**General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children’s Welfare**

The provider must promote the good health of the children, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and take appropriate action when they are ill.

**Promoting Health and Hygiene:**

**Coronavirus (Covid 19) Policy**

**EYFS key themes and commitments**

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| **A Unique Child** | **Positive Relationships** | **Enabling Environments** | **Learning and Development** |
| 1.4 Health and well-being | 2.1 Respecting each other | 3.2 Supporting every child |  |

**Policy statement**

This setting believes 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 by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

**EYFS key themes and commitments**

**Procedure for Coronavirus Pandemic:**

The following procedure will be followed following the arrival of the Coronavirus in the UK

The Setting will receive and follow guidance from central government via the Local Education Authority.

***The setting will:***

* Try to remain open if key workers require a place, however it may be necessary to close to stop the virus spreading between children and/ or because staff are unable to attend staff or there are not enough children viably open the setting.
* Take hygiene measures to reduce the risk of infection.
* Ensure that staff or children showing any signs of infection return home.
* Provide any relevant information requested by the Local Health Authority, contact RIDDOR and Ofsted.
* Offer parents any available information on the Coronavirus Pandemic.

The team at St. John’s Preschool will try and minimise the risk of transmission of Coronavirus by keeping children in smaller groups, and minimising the interactions between these groups.

**Changes to our opening hours and availability may change in these uncertain times, we will offer places in priority of order:**

Working parents: Children with SEN: Vulnerable Children :Children due to start mainstream school in September 2020.

***The Department for Education guidance on reopening states that: “Where the physical layout of a setting does not allow small groups of children to be kept at a safe distance apart, we expect practitioners to exercise judgement in ensuring the highest standards of safety are maintained. In some cases, it may be necessary for providers to introduce a temporary cap on numbers to ensure that safety is prioritised.”***

Therefore, we will have a temporary cap on numbers. We have worked out the number’s as no more than six children per day. We have calculated this number by dividing the settings available floor space into **2m²**.

**We will where possible to accommodate for two groups of children, set out as such:**

**Groups of two children:** 4 children per day. Group 1=1 practitioner:2 children. Group 2 = 2 children and the manager.

**Groups of three children:** 6 children per day. Group 1=1 practitioner:3 children. Group 2 = 3 children and one practitioner. The manager will then be responsible for taking car of managerial duties, helping to take children’s personal hygiene needs. Cleaning the toys, equipment and surfaces and preparing snacks and ensuring general safety measures are adhered to.

**Social distancing is a difficult concept for children in an early-years setting, therefore we will:**

1. Suspend circle time activities.
2. Work with fewer children so we can space mats, zones or sectioned off areas at least 2m apart.
3. We will change the layout of, or stop using areas that are usually enclosed i.e. book corner or dens.
4. We will suspend activities such as sand and water play or cooking that pose a higher risk of cross-contamination.
5. In addition to increased hand hygiene, we will wash children’s hands when they arrive at the setting and before they leave.

Any child that has a high temperature or cough will not be permitted to enter the setting for 14 days.

Children that display symptoms of a cold, runny nose, cough, sickness or diarrhoea or generally appear unwell will have to stay away from the setting for 7 days.

This is to minimise the risk of any kind of infection that another child or member of staff may contract.

If your child becomes unwell, we will call you immediately, we would expect that you will collect them within 30 minutes of us calling you. No parent should knowingly bring their child in if they suspect they have a temperature or are generally unwell. No child will be admitted that has had Calpol or a similar medicinal suppressant.

The key steps the government says providers should take to reduce the risk of transmitting an infection are incorporated below.

* Minimising contact with unwell individuals, and ensuring anyone who has coronavirus symptoms themselves or who lives with some displaying symptoms, does not attend our provision.
* Washing hands thoroughly and frequently for 20 seconds with soap or water, or alcohol hand rub or hand sanitiser.
* Catching coughs and sneezes in a tissue, and putting the tissue in a bin straight away.
* Cleaning frequently-touched surfaces
* Minimising contact between groups of children.
* We will closely consider which activities are suitable to deliver, and which could take place outdoors.
* We will stagger drop-off and collection times; each parent will be given an arrival time.
* The gates will remain locked until 9am, as the parent arrives the member of staff looking after a child will meet the parent at the gate and take the child into the setting.
* At drop-off and pick-up, we will ensure “that we minimise adult to adult contact”.
* We will ensure play equipment is appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously”.
* Removing unnecessary items from the learning environment and minimising the use of soft toys and furnishings as far as possible, as well as toys that are hard to clean.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The government guidance states that: “Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended” and that: “Schools and other education or childcare settings should … not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings.”

