

# Michael Hall Kindergarten

## COVID-19 Safe Operating Procedures **April 2021**

### 1 Introduction

It is important that everyone complies with the latest Government guidance on Coronavirus. We have developed these Safe Operating Procedures based on guidance from the Department of Education and the National Institute for Health Protection specifically for Early Years. We must adapt our everyday practices to ensure that we continue to offer the staff and children a safe environment. Hygiene and social distancing remain the two key elements of infection prevention and control. If any symptoms are displayed, families must be alert and self-isolate to minimise the risk of virus transmission.

Covid-19 appears to affect young children less often and with less severity. Children's role in its transmission is unclear but it seems that it is not insignificant.

In partnership with parents we trust that everyone understands and follows these Safe Operating Procedures.

The key principles of these procedures are:

1. Any pupil, staff member, parent or visitor with coronavirus symptoms must not attend Kindergarten and must isolate at home, or be tested and demonstrate they have a negative result
2. Increased cleaning processes are in place, throughout and at the end of the day
3. Staff members will be physically distanced as far as possible and wear masks where keeping two meters apart isn't possible
4. Kindergarten Children and staff in the four groups will be a key family group (a bubble)
5. Key family groups will be in place inside and outside
6. Arrival and departure. Children will be dropped off at separate entrances with designated waiting areas.
7. Parents will not come into Kindergarten unless explicitly arranged with the Kindergarten Assistant Principal e.g. in the event of a child being distressed

### 2 Attendance

Children and staff are expected to attend Kindergarten but must not be displaying any coronavirus symptoms, the most common being a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste and smell.

**It is important that you seek medical advice if you are unsure.**

**It is important that children do not attend Kindergarten if unwell for their own wellbeing and for the safety of others.**

If anyone is experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms they cannot return to Kindergarten until they have completed the required isolation period and be symptom free or have achieved a negative test result (proof will be required). Prompt exclusion is essential to preventing the spread of

infection. Children and employees who are classed as clinically vulnerable should follow their medical advice before attending Kindergarten.

We do not allow dual setting registration and we ask that children refrain from mixing with different extracurricular (bubble) groups outside of the school.

## **2.1. Drop off and collection of children**

Access to Hellen, Emma, Saskia's Kindergartens and Nicky's Afternoon Club is by the cowpath gate only.

Access to Rachel's Kindergarten is only via the maintenance entrance on Priory road.

Parents are asked to drop off and collect their children at designated entrances and not to enter the Kindergarten. Whilst parents are waiting, it is important to maintain physical distancing by keeping a distance of two metres apart. It is preferable if only one parent carries out drop off and collection.

If you can walk to Kindergarten, please do so.

## **2.2. Temperature and symptom monitoring**

Routine temperature testing is not recommended as a reliable method for identifying coronavirus. Parents and employees should follow the NHS guidelines and, in particular, evidence of a high temperature and/or new continuous cough. If anyone, or any member of a household, has a fever at 37.8 or above they and their household should not attend Michael Hall School and follow the procedure for displaying symptoms.

## **2.3. Travel to Kindergarten**

It is better not to share transport and to travel by car, bike or walk. Face coverings are required for use on public transport.

Kindergarten parents are encouraged to park in the lower part of the main carpark.

## **2.4. Travel outside of local area**

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

If you intend to [travel to the UK from abroad](#), including UK nationals returning home, you must provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result taken up to 3 days before departure.

Before you return to the UK you must [provide your journey and contact details](#). You must [self-isolate](#) when you enter the UK from any foreign country except Ireland, unless you have a valid exemption.

When you enter England from abroad (except Ireland), you must follow the new requirements for quarantining and taking additional COVID-19 tests. For those travelling from a country on the [banned travel list](#) you will be required to [quarantine in a hotel](#).

# **3 Implementing Physical Distancing**

It is not our intention to prevent normal physical and social interaction between the children and teaching staff and it is important to have their wellbeing at the centre of everything we do. If a child is upset or needs comforting, we will give them all the support they need.

