

Managing Respiratory Infection (including Covid-19) Policy

Aim

Since March 2022 when the final Covid restrictions were lifted the UK Health and Security Agency (UKHSA) has advised that COVID-19 should be managed like other respiratory infections, such as flu. We aim to offer a safe environment at The Acorn Nursery School for children, staff and parents, free from respiratory infections.

Measures to prevent the spread of respiratory infections, including Covid-19

Our baseline infection prevention and control measures will help to manage the spread of infection.

- Respiratory hygiene is actively promoted following the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. Children are shown how to cover their coughs and sneezes with the inside of their elbow or a tissue. Tissues are disposed of immediately. Children and staff must wash their hands or clean with alcohol hand sanitiser after cleaning their nose.
- Children and staff regularly wash their hands and children are supported to do so thoroughly.
- Internal spaces are well ventilated by opening windows and doors when occupied by staff and children, whatever the weather.
- We aim to spend as much time as possible outdoors, whatever the weather.
- All hard surfaces subject to regular touch are cleaned 3 times a day with an anti-viral disinfectant spray (Zoflora). These include but are not limited to: door handles; sinks; taps; soap dispensers, and toilet flush handles.
- Resources used by children and staff are cleaned regularly with anti-viral disinfectant spray (Zoflora).
- All adults working at The Acorn Nursery School are encouraged and enabled to take up the offer of national vaccination programmes including Covid-19 and flu.

Symptoms of respiratory infections, including COVID-19

Respiratory infections can spread easily between people. It is important to be aware of symptoms so you can take action to reduce the risk of spreading your infection to other people. The symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections are very similar.

Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
- sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
- diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

Measures for children who become unwell with a respiratory infection.

Children who are unwell and have a high temperature (38C or more) should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. In line with our 'Managing Children's Illness' policy, any child with a high temperature should not attend nursery and must stay away from nursery for a minimum of 24 hours after the child's temperature has reduced to be within normal range and they are well enough to return. Children must never be sent to nursery if they have been given fever reducing medication such as Calpol or Ibuprofen.

If you choose to test your child for Covid-19 and the results are positive, we ask that you keep your child away from nursery for a minimum of 3 days (day of test is considered day 0). The child's temperature must be within normal range and they must be well enough to return.

Children with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend nursery.

Measures for children who live in the same household as someone who becomes unwell with a respiratory infection.

When a member of the child's household becomes unwell with a respiratory infection, the child can continue to attend nursery so long as they are well. The individual with symptoms of respiratory infection must not drop-off or collect the child from nursery until 24 hours after they are symptom free. If the individual chooses to test for Covid-19 and the results are positive, we ask that the individual stays away from nursery for a minimum of 5 days (day of test is considered day 0) for adults and 3 days (day of test is considered day 0) for children and young people under 18 years.

If an alternative adult is unable to assist with dropping-off or picking up the child, parents should speak to their child's Room Leader to arrange a temporary alternative drop-off / pick up procedure avoiding busy times and indoor spaces.

Managing an outbreak of a respiratory infection, including Covid-19

The Acorn Nursery School may escalate concerns to our Local Health Protection Team (HPT) if there are concerns related to:

- a higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of pupil or staff absences due to acute respiratory infection
- evidence of severe disease due to respiratory infection, for example, if a pupil or staff member is admitted to hospital
- a cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students within the affected group.

The Health Protection Team may implement outbreak testing for specific settings at their discretion.

Where there are high levels of staff absence relating to respiratory infections, we may need to restrict attendance. In this case priority is given to:

1. Children who are looked after or vulnerable.
2. Children with both parents working as critical key workers.
3. Pre-school (Acorns) children.
4. Younger (Catkins & Squirrels) children, dependent on family circumstances.