

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises.

Health

The provider must promote the good health of children attending the setting.

Hollytree Community Pre-school – Policies and Procedures

8.1 Health and safety general standards

Policy statement

At Hollytree pre-school we believe that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

- We aim to make children, parents, staff and volunteers aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.
- Our member of staff responsible for health and safety is:
 - Stacey Yeates
- She is competent to carry out these responsibilities.
- She has undertaken health and safety training and regularly updates her knowledge and understanding.
- We display the necessary health and safety poster in the setting.

Insurance cover

We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate for public liability insurance is displayed in:

- the entrance area

Procedures

Awareness raising

- Our induction training for staff and volunteers includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues, so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and procedures as they understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. The induction training covers matters of employee well-being, including safe lifting and the storage of potentially dangerous substances.
- We keep records of these induction training sessions and new staff and volunteers are asked to sign the records to confirm that they have taken part.
- We explain health and safety issues to the parents of new children, so that they understand the part played by these issues in the daily life of the setting.

- As necessary, health and safety training is included in the annual training plans of staff, and health and safety is discussed regularly at our staff meetings.
- We operate a no-smoking policy.
- We make children aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.

Windows

- Low level windows are made from materials that prevent accidental breakage.
- We ensure that windows are protected from accidental breakage or vandalism from people outside the building.

Doors

- We take precautions to prevent children's fingers from being trapped in doors.

Floors

- All our floor surfaces are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven, wet or damaged. Any wet spills are mopped up immediately.

Electrical/gas equipment

- We ensure that all electrical/gas equipment conforms to safety requirements and is checked regularly.
- Our boiler/electrical switch gear/meter cupboard is not accessible to the children.
- Heaters/radiators, wires and leads are properly guarded and teach the children not to touch them.
- There are sufficient sockets in our setting to prevent overloading.
- We switch electrical devices off from the plug after use.
- We ensure that the temperature of hot water is controlled to prevent scalds.
- Lighting and ventilation are adequate in all areas of our setting, including storage areas.

Storage

- All our resources and materials, which are used by the children, are stored safely.
- All our equipment and resources are stored or stacked safely to prevent them accidentally falling or collapsing.

Outdoor area

- Our outdoor area is securely fenced. All gates and fences are childproof and safe.
- Our outdoor area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish, animal droppings and any other unsafe items before it is used.
- Adults and children are alerted to the dangers of poisonous plants, herbicides and pesticides.
- We leave receptacles upturned to prevent collection of rainwater. Where water can form a pool on equipment, it is emptied and cleaned before children start playing outside.

- We check that children are suitably attired for the weather conditions and type of outdoor activities; ensuring that sunscreen is applied by parents prior to the session and hats are worn during the summer months.
- We supervise outdoor activities at all times; and particularly children on climbing equipment.

Hygiene

- We seek information from the Public Health England to ensure that we keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations.
- Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene.
- The setting is cleaned daily including the playroom, toilets and kitchen. Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
- We plan in time during holidays for cleaning resources and equipment, dressing-up clothes and furnishings.
- The toilet area has a high standard of hygiene, including hand washing and drying facilities.
- We implement good hygiene practices by:
 - cleaning tables between activities;
 - cleaning and checking toilets regularly;
 - wearing protective clothing - such as aprons and disposable gloves - as appropriate;
 - providing sets of clean clothes;
 - providing tissues and wipes.

Activities, resources and repairs

- Before purchase or loan, we check equipment and resources to ensure that they are safe for the ages and stages of the children currently attending the setting.
- The layout of our play equipment allows adults and children to move safely and freely between activities.
- All our equipment is regularly checked for cleanliness and safety, and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.
- We make safe and separate from general use any areas that are unsafe because of repair is needed.
- All our materials, including paint and glue, are non-toxic.
- We ensure that sand is clean and suitable for children's play.
- Physical play is constantly supervised.
- We teach children to handle and store tools safely.
- If children fall asleep in-situ, it may be necessary to move or wake them to make sure they are comfortable. Sleeping children are checked every 10 minutes.
- Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.
- Any faulty equipment is removed from use and is repaired. If it cannot be repaired it is discarded.