Many will be familiar with the term 'bubble' being used to group and segregate pupils at this time. Grouping children in this way means that in the event of any confirmed case of COVID-19, close

contact with other individuals can be identified easily. In a worst case scenario, all of the Kindergarten children may need to isolate.

### **3.1 Kindergarten rooms**

Children will have access to the full range of activities that are considered safe at this time and procedures in place will not interrupt their play.

### **3.2 Mid-morning meal**

- Fresh cooked food will be served to the children each day.
- The children will eat in their rooms.
- The practitioners will serve the children.
- No food will be eaten out of shared platters or containers.
- The children will have their own drinking cup.

### **3.3 Afternoon Club**

Afternoon Club is included within our Kindergarten bubble and will take place as normal in Nicky's Afternoon club space on the right hand side of the main Kindergarten building.

### **3.4 Parent and Child**

As a registered Early Years setting, current guidance prevents us from opening our Parent and Child group provision until after the 29<sup>th</sup> March outdoors.

### **3.5 Employees**

All Kindergarten staff will undergo a return-to-work induction and training on the new Safe Operating Procedures, with emphasis on good hygiene practices and maintaining physical distancing.

Staff will be asked to test at home twice a week using Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs). The LFD test will give a result in around 30 minutes. Staff who test positive will then self-isolate, helping to reduce transmission of the virus. This will help to break the chains of transmission of coronavirus in education settings by identifying asymptomatic positive cases. This is important as up to one in three people who have the virus have it without symptoms (they are asymptomatic) so could be spreading the disease unknowingly.

All staff have signed to agree they have understood and will comply with the school's COVID-19 arrangements.

Any Deliberate or consistent breaching of these COVID-19 specific rules will constitute as misconduct and will be managed through the School's Disciplinary Policy.

### **3.6 Fire drills and lockdown practice**

If we have to respond to a fire or emergency lockdown, we will continue to manage physical distancing, as far as possible. The safety of the children and employees will always come first.

## 4 Wellbeing

We know that this is an unusual and unsettling time. It is very important that at the forefront of this heightened awareness of safe operating procedures. Care and consideration must be taken to ensure that everyone within the Kindergarten community feels safe and secure. We will try our best to create as normal a Kindergarten environment as possible and hope that you will bear with us. We will concentrate on building secure attachments and we will continue with our ongoing learning observations.

We will not be able to carry out lengthy handovers and we want the teaching staff to spend time with the children, supporting and building relationships.

We would always speak with you immediately if we had any concerns. If your child is expressing any concerns or worries, it is important that you inform their Kindergarten teacher.

## 5 Visitors

### 5.1 Settling in

In order to minimise any risk of infection, parents will not be able to spend time in the Kindergarten rooms. Parents may only enter the Kindergarten lobby for the purpose of settling-in, if not doing so would cause a child distress. Your child's Kindergarten teacher will give further guidance on this. It is important that physical distancing continues to be maintained.

### 5.2 Celebrations and Festivals

Birthday celebrations and seasonal festivals will continue, although parents will not currently be able to attend.

### 5.3 Visitors

Meetings can now take place face to face, outside, in front of the school mansion. However we will still endeavour to use phone communication as much as possible. Unless it involves a safeguarding issue that cannot be resolved by telephone.

Interviews are able to be conducted face to face outside in the Kindergarten garden and parents' evenings are postponed for the foreseeable future.

### 5.4 Contractors

Any contractors to the Kindergarten will be reminded of National Institute for Health Protection guidance prior to entering the building.

## 6 Health, Hygiene and Safety

### **Reducing the spread of the virus. Wash Hands, Cover Face, Make Space.**

It is recognised that good hygiene and cleaning practices will significantly reduce the spread and transmission of the virus as well as everyone being alert to the symptoms. Doors and windows will be opened as much as possible.

## **6.2 Cleaning**

An enhanced recorded cleaning schedule will be implemented throughout and at the end of the day. Communal areas and touch points, such as door handles and shared facilities will be regularly cleaned.

