

Coronavirus Policy

S4YC are committed to following Government guidelines set out by the Department of Health and have set out below an operation plan for the company in these unprecedented times.

We are sure that many of you are already aware that, due to the 'R' rising in some areas, many local educational settings have been forced to delay their plans to reopen to the wider community. Since confirming the conditional wider reopening of our nurseries/preschools the Government have released further information stating that the five 'key tests' that they stress **MUST** be met before lifting lockdown, including schools and early years settings, have not been met.

The 'R' is rising in the North West and 'Track and Trace' is not fully operational.

As a result, S4YC **WILL NOT** open to wider groups of children unless the 'R' is below 1 however, we will remain open to the same children that have previously been attending our settings since lockdown began, that being children of keyworkers and those who fall into the vulnerable children category.

We appreciate that this news will be inconvenient for many families, but we must keep children, staff, and the wider community safe.

The conditional wider reopening of our settings will be reviewed weekly and the 'R' rate monitored according to our local area. Again, this is totally dependent on the five key tests being fully met.

- Test one: Making sure the NHS can cope**
Test two: A 'sustained and consistent' fall in the daily death rate
Test three: Rate of infection decreasing to 'manageable levels'
Fourth test: Ensuring supply of tests and PPE can meet future demand
Fifth test: Being confident any adjustments would not risk a second peak that would overwhelm the NHS

Absences

To enable us to manage absences during the current COVID-19 pandemic we must follow the procedures set out below and record appropriately.

- If any child is absent the Manager must clarify the reason why with the parents either verbally or by a telephone conversation with to confirm if their absence relates to the Coronavirus.
- If a child has a new dry cough or a high temperature, loss of sense of smell/taste they must Self Isolate for 7days.
- If any family member (parent / carer / sibling etc.) living within the same household as the child has symptoms, the whole household (including the child) must also Self Isolate even if they display no symptoms for 14 days.
- The Manager should confirm a return date with parents at least 14 days on from this date (after which isolation by the child and/or family members is complete)
- If a setting is forced to close, parents will not be liable for the payment of childcare fees.
- Children attending OOSC must book in the usual way using iPAL and must give notice if wishing to cancel their place. If the place isn't cancelled, they will be charged.
- Managers of all settings (preschool / nursery / OOSC) must complete a continuous daily attendance sheet each morning and afternoon session and email when completed to:

michelle@s4yc.co.uk

lianne@s4yc.co.uk

lorna.a.davies@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

lisa.karigambe@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

- Unless a setting is forced to close the parents are still liable to pay for the child fees.

Taking measures to reduce virus spread within S4YC settings

Please follow guidelines from the World Health Organisation on infection control:

- Frequently clean hands using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- When coughing and sneezing, cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash your hands.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough.
- Keep social distancing rules (of at least 2 metres) where at all possible.
- Keep children in small groups – Bubbles etc.
- Remove soft furnishings, soft toys and any resources that are hard to clean
- Staff will clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces more often than usual using standard cleaning products. This includes tables, chairs, resources, equipment, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, toilets, taps, and sinks.

Coronavirus alert: Rare syndrome seen in UK children

As this new information emerges in regard to the coronavirus here are some signs and symptoms to look out for, if you are concerned about a child's health whilst they are in your care please call the child's parents/ carers or emergency contact. And follow first aid treatments whilst awaiting collection.

NHS doctors have been warned to look out for a rare but dangerous reaction in children that may be linked to coronavirus infection. (Kawasaki Disease)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/kawasaki-disease/>

When to seek help

Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children, it is rarely serious. If a child becomes unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself.

However, the RCPCH advises parents to seek urgent help (call 999 or go to A&E) if a child is:

- Becoming pale, mottled and feeling abnormally cold to the touch
- Has pauses in their breathing (apnoea's), has an irregular breathing pattern or starts grunting
- Has severe difficulty in breathing becoming agitated or unresponsive
- Is going blue round the lips
- Has a fit/seizure
- Becomes extremely distressed (crying inconsolably despite distraction), confused, very lethargic (difficult to wake) or unresponsive
- Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass test')
- Has testicular pain, especially in teenage boys

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-52439005>

Coronavirus procedure

S4yc aim to continue to offer childcare provision to vulnerable and key worker children whilst following health and safety measures to ensure children are kept safe whilst taking part in different fun activities during this time.

Rigorous infection control measures

Our settings have rigorous infection control measures in place such as:

- Regular supervised hand washing ensuring young children and adults wash their hands for 20 seconds more often than usual with soap and water
- Cleaning and disinfecting regularly touched objects and surfaces and the wider environment more often than usual using your standard cleaning products and following a rigorous cleaning procedure.