Jewellery and accessories

- Our staff do not wear jewellery or fashion accessories, such as belts or high heels, that may pose a danger to themselves or children.
- Parents must ensure that any jewellery worn by children poses no danger; particularly earrings which may get pulled, bracelets which can get caught when climbing or necklaces that may pose a risk of strangulation. We recommend children only wear 'stud' earrings rather than hoops.

Safety of adults

- We ensure that adults are provided with guidance about the safe storage, movement, lifting and erection of large pieces of equipment.
- We provide safe equipment for adults to use when they need to reach up to store equipment or to change light bulbs.
- We ensure that all warning signs are clear and in appropriate languages.
- We record the sickness of staff and their involvement in accidents. The records are reviewed termly to identify any issues that need to be addressed.

Control of substances hazardous to health

- Our staff implement the current guidelines of the *Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)*.
- We keep a record of all substances that may be hazardous to health - such as cleaning chemicals, or gardening chemicals if used and where they are stored.
- Hazardous substances are stored safely away from the children.
- We carry out a risk assessment for all chemicals used in the setting. This states what the risks are and what to do if they have contact with eyes or skin or are ingested.
- We keep all cleaning chemicals in their original containers.
- We keep the chemicals used in the setting to the minimum in order to ensure health and hygiene is maintained. We do not use:
 - bleach;
 - anti-bacterial soap/hand wash, unless specifically advised during an infection outbreak such as Pandemic flu; or
 - anti-bacterial cleaning agents, except in the toilets, nappy changing area and food preparation areas. Anti-bacterial spays are not used when children are nearby.
- Environmental factors are taken into account when purchasing, using and disposing of chemicals.
- All members of staff are vigilant and use chemicals safely.
- Members of staff wear protective gloves when using cleaning chemicals.

Legal framework

- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
- Electricity at Work Regulations (1989)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) (2002)
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992 (As Amended 2004))
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (1992)

Further guidance

- Health and Safety Law: What You Need to Know (HSE Revised 2009)
- Health and Safety Regulation...A Short Guide (HSE 2003)
- Electrical Safety and You: A Brief Guide (HSE 2012)
- Working with Substances Hazardous to Health: What You Need to Know About COSHH (HSE Revised 2009)
- Getting to Grips with Manual Handling - Frequently Asked Questions: A Short Guide (HSE 2011)

This policy was adopted by

Hollytree Community Pre-school

Last review

August 2023

Date of next review

August 2024

Signed on behalf of the provider

J Goldspink

Name of signatory

Jo Goldspink

Role of signatory

Joint Manager

Annex A – Additional guidance with regards to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

From 1st June 2020 Early Years settings have been able to welcome back children. From September 2020 we will no longer need to keep children in small group 'bubbles'. At Hollytree preschool we are working hard to ensure that all children in our care are safeguarded and well cared for and that their development is supported in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage as they return to the setting. In order to do this, we will comply with health and safety law, assessing risks and putting in place proportionate control measures.

As part of our wider opening we will review our health and safety risk assessment to identify the hazards, how people may be harmed by them and the controls we will put in place to minimise risks. This will be continually monitored to ensure that the controls are effective and working as planned. It will be updated as issues are identified and when there are changes in public health advice.

Our risk assessment will identify what measures need to be put in place to protect the health and safety of our staff, children and visitors. It will be shared with staff in order to help them with planning and monitoring and will also be shared with families and any visitors to the setting.

Any concerns about the controls put in place should be raised with the managers. These concerns will be recognised and given proper consideration by the managers. If issues are not resolved the concern should be raised with the HSE (Health and Safety Executive): hse.gov.uk or telephone 0300 790 6787

System of Controls

These actions must be taken by all Early Years settings:

Prevention

1. *Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend settings.*

Children, staff and other adults will not come into the setting if they have symptoms (a new, continuous cough, high temperature or change in their normal sense of smell or taste), or have tested positive in the last 7 days. If a child, staff member or visitor to the setting develops these symptoms during the day they will be sent home and advised to follow '*Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID – 19) infection*'. Anyone with symptoms must self-isolate for 7 days and arrange to be tested. Other members of their household should self-isolate for 10 days.

