



Bright Beginnings Preschool

This is our plan for dealing with children and staff (or solo operator) who become ill with symptoms of COVID-19. This is to ensure that all staff know what to do in the event of a child or member of staff displaying symptoms of Covid-19.

The Manager/most senior person is responsible for the implementation of the Service Incident Plan _____.

All staff are familiar with the infection control and risk management policies and adhere to procedures set down in each policy.

All staff are aware that they do not attend for work if they have symptoms of respiratory virus infection.

All parents are aware that children should not attend the early childhood service if they have symptoms of respiratory virus infection.

All staff are aware of the service incident plan to manage a child who may develop symptoms of COVID-19 and that, at all times, there is at least one person who is prepared to undertake the care of such a child if the need arises.

There is an adequate supply of aprons, gloves and masks for use if someone develops symptoms of COVID-19 or if staff members caring for a sick child feel they need to use them.

Staff and parents will be given a copy of this plan.

1. If a child or staff member is in the childcare facility at the time that they feel unwell and develop symptoms

- If a child develops any symptoms of acute respiratory infection including cough, fever, or shortness of breath while in the early childhood service, **a staff member will take them to the place that is planned for isolation.** This should be a room if possible but if that is not possible it should be in a place 2m away from others in the room.
- **Call their parent or guardian and ask them to collect their child as soon as possible.**
 - Remember the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so the physical separation is enough to reduce risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room.



- A staff member caring for a child waiting for pick-up **will need to be prepared to have contact with the child as necessary**. The staff member should wear a mask.
- Staff members may prefer to wear gloves in this situation. Whether gloves are worn or not it is essential to avoid touching your own nose, mouth or eyes while caring for a symptomatic child and to perform hand hygiene. If gloves are used, you must perform hand hygiene immediately after removal and safe disposal of gloves.
- **If a staff member develops symptoms** of acute respiratory infection including cough, fever or shortness of breath while in the care facility ask them to go home without delay and contact their GP by telephone.
 - They should remain 2 m away from others if possible.
 - They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin. If you don't have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.
 - If they can tolerate doing so, they should wear a surgical mask.
 - If they must wait, then they should do so in an office or other area away from others.
 - If they need to use toilet facilities they should wipe contact surfaces clean and clean their hands after attending the toilet.
- In an emergency, call the ambulance, and explain that the child or staff member is unwell with symptoms of COVID-19.
- The room will need to be cleaned and contact surfaces disinfected once they leave.
- If they need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if available and it needs to be cleaned and contact surfaces disinfected before use by others.

2. What to do if there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the setting

- All individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their GP for further advice.
 - If the doctor arranges testing for them, they (or their parent) will be contacted by Public Health to identify anyone who has been in contact with them during the period when they were likely to have been infectious.



- The childcare setting will then be contacted by local Public Health staff of the HSE to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken.
- An assessment of each childcare setting where this may occur will be undertaken by HSE public health staff.
- Advice on the management of children and staff who came into contact with the case will be based on this assessment.
- The HSE Public Health staff will also be in contact individually with anyone who has been in contact with the case to provide them with appropriate advice.
- Advice on cleaning of communal areas is outlined in our infection control policy.
- Symptomatic people should self-isolate and arrange to get tested for COVID-19.
- Confirmed COVID-19 cases should continue to self-isolate at home for a minimum of 14 days and should not return to the childcare setting until they are advised that it is safe to do so.
- Close contacts of a confirmed case should go home and restrict their movements for 14 days. They should not attend the childcare facility during that time. They will be offered testing for COVID-19 and will need to stay away from the childcare centre for 14 days even if the virus is not detected on the tests. This is because some people who are infected do not have a positive test at the time the test was taken.

3. Advice on how to clean the setting where there were children, or staff with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

Droplets carrying the virus that causes COVID-19 can fall from the air on to surfaces such as table tops, toys, and other things that we touch. If people contaminate their hands while sneezing or coughing they may contaminate surfaces by touching them. A person may become infected when they touch a contaminated object or surface and they then touch their own mouth, nose or eyes. For example, someone may touch a contaminated door handle and then rub their eyes or put something in their mouth. The virus cannot grow on surfaces but it can survive if they are not cleaned. The virus gradually dies off over time and under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.



Regular cleaning of frequently –touched hard surfaces and of hands will therefore help to reduce the risk of infection (see Infection Control policy).

Once a person with suspected COVID-19 is identified in a childcare setting all surfaces that the person has been in contact with should be cleaned and disinfected.

General tips for cleaning/disinfecting rooms where a child or staff member with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 was present (see Infection Control Policy)

- Once the room is vacated, the room should not be reused until the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.
- Disinfection only works reliably on things that are clean. When disinfection is required it is always as well as cleaning never instead of cleaning.
- The person assigned to clean the area should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household or disposable single use non-sterile nitrile gloves and a disposable plastic apron (if one is available)
- Clean the environment and the furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine-based product such as sodium hypochlorite (often referred to as household bleach). Chlorine based products are available in different formats including wipes. Alternatively use a two in one process of cleaning and disinfection with a single product for example certain wipes.
- If you are not familiar with chlorine based disinfectants then please refer to the HPSC Management of Infectious Diseases in Schools available at <https://www.hpsc.ie/az/lifestages/schoolhealth/>
- Pay special attention to frequently touched flat surfaces, the backs of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces or items that are visibly soiled with body fluids.
- Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be put back into use.
- Carpets (if present) do not require special cleaning unless there has been a spillage however for ease of cleaning, it is preferable to avoid carpets in areas of a childcare facility where children are cared for.

Cleaning of communal areas if a person is diagnosed with COVID-19

- If a child or adult diagnosed with COVID-19 spent time in a communal area like a play area or sleeping area or if they used the toilet or bathroom facilities, then these areas



should be cleaned with household detergent followed by a disinfectant (as outlined above) as soon as is practicably possible.

- Pay special attention to frequently touched sites including door handles, backs of chairs, taps of washbasins, toilet handles. Once cleaning and disinfection have been completed and all surfaces are completely dry, the area can be put back into use.

Laundry if a person is diagnosed with COVID-19

- Laundry for example from cots should be washed at the highest temperature that the material can stand.
- Items can be tumble dried and ironed using a hot setting/ steam iron if required.
- Household/rubber gloves can be worn when handling dirty laundry and items should be held away from your clothing. The gloves can be washed prior to removal and dried for reuse. Hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water after removing the gloves
- If gloves are not available, hands should be washed thoroughly after handling laundry.

Managing rubbish if a person is diagnosed with COVID-19

- All personal waste including used tissues and all cleaning waste should be placed in a plastic rubbish bag.
- The bag should be tied when it is almost full and then place it into a second bin bag and tied.
- Once the bag has been tied securely it should be left somewhere safe. The bags should be left for three days before collection by the waste company.

Reviews to the Service Incident Plan will be carried out in line with changing regulations or legislation, experience, or changing circumstances of the service. We will monitor and implement ongoing guidance during the **COVID-19 Pandemic** in line with updated HPSC guidance: www.hpsc.ie.

Use with:

- **Infection Control Policy and Risk Management Policy**
- **Cleaning Programme, Staff Roster, Staff Training Record.**

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