:** Secondary priority children whose parents rely on childcare to enable them to work and who are unable to work from home
- **Category 3:** Third priority will be given to 3 and 4 year olds who are transitioning to Primary School in September 2022

- **Category 4:** Parent Carers who do not rely on preschool to provide childcare to enable parents to work will in the first instance be asked to volunteer to keep their children at home in these circumstances to reduce pressure on the preschool. If there are not enough willing volunteers, management will consider any other relevant factors that might give some children priority for a place over others.

Places will be offered at the discretion of the management and will be carefully considered by taking into account all of the above recommendations. Consultation with parent carers will be sought in advance to determine each family's level of need should the occasion arise therefore minimising impact and disruption where possible.

Closing preschool due to impact on staff child ratios

We will only close the preschool if we are unable to meet the statutory staff/children ratios as prescribed by Ofsted, or instructed to close by the powers that be.

Communication

Should Watoto Preschool have to run a reduced provision or close the preschool every effort will be made to communicate this to parent/carers at the earliest opportunity via WhatsApp, email, telephone, and social media channel. Staff will also communicate this verbally at the setting. Parent carers should remain vigilant in checking the channels mentioned above to keep abreast of any updates that may affect their child's attendance at Watoto Preschool.

Watoto PreSchool are aware that the above is subject to change and will be continually reviewed based on information from the DfE, Government, Sheffield City Council, Public Health and other reputable sources.

This procedure was adopted by the Committee of Watoto PreSchool on: 28 December 2021