The rate of hand washing must be significantly increased. Everyone, including children, must wash their hands with soap and water on arrival at Kindergarten, sanitiser will also be available. There will be regular opportunities for hand washing throughout the day.

## **6.3 Use of Tissues**

The children will be supported in age-appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves and others safe and this includes sneezing into a tissue (or their arm if immediate) and then to dispose of the tissue.

## **6.4 Toileting**

The children will be taken to the toilets and supervised. Hand washing signs will be displayed. The practitioners will support the children to ensure hand washing is thorough.

## **6.5 Clothing**

All employees and children should wear clean clothing every day. Children should bring a bag of spare clothing. The bags will be stored individually in a designated area and will go home for replenishment on the day when they are used.

## **6.6 Risk assessments**

All risk assessments will reflect the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Certain activities will be adapted to reflect this risk

## **6.7 Items from home**

- We would prefer no toys or comforters to be brought into Kindergarten, please speak to your child's teacher about this.
- Pillows for the children's rest time need to have removable/washable covers. The covers will be washed weekly at Kindergarten.

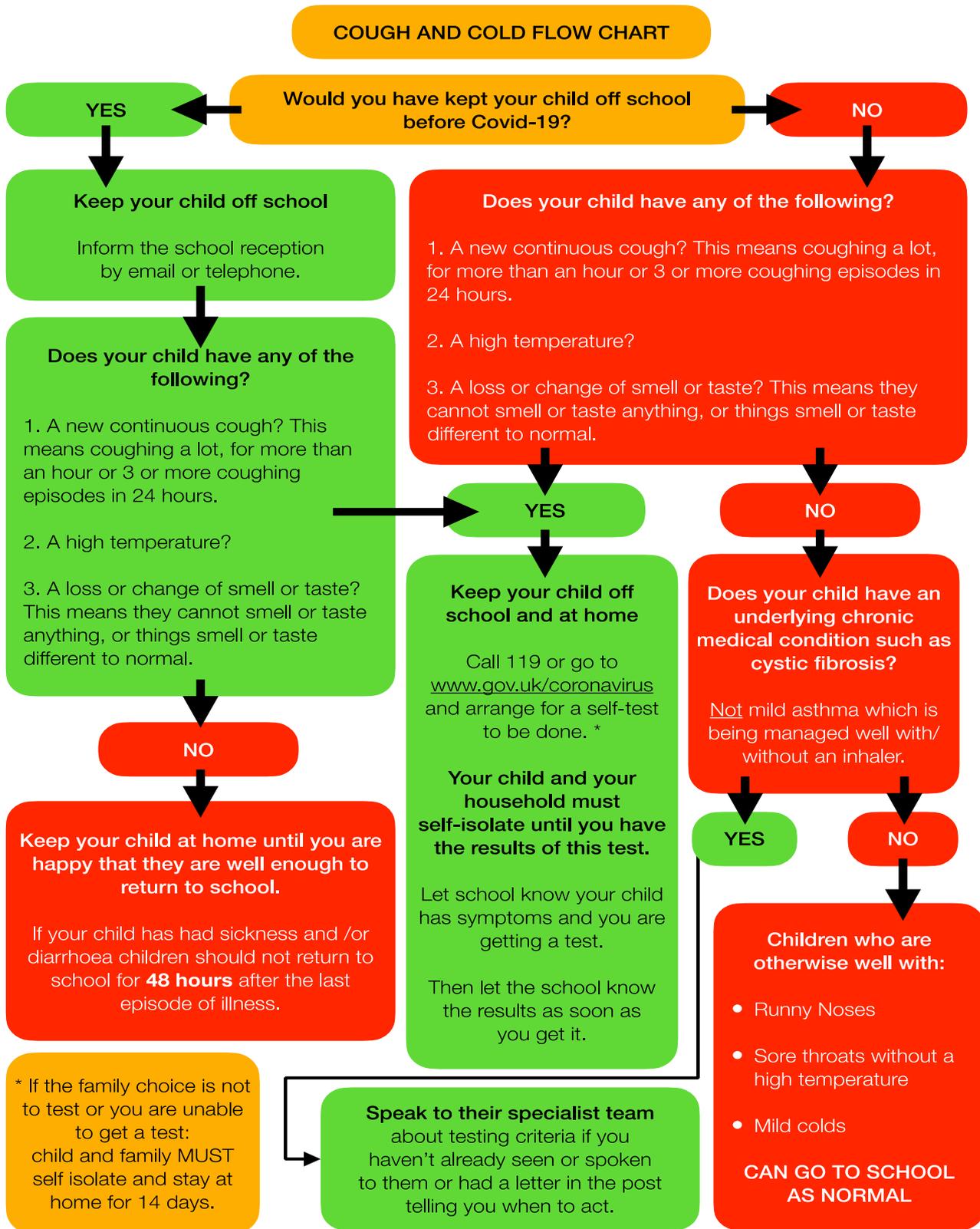
## **6.8 Resources at Kindergarten**

Soft toys and resources that are difficult to clean will be removed. The children will only share toys and activities within their groups that can be sanitised or washed on a regular basis.

# **7 Responding to a person displaying symptoms of COVID-19**

In the light of any seasonal or COVID related illness. It is vital you follow advice from your own GP or 111 service should you need such advice. Equally, you must not send your child to Kindergarten if they are starting to feel unwell.

School colleagues are not health professionals and will therefore not attempt to advise you on whether you should send your child to school. We trust all our parents to make informed, sensible decisions and make us aware of any circumstances they need to. The following flowchart is designed to help parent's decision making when their child is unwell.



## 7.1 A child

If a child is displaying coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the Kindergarten, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance. The Department of Education's instruction to schools is that we must advise parents/carers to seek COVID-19 testing if symptoms are displayed. Therefore, anyone displaying symptoms must EITHER be tested before they return, and confirm that they do not have COVID-19 OR they must stay at home and isolate for 14 days from the onset of symptom, along with all other members of the household.