- Using waterproof dressings to cover on any existing wounds or lesions
- Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as aprons and gloves following current government guidelines
- The immediate cleaning of spillages of blood and other bodily fluids
Clear procedures on safe disposal of waste – double bagged
- infection control guidance and management procedures in place which are clearly understood and adhered to by staff
- making sure any items that ed mouths such as cups, bottles and straws are not shared.

Handwashing

Public Health England advises that children and staff should be encouraged to catch sneezes with a tissue, bin the tissue and wash their hands. All settings have introduced snuffle stations to support the above advice.

Staff should remind children to wash their hands whilst explaining the reasons behind hand washing in an age appropriate way:

- after outside breaks
- before meals and snack times
- after using the toilet
- when they arrive at the setting
- at the end of the day before they go home.

If you do not have access to soap and water to hand at the time, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used instead. Look for products with minimum 60% alcohol. It is important that everyone should not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Serious Health Issues

We advise that all adults who are over the age of 70 years or have any serious health issues should stay away from the setting. If parents are struggling to drop off / pick up their child, please let the setting manager know and we will do all we can to assist you. We request that only one consistent parent / carer drops off / picks up their child to minimise the spread of infection.

Signing in / out

From 17 March 2020 parents will not be allowed into the setting and children will be signed in / out (on iPAL) at the setting entrance / exit by a member of staff, parents will not have access to our devices to prevent cross contamination. Parents may need to wait outside for longer periods while we get your child ready to leave. Please be patient with us at these unprecedented times.

Children will be asked to wash their hands when arriving at the setting.

Snack / Lunch

Following the new restrictions, we expect food outlets to become even busier. Buying food in bulk has become almost impossible. To avoid the risk of contamination we are where possible, asking out of school club parents to provide breakfast for children before attending the session and provide a snack for break / after school club. For preschool / nursery children we are asking parents to provide breakfast for children before attending the session, provide a snack and if staying for lunch to provide a healthy packed lunch as there will be no hot lunches available. Please see the setting manager if you have any difficulties providing the above.

Parent and Toddler sessions

All sessions have now been cancelled with immediate effect until further notice.

Visitors

Visitors will only be allowed into the setting with a booked appointment with the setting manager, they will be advised to provide their own PPE and will be supervised by the manager for the duration of their visit. Please refer to the visitor policy and power point.

Key workers and vulnerable children/family groups

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to, doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social and other frontline health, and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector. Those working as part of the health and social care supply chain including producers and distributors of medicines and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

Nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

Those required to run the justice system, religious staff, charities, and workers delivering key front-line services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

Local and national government

Administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services, including payment of benefits.

Food and other necessary goods

Those involved in the production, processing, distribution, sale, and delivery of food.

Public Safety and National Security

Police and support staff, ministry of defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel, fire and rescue services including support staff, national crime agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles.

Transport

Those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating.

Utilities, communication, and financial services

This includes essential financial services provision (Including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors, information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications, postal service and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

Vulnerable children

Children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

S4YC Bookings for Key Workers / Vulnerable Children – Target Children only

Before and After School Clubs

Due to the "bubble" system in use in many schools, OOSC are currently only taking vulnerable or key worker children who have previously been attending since lockdown. Taking additional children would result in children mixing which could lead to further spread of the virus. Those attending should continue to book their child's place via iPAL.

Preschools / Nursery's

Parents who fall into the key worker or vulnerable children may continue with their current booked sessions. All parents need to confirm with the setting manager that their child will be attending these sessions and confirm they are eligible to access childcare under the current government guidelines. If parents require additional sessions due to key worker needs, they need to book via their iPAL account at least 24 hours in advance.

Cancellations

Given the unforeseen circumstances, S4YC have temporarily amended their cancellation policy for our out of school / holiday clubs from 7 days. If a parents child/ren are unable to attend school, they need to log on to <https://s4yc.schoolipal.co.uk> and cancel the bookings they no longer require.

It is the parent's responsibility to cancel these bookings. Any sessions that are not cancelled will be charged for.

Preschools / Nursery Fees

All Preschool / Nursery fees including voluntary contributions from 23rd March 2020 will be credited to their iPAL account so that they can use at a later date. All fees will be recalculated in due course. If any parents have accounts in arrears, please could you bring them up to date promptly.

Holiday clubs

Holiday clubs will run in line with government guidelines for key workers / vulnerable children. Sessions can be booked as normal via iPAL, as well as cancellations. Due to school availability venues may change slightly to those current advertised but again we will communicate any changes.

Children from other settings

In the case we accept key worker children and vulnerable children from other settings we will endeavour to make the process as smooth as possible for both the child and their family by doing the following:

- All about me to be completed
- Staff to introduce them self to the child and family
- iPAL system to be completed with permissions
- Allergies and health care needs discussed before child begins.