If a child is awaiting collection due to coronavirus symptoms they will be separated from the rest of the group and will wait with a member of staff. The member of staff will wear PPE – apron, gloves and face mask, while waiting with the child. Once the child has been collected the area where they were waiting will be thoroughly cleaned. Anyone who has had contact with someone who is unwell must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water.

If the child becomes seriously ill, we will call 999.

We will advise parents on collection not to visit their GP, pharmacy or other healthcare provider, but to follow advice in '*Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID–19) infection*'

Once the child has been collected staff and other children at the setting do not need to go home to self-isolate. However, if they develop symptoms themselves, if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive or if they are requested to by NHS test and trace, they will self-isolate.

2. *Clean Hands thoroughly more often than usual.*

All staff, children and visitors to the setting must wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and running water regularly but particularly:

- When they arrive at the setting;
- When returning from breaks;
- After playing outside;
- Before and after eating.

We have two bathrooms which will be used by the children and we will ensure there is always soap available. Staff and visitors will use the disabled bathroom for handwashing. Paper towels will be used to dry hands and these will be disposed of in the lidded bins provided.

We will also have a supply of hand sanitiser available. A bottle will be placed on the table outside and children will be expected to use it before entering the setting.

Due to the age of the children, staff will supervise hand washing to ensure they are cleaning their hands properly. Particular care will be taken when children are using hand sanitiser due to the risk of ingestion.

These routines will be built into the setting culture and children will be helped to understand the need to follow them.

3. *Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.*

We will ensure there is a good supply of tissues available to the children at all times. There are lidded bins in the bathrooms for tissues and these will be emptied regularly throughout the day.

Again, due to the age of the children, staff will help and support them with using tissues and disposing of them correctly. They will be taught to understand the importance of the process and that it is now part of the routine.

Face coverings are not currently recommended in early years settings.

4. *Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products, such as detergents and bleach.*

A cleaning schedule will be in place to ensure enhanced cleaning throughout the day. Frequently touched surfaces, equipment, toys and resources will be cleaned throughout the day. Bathrooms, including the sinks, taps, bins and toilets will all be cleaned thoroughly every hour. At the end of the session all equipment will be cleaned before it is put away.

Staff will be aware of the cleaning rota and will sign once they have completed cleaning tasks.

Staff will use anti-bacterial cleaning products and will ensure children are not close by when using them.

Gloves will be worn during cleaning and hands will be washed once cleaning is complete.

No soft furnishings, including rugs and cushions, will be used in the setting and there will be no soft toys available. Carpet areas will be sprayed with anti-bacterial spray at the beginning and end of the day.

Children will not be allowed to bring in toys from home.

(Points 1 – 4 must be adhered to at all times by all early year's settings)

5. *Minimise contact between groups where possible*

Following government guidelines, from 20th July 2020 'Early years settings will not be required to arrange children and staff in small, consistent groups'.

We will advise parents and carers to limit the number of settings their child attends. Ideally children should only attend one setting consistently.

Our staff are only employed at our setting.

(Point 5 must be properly considered and settings must put in place to suit their particular circumstances)

6. *Where necessary, wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).*

Staff and children at early years settings do not need to wear PPE accept under the following circumstances:

- When an individual child becomes ill with coronavirus symptoms while at the setting. The staff member waiting with the child for collection will wear PPE – apron, gloves and face mask.
- When providing intimate care needs that involve the use of PPE, for example nappy changing.

(Point 6 applies in all specific circumstances)

Response to any infection

7. *Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.*

We will ensure all staff understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact our local Public Health England (PHE) Health Protection Team:

PHE Hampshire and Isle of Wight Health Protection Team (South East)

Fareham Borough Council Civic Offices

Civic Way

Fareham

PO15 7AZ

0344 225 3861

We will ensure all staff and parents understand that they need to be ready and willing to:

- Book a test – staff and children must not come into the setting if they have symptoms, they must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop symptoms at the setting and must book a test to confirm if they have coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they do test positive or if asked by NHS Test and Trace.
- Self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Tests can be booked online through the NHS website or ordered by phone via NHS 119.

We require all parents and staff to inform us immediately with the results of their tests and follow this advice:

- If negative – stop self-isolating if they feel well and no longer have symptoms. Other members of the household can also stop self-isolating.
- If positive – continue to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of symptoms and then only return to the setting if they do not have symptoms other than the cough or loss of smell/taste (these symptoms can last several weeks after the infection has gone). If they still have a high temperature they should continue to self-isolate. Other household members must continue to self-isolate for the full 10 days.

