

Social distancing in Early Years Policy

Children are likely to become infected with coronavirus (COVID-19) at roughly the same rate as adults, but the infection is usually mild. The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature (over 37.8 degrees). For the vast majority of children and staff, coronavirus (COVID-19) will not cause serious illness.

To help ensure that the risk of virus spread for both staff and children is as low as possible, Dell Cottage will endeavour to:

- tell children, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to enter the education or childcare setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- consider how children arrive at the education or childcare setting
- ensure group sizes reflect the numbers of teaching staff available and are kept as small as possible
- stagger lunch times, break times, and the movement of pupils around the setting, to reduce large groups of children gathering
- consider sleeping arrangements and circle time activities and space floor mats and cushions 2m apart where possible
- open out areas that are usually enclosed e.g dens
- temporarily suspend cooking, and sensory activities which may pose a higher risk of cross contamination
- discourage parents from gathering at the door and hand children over without entering the setting (if parents wish to speak to staff then they can telephone or email)
- try to follow the [social distancing guidelines](#)
- we will ensure all staff and children wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds frequently and are encouraged not to touch their faces.
- encourage children to use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste
- ensure help is available for children and young people who have trouble washing their hands
- inform parents and communities about the measures that you are taking and get their help to implement them
- increase cleaning of surfaces in classrooms, including desks and handles, and within toilet blocks and changing rooms, adhering to guidance
- for children and young people with an EHC plan, work with the local authority as well as with parents to decide how best to continue supporting these children and young people to stay healthy

PPE (personal protective equipment)

The scientific advice indicates that educational staff do not require personal protective equipment. This is needed by medical and care professionals providing specific close contact care, or procedures that create airborne risk, such as suctioning and physiotherapy, for anyone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) and is displaying symptoms. Staff will continue to use gloves and aprons as usual where needed for hygiene purposes.

Handwashing

Staff, children, young people and families should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds more frequently than normal, including on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing.

Staff should supervise young children to ensure they wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water (or hand sanitiser if soap is not available or feasible in the particular situation) and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues. Bins for tissues should be emptied throughout the day.

Staff will consider how to encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition.

Some children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities may require additional support in following public health advice or may find frequent handwashing distressing. Staff will know where this is likely to be the case, and how they can best support individual children and young people.

Self-isolating and temperatures

Educational settings should reiterate to parents/carers the need to follow the advice on coronavirus (COVID-19), including the whole household entering 14 days of self-isolation if anyone in the household develops a fever or a new, continuous cough. They are advised to follow the [staying at home guidance](#).

Parents/carers and schools do not need to take children's temperatures every morning but should be vigilant about signs of a temperature.

Social distancing within education and childcare settings with very young children will be harder to maintain. Staff will endeavour to implement the above measures as far as they are able, whilst ensuring children are kept safe and well cared for within their settings.

This policy will be reviewed and updated along with government guidance