



COVID-19 Policy

Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The following symptoms may develop after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer, and chronic lung disease.

How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.

There are 2 routes by which people could become infected:

- secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then

touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a doorknob or shaking hands then touching own face).

Preventing the spread of infection

We will continue to implement our infection control policy, through maintaining high hygiene standards and reducing the chances of infection being spread.

In addition to this we will:

- Implement robust handwashing routines with extra stations, where possible. Hands will be washed thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap, and dried thoroughly, or use alcohol hand rub/sanitizer ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered. Sanitizer stations are situated outside and inside the building
- Clean hands-on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing
- Encourage staff and, where age/stage appropriate, children not to touch their mouth, eyes, and nose (consider face washing with children where appropriate)
- Ensure good respiratory hygiene - use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste; promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach for all staff and children
- Ensure that help is available for children who have trouble cleaning their hands independently
- Encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs, and repetition
- Ensure that lidded bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day
- Clean frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach (including surfaces that children are touching, such as toys, books, tables, chairs, doors, sinks, wiping down toilets after each use, light switches, banisters)
- Where possible, ensure spaces are well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units
- Prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation
- Take steps to ensure symptomatic individuals do not attend nursery
- Ensure play equipment is appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it.

Cleaning Routines:

Daily cleaning routines will largely remain the same, as high standards of good hygiene are currently in place. A deep clean of the setting will take place every evening when nursery has closed.

Nursery Staff

Exclusion periods: any staff member with symptoms of coronavirus will be asked to follow government isolation guidelines. This is to carry out a lateral flow test and if it is negative, staff can return to the setting.

If the lateral flow tests show a positive result, they must isolate immediately. In line with the reduced self-isolation approach, anyone who tests positive will be able to leave self-isolation after the date of their initial positive test if they receive 2 negative LFD results, 24 hours apart, on days 6 and 7.

If they continue to test positive on these days, they will need to remain in isolation until they have 2 consecutive negative results, and we request that photographic evidence is forwarded before they can return to the setting.

Positive cases are reported to the necessary agencies.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone who has COVID-19 or are a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case if any of the following apply –

- They are fully vaccinated
- They are below 18 years, 6 months of age
- They have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- They are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

Whilst guidance allows the above to continue to attend the setting, we are asking staff that if there is a confirmed positive case within their household, lateral flow testing is taken for the duration of the individuals isolation period, and negative results are confirmed daily prior to them attending the setting. This is to ensure the health and well-being of the children and staff who attend St Bernards. If they do test positive at any point during this testing procedure, they must carry out the isolation approach as detailed above and report their positive case to the setting immediately.

Return to work: If any staff have been absent from the setting due to being positive, on their return staff will be asked to complete a health declaration form on their return to work and after any episodes of illness to state that they are now fit and well, have no other symptoms and have isolated for the timescales set by the Government.

Children and families

Whilst government guidance allows children to continue to attend settings, we have revised our policies, procedures, risk assessment and contingency plan and at this moment in time due to the current cases we have had within the setting relating to family members in a household testing positive and subsequent transmissions to other members taking place including children and adolescents, we are still requesting that if a positive case occurs within the household, children who attend the setting must carry out lateral flow tests for the duration of the parent/carer's isolation period. This is essential to ensure the health and well-being of both the

staff and children who attend St Bernards. It also enables the provision to operate effectively.

If a child develops symptoms during nursery operational hours that are compatible with coronavirus, parents will be contacted, and the child is to be collected immediately and a lateral flow test must be carried out before they can return to the setting.

If the results are negative, the child can return. If the results are positive, In line with the reduced self-isolation approach, anyone who tests positive must isolate and will be able to leave self-isolation after the date of their initial positive test if they receive 2 negative LFD results, 24 hours apart, on days 6 and 7. If they continue to test positive on these days, they will need to remain in isolation until they have 2 consecutive negative results, and we request that photographic evidence is forwarded before they can return to the setting.

Routine testing of children's temperatures will not take place as per government guidelines. We remind parents and staff to follow national advice on Covid-19 symptoms. We ask all staff and parents to follow government advice if anyone in their household displays any symptoms.

If a child has a high temperature, new continuous cough or indicates a loss of taste/smell whilst at nursery, parents will be called immediately. The child will be cared for in a separate room from the other children and the staff member will, in these cases, wear a face covering to minimise the spread of infection. Whilst the child is awaiting collection they will be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child, and with appropriate adult supervision (ensuring safeguarding and PPE procedures are met.) Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

Ideally, a window will be opened for ventilation. Where it is not possible to isolate them, they will be moved to an area, which are at least two metres away from other people.

They will be comforted and reassured whilst waiting for collection, as per our usual policy.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they will use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom will be cleaned and disinfected, using standard cleaning products, before being used by anyone else.

PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if two metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs.)

In an emergency staff will call a manager and 999 if they are seriously ill, injured or their life is at risk.

Nursery practices

- Key staff will have registers, so attendance can be marked immediately on entry

- Only parents who are symptom free and/or have completed the required isolation periods will be able to drop off or collect their child
- Toddlers and babies will arrive at the front entrance, whilst the preschool children will enter via the side gate. This is to reduce the number of individuals gathering in one area.
- Staff will greet parents at the doorways and will be wearing a visor or face covering.
- Staff will carry out lateral flow tests three times a week at home using kits provided. Positive lateral flow tests will require staff to isolate immediately and isolate in line with the government.
- Further information will be communicated to all parents in the usual ways.

Caring for Babies and Toddlers

- Increased frequency of cleaning; toys sterilised after use; any toys/equipment/resources that cannot be easily cleaned e.g., soft toys will not be used during this time
- Use of PPE will be used for nappies, toilet accidents etc. Staff will be wearing gloves and aprons at drop off and collection times for those children who will be in physical contact with the staff member
- There will be safe distancing of bed/cots (where possible) and children will be positioned away from each other during sleep times. Bedding and sheets will be washed daily in line with NHS laundry guidelines
- Items such as towels, flannels and bedding will not be shared by children
- Children will be always supervised when eating/drinking to ensure that they do not share cups/utensils or food
- Personalised cups will be used to prevent cross contamination
- Blue Overshoes will be worn in the Baby/sleep room

Risk assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment and this is regularly reviewed. This assessment directly addresses risks associated with coronavirus (COVID-19), so that the right measures can be put in place to control those risks for children, their families, and staff.

Personal protective equipment

Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early year's settings to protect against COVID- 19 transmission. PPE will be continued to be worn as normal for nappy changing and the administration of paediatric first aid. PPE will also be worn by staff caring for a sick child while they await collection if two metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs. It will also be worn at drop off and collection times if the child is unable to walk in/out of the setting unaided.

Face coverings

During everyday practice, staff and children will not be asked to wear face coverings as per the government guidelines when based in their area. Coverings are required when greeting parents at the entrances/exits.

Strict compliance of the government guidelines and the above measures are required to be always followed.

This policy was adopted on/reviewed	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
24 th March 2020 3rd July 2020 24th September 2020 27th November 2020 2nd December 2020 8th January 2021 18th January 2021 12 th February 2021 12 th April 2021 16 th July 2021 16 th August 2021 29 th November 2021 11 th January 2022	Steph Alexander	Ongoing