Children are unable to attend more than one early years/childcare setting, parents will choose which setting they would like to care for their child, apart from when the school and S4YC share the care of the child.

Home Learning

Our Early years Compliance managers have put together a home learning package for parents/carers to share with their child/ren at home during these unprecedented times. This home learning pack has been emailed out to all Preschool / Nursery parents via iPAL and can also be found on the company website

<http://www.s4yc.co.uk/page/preschool-nursery-home-learning/64830>

Facebook

Activities are being uploaded to Facebook e.g. stories, songs, action rhymes for you to join in with children at home. This is also an opportunity for children to see some of their key persons keeping the connection with preschool / nursery.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

On 24.4.2020 amendments to the statutory guidance came into place to be followed during the COVID-19 epidemic these are as follows.

Ratios

Ratios remain the same for private, voluntary, and independent early years providers. Exceptions can be made during the crisis, as the EYFS already allows for changes to ratios in exceptional circumstances. Providers should ensure that they keep the safety and well-being at the heart of any decision to reduce their ratios during Covid-19 and use “reasonable endeavours” to ensure that at least half of their team holds at least a relevant L2 qualification to meet staff: child ratios – although this will not be a legal requirement.

A risk assessment approach will be used to determine whether settings can operate safely. Where this is not the case, they should speak to their local authority to discuss options such as sharing provision or merging with other settings.

Settings that have remained open during the crisis may need to get back to full staffing levels once the period of temporary changes has ended. For these settings, there will be a transitional period of up to two months, where the relaxed requirements around qualification levels will be allowed to continue.

DBS checks

These are still required for new staff. If an application had been made but the DBS disclosure has not arrived, new staff and volunteers can still care for children if they are supervised by someone with a DBS check.

Under no circumstances can an unchecked member of staff be left alone with children. We have received several queries from the sector about the portability of DBS checks during this time so it is reassuring to have had clarification that where a worker is already engaged in regulated activity and has the appropriate DBS check, there is no expectation that a new check should be obtained for them to temporarily move to another setting.

The onus remains on the receiving setting to satisfy themselves that the appropriate checks. This could also include seeking clarification from the existing employer.

Learning and development

Early years providers should use 'reasonable endeavours' to meet the existing learning and development requirements, instead of this being something they 'must do'. Providers should tailor their curriculum, or educational programmes, to what is appropriate to the children currently in their care. This will involve ensuring that children continue to be supported to learn and develop in an environment that meets their needs.

Progress check for two-year-olds

The progress check at age two will not need to be undertaken during the coronavirus period. Once the setting has reopened fully, you should carry out the check on children who are still within the two- to three-year-old range. This will form part of the summative assessment is done for all children, regardless of whether they are returning or have continued to attend as a prioritised place.

In the meantime, practitioners can hold true to the purpose of the progress check by seeking help for any children whose progress and development give them cause for concern.

First aid

Paediatric first aid requirements remain in place for children below the age of 24 months. However, if children aged between two- and five-years-old are being cared for, providers must use their “best endeavours” to ensure one person with PFA is onsite when children are present. If this is not possible, providers must carry out a written risk assessment and ensure that someone with a First Aid at Work or emergency PFA certification is on site at all times when children are on the premises. New entrants (L2 and L3) will not need to hold a PFA certificate within their first three months to be counted in staff: child ratios.

If a practitioner is unable to renew their first aid certificate for reasons directly related to Covid-19, the validity of current certificates can be extended by up to three months. This applies to certificates expiring on or after 16 March 2020.

Providers will need to be confident that where certificates have expired they have plans in place to update them asap once the crisis is over which may be a challenge as first aid training is not always easy to access and is likely to be oversubscribed once the restrictions are lifted.

Social distancing

The government has made available additional guidance to help ensure that the risk of virus spread for both staff and children is as low as possible. Settings that remain open should:

- Tell children, parents, carers or any visitors such as suppliers, not to enter the setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus.
- Consider how children arrive at the setting and reduce any unnecessary travel on public transport.
- Ensure group sizes reflect the numbers of practitioners available and are kept as small as possible.
- Stagger lunch and snack times to reduce large groups of children.
- Discourage parents from gathering in their lobby/entrance area.
- Try to follow the social distancing guidelines

Social distancing is a difficult concept in an early year setting. Staff may want to consider:

- Changing the layout of your sleep/rest area so that cots or sleep mats are at least 2 metres apart.
- Open out or stop using areas that are usually enclosed i.e. book corner or dens.
- Suspend activities such as sand and water play or cooking that pose a higher risk of cross-contamination.

In addition to increased hand hygiene, wash children’s hands for at least 20 seconds when they arrive at the setting, after toileting, before and after snacks, lunch, throughout the day and before they leave.