



Caterpillars Pre-School

Policy For Dealing With The CoronaVirus In A Childcare Setting

March 2020

(Updated January 2021)



Introduction

Caterpillars is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all of its employees and children. To this end, this policy sets out steps that Caterpillars is taking in order to tackle the coronavirus outbreak.

This Policy will be updated as guidance on the virus develops and will apply during normal opening throughout the duration of the pandemic as well any periods of reduced opening for children of Critical workers or vulnerable children or restricted opening following any periods of school closures.

Infection Control Measures

We strongly encourage all employees and parents to keep up to date with the guidelines from Public Health England and the Department of Education (DfE) on infection control and current guidance, both whilst at work and in their daily lives. This includes:

- frequently cleaning their hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water
- when coughing and sneezing, covering mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, throwing the tissue away immediately and washing their hands
- avoiding close contact with anyone who has a fever and cough.

In line with current Government guidance, neither staff or children are required to wear facemasks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) whilst attending Caterpillars unless a child or staff member become sick or injured during their time at Caterpillars.

Corona Virus Symptoms

The main symptoms include but are not exclusively;

- Loss of taste and/or smell
- Fatigue
- Headache
- A fever or high temperature
- Difficulty breathing

If a child develops symptoms whilst attending Caterpillars, they will be isolated away from other children, but with a member of staff whilst they are awaiting collection. Parents must ensure we have the correct contact telephone numbers so we can arrange the quick collection of the child.

Only when dealing with a child who is displaying coronavirus symptoms will staff be required to wear PPE.

If a Child or Family Member Contract the Virus and Periods of Self-isolation

Anyone who has symptoms of Coronavirus or lives with someone else who does, should self-isolate at home inline with the current guidance. This includes both children attending the settings and employees.

If your child or a member of the family begin to display symptoms of the virus, you must follow the current Government guidance on the length of time you and your family need to self-isolate.



You should notify your setting Manager as soon as your child or another family member starts to display symptoms and/or you are told to self-isolate. You should not wait until the day they are due to return in case there is a need to notify other families that they also need to self-isolate.

During your child's absence, Caterpillars normal sickness policy rules will apply and you will still be charged for the sessions your child would have attended.

From 1st June 2020 any child or staff member who develops symptoms compatible with the coronavirus or who has been in a group with a child or staff member who has, will be sent home and advised to self-isolate in line with the current Government guidance.

All children attending pre-school will have access to a Coronavirus test if they display symptoms. If a negative test result is returned, then the child can return to pre-school.

Opening for children of Critical Workers or who are Vulnerable During a Government School Closure Period

Those parents whose role has been identified as being critical to the Coronavirus response are entitled to an access to an early years provision during any school closure period. However, the Government advice is that a place should only be sought if it is not possible for your child to be cared for at home in order to minimise the number of children still in a school environment and reduce the spread of the virus.

Parents who are Critical workers should be making every effort to enable their child/ren to be safely cared for at home.

During any periods of forced closure by the Government, if it becomes necessary for us to reopen, due to the number of children of key workers or vulnerable children, Caterpillars may only be able to open one of our locations due to the numbers of children still requiring a pre-school place. Caterpillars will remain in close contact with all affected parents to advise of the provision that can be put in place. If it is not feasible for us to open, we will provide advice to parents on how they can find a temporary setting for their child.

During Lockdown 3, preschools have been advised that they can remain open to all. Caterpillars will monitor all guidance and will notify parents if anything changes, including reducing opening to Critical Workers only.

Re-opening of Pre-schools

As and when the Government advises that Pre-schools can begin to reopen following any period of closure, guidance from the DfE, Public Health England and Early Years Alliance will be at the heart of all decisions made around how and when this will be applied to Caterpillars pre-schools.

The health and safety of all Caterpillars staff and children will be at the forefront of the decision-making process as to when Caterpillars pre-schools will reopen.

Different reopening approaches/dates/times may be applied to each setting depending on individual factors that have to be considered, some of which may or may not be within Caterpillars direct control.

To maintain safety, a prioritised approach may be adopted to limit the number of children that can attend each day to maintain a safe level and ensure the recommended distancing rules can be effectively implemented.



Drop Off and Pick Up Arrangements once Pre-schools re-open

Only one adult can drop off or collect a child from Pre-school. Siblings not attending school cannot be brought to the setting with the adult.

Parents will need to adhere to strict 2m distancing whilst waiting to enter the setting. Parents must not gather in groups either before or after pre-school sessions to chat at the gate, entrance, grounds or car park.

Parents/carers will not be allowed to enter the settings. The children will be welcomed into the setting by a member of staff and will be taken to wash their hands immediately and then frequently through the day.

When being dropped off, any child who experiences detachment issues or is upset and unwilling to freely leave a parent will be asked to go home for that day. The restrictions on parents being able to come into the settings and limited numbers of staff will mean all drop offs must be quick and social distancing restrictions means that staff cannot intervene between the parent and child.

Managers will remain contactable via phone or email for any questions or concerns parents or carers may have during a session.

In order to maintain strict hygiene standards, other than a small bag containing a snack, sun hat and change of clothes no other bags or toys from home must be brought to the settings.

Stricter drop off and pick up arrangements may need to be applied at our Birch setting due to sharing the site with the school and the need to maintain the safety of children and staff at both the school and preschool.

Parents must ensure that any measures are strictly adhered to and that children are dropped off on time. Due to the need for staff to come out to collect children as well as maintain safe staff/children ratios, they cannot come back out if children are late. If you arrive at the school gate after 9am and the staff member has returned to the setting, your child will have to return home for the day but you will still be charged.

Parents **should not** enter the school site to try and access the setting.

Access to Key workers

During any period of opening where lower than expected numbers of children are attending, it is likely that your child's normal key person will not be available either in the setting on the days they are attending or contactable outside of this.

Any concerns parents/carers have about this should be discussed with the setting Manager.

Closures due to Staff Shortages

All Caterpillars employees will continue to closely follow all guidance from Public Health England, Department of Education and Essex County Council. During any periods where the pre-school is open, all employees are required to follow the same guidance around self-isolation and therefore, there may be times when we have to close a setting due to insufficient staff numbers to ensure the safety of the children attending. If this happens, we will contact you as soon as this becomes apparent.



Temporary Business Closure /Operating From Another Location

As time progresses, it maybe that Caterpillars is unable to continue its operations as normal or we are again required to close by the Government. In this scenario, we may be forced to close both, or one of the Preschools temporarily until such a time as we are able to resume operations.

Travel Plans

Caterpillars accepts that some of our family community will have plans to travel in the near future, including pre-booked and paid for holidays.

Government guidance on the countries which require self-isolation upon return is being continually updated as countries are identified as having been severely affected by the virus. We would therefore ask all families to let their setting manager know of the countries to be visited so your child's return can be managed appropriately on their return, which depending on the government guidance at the time of the return could include a period of quarantine before your child can return to their setting.

This policy was adopted by Caterpillars Pre-School

In

March 2020

Updated in

January 2021

Date to be reviewed

March 2021

Signed on behalf of the management committee

⤵:

Cerise Upham

Name of signatory

Cerise Upham

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

Chair of the Committee