Whilst waiting to be collected, they will be isolated from others in a designated area. An employee will stay with them and will wear PPE.

If the child becomes very unwell, we will follow our normal emergency procedures and call 999.

The isolation area will be deep cleaned once the child has been collected.

## 7.2 An employee who displays symptoms

In the event of an employee developing coronavirus symptoms whilst at work, they will leave work as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

They will be required to have a test before they return.

## 7.3 PPE Equipment

Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in Kindergarten to protect against COVID-19 transmission. **Hand washing, increased ventilation, regular cleaning and physical distancing are the most effective measures. Gloves, aprons and face visors/masks are to be used for intimate care and first aid purposes. Masks are to be worn by and between staff, where physical distancing isn't possible, for example, in common areas and staff rooms. Masks will also be worn where unavoidable close interaction with parents isn't possible.**

Any member of staff that wants to wear a mask/visor through personal preference will be supported.

Spare masks, cleaning spray/cloths, gloves and hand sanitiser available in Kindergarten Assistant Principals office.

## 7.4 Reporting, testing and tracing

Everyone over the age of five, children, parents and members of their households, is now eligible for a COVID-19 test, should they display coronavirus symptoms. If contacted by NHS Test and Trace or notified of a suspected or confirmed case by a parent, the Kindergarten Assistant Principal will immediately liaise or contact Public Health England Health Protection Team (PHE HPT) for help and advice.

The Kindergarten Assistant Principal is responsible for contacting PHE HPT if a case is confirmed or if a symptomatic person is admitted to hospital, a possible case refuses testing, there are a cluster of possible cases/unexpected increase in absenteeism or a suspected case has a definite link to a confirmed case.

If there is reasonable evidence that a positive diagnosis was caused by exposure at work, this will be reported to RIDDOR.

The Government's tracing app is a way of helping to protect everyone.

# 7 Further guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

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

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>