It adds that: “Children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way”.

However the guidance also states that if a child develops coronavirus symptoms while at a setting, a “fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult” and that “disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn” during any contact with the symptomatic child.

In line with the use of PPE, in order to meet the health and safety guidelines for our children and staff we will wear PPE when required. We will implement this action “If a risk assessment of a situation arising determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection will also be worn.”

With regard to obtaining PPE, government guidance states that: “Education, childcare and children’s social care settings and providers should use their local supply chains to obtain PPE”, and that: “Where this is not possible, and there is unmet urgent need for PPE in order to operate safely, they may approach their nearest local resilience forum.” We will ensure that we have protective equipment wherever possible.

**If a member of staff or child falls ill at our setting.**

The DfE states that: “If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education or childcare setting, they must be sent home”, and advised to follow government guidance (i.e. to self-isolate for seven days, while all members of their household self-isolate for 14 days).

If it is a child, we are caring for falls ill, we will move the child to an area at least two metres away from other people and ensure windows are open

PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection, if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).”

Where a member of staff has helped an unwell child, we will wash our hands thoroughly for 20 seconds afterwards, the member of staff will not be required to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or the child subsequently tests positive for coronavirus.

If the member of staff does develop symptoms, they will be able to access a free coronavirus test.

We will clean the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left as this will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.”

If a child or staff member is seriously ill, we will call 999.

**If a child or member of staff tests positive for Corona Virus.**

The government has confirmed that all staff and children at a childcare setting will have access to a coronavirus test if they display symptoms of the virus.

In the case of children, guidance states that: “To access testing parents will be able to use the 111 online coronavirus service if their child is 5 or over [and] will be able to call 111 if their child is aged under 5.”

If either a child or member of staff tests positive, the rest of their ‘group’ at the setting will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days”. However, any household members of those in that group do not need to self-isolate unless the children or staff member who they live with develops symptoms themselves.

If other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England’s local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take”.

Where appropriate, in some cases, a number of other children may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure” but that “where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of our setting will not generally be necessary”.

**If more parents want their children to return to the setting that can be safely catered for.**

Following the guidance on reopening stew will discuss the options with our local authority. We will try and find a solution that may involve children attending a nearby setting, though it notes that this should be “on a consistent basis”. We will try and give should it be required at least one day per child that they can attend. Priority will be given to working parents and children getting ready to transition into school.

We will additionally prioritise places based on the needs of the child (for example, prioritising a child who is not officially defined as vulnerable but could be considered to be) and/or the needs of their parents (for example, prioritising a parent who is working and cannot work from home).

**Members of staff with underlying health conditions.**

Staff members who are clinically vulnerable – for example, those with diabetes, or who have mild-to-moderate asthma – will be supported to observe social distancing by carrying out roles that can be done from home, such as planning or admin roles. If this is not possible, we will offer roles that allow staff to stay two metres away from other people wherever possible. If this isn’t possible, then we will assess and discuss with the member of staff whether this involves an acceptable level of risk”.

Staff members who are clinically extremely vulnerable – such as those with specific cancers or with severe respiratory conditions such as cystic fibrosis – will not expected to attend work.

**Staff that live with someone that is vulnerable.**

In line with current guidance, staff who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, can attend their education or childcare setting. However, staff who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable will “only attend our childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to.

**Children with underlying health conditions**.

Few if any children will fall into the category of clinically vulnerable, if a child has underlying health conditions then parents should follow medical advice if their child falls in this category. Children who have been classed as clinical extremely vulnerable are not expected to attend our setting.

**Children who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable,**

Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable should only attend their setting “if they are able to understand and follow social distancing instructions”.

This may not be possible for very young children at our setting, therefore if we deem that a chid does not have the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing, we expect that they will not be attending our setting.

**Temporary changes to the EYFS.**

In line with the government we will be adhering to the following: on April 2th 2020 it brought into force changes to how the EYFS applies during the coronavirus outbreak, including asking early years providers to use “reasonable endeavours” to learning and development requirements, instead of this being something they ‘must do’. Department for Education guidance states that the changes to how the EYFS applies will last “until government stipulates otherwise” It adds the end date of changes is currently 25 September 2020, but this will be reviewed on a monthly basis and may be brought forward “for instance, if government advice on self-isolation and social distancing is amended”.

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Sandbach Heath (St. John’s) Playgroup | name of setting |
| Held on |  | (date) |
| Date to be reviewed |  | (date) |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee |  | |
| Name of signatory |  | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) |  | |