8. *Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the setting community.*

If a child or staff member has a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will take swift action:

- We will contact the local Health Protection Team (see above). They will also contact us if someone at the setting has been identified through the Test and Trace process.
- We will work with the Health Protection Team to carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the infected person.
- Those who have been in close contact will be sent home and will have to self-isolate for 10 days from when they were last in contact with the infected person. If they are not attending the setting they will be contacted by telephone and told to self-isolate for 10 days.
- Household members of those sent home do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms.
- If the child or staff member develops symptoms, they must get a test and follow guidance
 - If negative, they must continue to self-isolate for the remainder of the 10-day period.
 - If positive, they must inform the setting immediately and must self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of symptoms.
- We will keep records of all children and staff who attend the setting each day so that we can easily identify who the infected person has been in close contact with.
- We will not share the names of those infected with coronavirus unless it is essential to protect others.
- We will not request evidence of a negative test result or other medical evidence before we admit children or welcome them back to the setting.

9. *Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.*

If we have 2 or more confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) within 14 days, or if we have an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus is suspected, we may have an outbreak. In this case we will contact our local health protection team and will follow their advice on any additional action that is required.

(Points 7-9 must be followed in every case where they are relevant)

Further Guidance:

Childminders:

At Hollytree we have children who are dropped off and collected by childminders. We will advise childminders that walking is preferable when dropping off and collecting from the setting. If this is not practicable, then we will advise that a private vehicle is preferable to using public transport.

Visitors

Wherever possible we will discourage and avoid visitors entering the setting.

External professionals offering support to the setting or to individual children, for example Speech and Language therapists, may visit the setting. We will expect them to follow the protective measures in place, keep the numbers of attendees to a minimum and observe social distancing throughout the visit.

Wherever possible we will encourage visitors to the setting to come outside the setting hours.

A record will be kept of all visitors with their contact details including telephone numbers and email addresses.

Parents and carers should not come into the setting at this time unless essential. We expect parents and carers to drop off and collect children at the door, adhering to social distancing rules whilst waiting.

Attendance

Shielding advice for adults and children will pause on 1st August 2020 meaning that all children can return to the setting. Circumstances will be closely monitored and if rates of disease rise in our local area, children (or family members) within the area will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high.

Some children who are no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to the setting.

All parents and carers must inform the preschool of any absence. This must be done on the morning of the first day of absence by either calling or texting the preschool or by emailing. The reason for absence must be given.

Staff shortages

Should we experience staff shortages due to the coronavirus outbreak we may need to close the setting if staff/child ratios cannot be met. We will work with the Local Authority and may pool staff with another setting or take on qualified, DBS checked staff from other educational settings which have been closed. It is also possible for us to invite local registered childminders to work with us at the setting.

Premises

From September 2020 the community centre will also be used by the social club in the evenings and at weekends. This means we will need to manage the risks related to other users of the premises.

We will ensure that surfaces, including door handles, light switches, sinks and toilets are all thoroughly cleaned in the morning before setting up. Some preschool equipment may be left in the hall overnight, when this happens it will be stacked and stored away from the main part of the hall on the stage area. We will also ensure that the room is thoroughly cleaned before we leave at the end of the session.

Outdoor Public Spaces

We will maximise the use of our own, private outdoor area.

We will continue to make use of the field and woods near the setting, taking small groups of children out when we can.

We may also take small groups of children to other outdoor public spaces once a risk assessment demonstrates they can stay 2 metres away from other people at all times.

We will not take larger groups of children out at this time.

We will not be taking children on visits to the Infant school during the Coronavirus outbreak

Children at home

If parents choose to keep their children away from the setting, we will do all we can to support their learning and development at home. We will ensure staff maintain contact with their key children and their families, offering ideas for activities which can help provide a positive learning environment in the home.

Ideas for early years activities can be found online, for example through the Hungry Little Minds Campaign, BBC's Tiny Happy People and the National Literacy Trust's Family Zone.

We will work closely with the local authority to monitor the welfare of vulnerable children who are not attending the setting (see our 'Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' policy 1.2)