

COVID-19/Coronavirus Policy

At Stepping Stones the health and safety of the children and the adults is of paramount importance. We follow guidelines from Public Health England and the Government and use our own knowledge and understanding of our setting to create an environment that is as safe as possible during the pandemic.

We will do our utmost to protect children and adults within our setting. However the Coronavirus/ COVID 19 is a new virus with lots of unknowns and we can only minimise the risk we cannot eliminate it.

Safety overall

No adult/staff member or child will be allowed in the setting if they have a cough, temperature, lack of taste and smell or any other symptom of Covid 19.

No adult/staff member or child to be allowed in setting if they have been abroad to any country that the government say to quarantine after visiting until after the quarantine period is finished.

All staff have done the infection control VLE course.

The manager has completed a Covid 19 course which includes 'returning to work safely' and 'returning to work safely - education and childcare'.

Staff are requested to test twice a week.

The whole session is run outside whenever possible.

During winter months the children will always have access to the outside via freeflow (either patio or garden).

Access toilets from patio or hall

If heavy rain or very cold the hall will be used. Doors and windows MUST be kept open and patio area with shade MUST be open. Children will be encouraged to play outside under the shade.

Adults will always stay 2 m apart when possible

Adults will wash hands regularly and make sure children wash hands regularly.

The cleaning schedule will be followed vigorously.

Children can attend more than one setting because parents use child minders and nurseries to return to work. However, staff and parents should be mindful of the amount of other

activities/settings/visits that they or their children attend as each activity/setting/visit brings extra risks.

Contaminated surfaces and toys

Toys/equipment

All toys and equipment to be cleaned regularly.

Tuff trays for water play, pastry play, spaghetti play et cetera to be thrown away at end of each session.

Playdough to be made up in 3 different colours and used on 3-day rotation.

Surfaces

High contact surfaces – will be cleaned every two hours and ticked off on cleaning chart. This includes door handles, taps, toilet flush, small tables, stair gate to kitchen et cetera

Low contact surfaces – cleaned after or before every session. This includes fridge handle, kettle, work surfaces in kitchen, gates to garden, computer keypad et cetera

Contact staff to parents/parents to staff

Social distance – to always stay 2 m apart from another staff member or parent

We advise parents and staff to wear masks at drop off and pick up unless exempt.

Children to be dropped at the gate by parent remaining a safe distance away. If the child does not want to come in please remember that we will not be able to have contact with parent whilst the child is handed over.

If children struggled to leave their carer they should be taken by the hand or persuaded to come in on their own.

No parents allowed in setting apart from settling visits that can be done in garden.

Parents to line up to come in along the wall by the markers. Only 6 parents at a time to wait outside standing at a two metre distance from each other. Any other parent to wait in the car until there is a space outside the setting.

Marking outside gate for 2 metre rule.

Contact staff to children/children to staff

If a child needs comforting adults are advised comfort the child into your chest or stomach not by your face.

Keep a 2 m distance whenever possible.

During the day each staff member to look after a small group of children wherever possible.

Staff to regularly wash hands and use hand gel.

Children to use hand gel before entering the building.

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Parents requested to put children in easily changeable clothes that they can change themselves

Parents responsibility

Please do not send your child if they have a cough, temperature, or any other symptom of Covid 19.

Although Government guidance is that children can attend if they are a close contact with someone with Covid 19, as we are a small setting the implications of this could be catastrophic. We have vulnerable children who attend, and we also have staff who are close contacts with vulnerable children and pregnant mothers, so we have a lot of different factors to consider. Also, if we did have an outbreak this would have a knock-on effect as we would potentially have to close, so all children would miss out on preschool for at least 10 days. Taking all these factors into account **we are asking you do not send your child to preschool if there is a positive case in your household. This will be for 10 days or for 6 days if you LFT them on day 5 and 6. Please remember that the day you test positive or the day the symptoms started is classed as DAY 0.** As we are asking you to do this, all fees accrued during the first 7 days will be refunded.

Please do not send your child if you have been abroad to any country that the government say to quarantine after visiting until after the quarantine period is finished.

Parents to put on all day suntan cream before child arrives at preschool

Each day Parents to provide one wipeable bag to include a change of clothing, nappies if required, a lunchbox and two drinks (one for lunch and one for snack).

Parents to chop up any fruit that is in the child's lunchbox and to provide the child with easily openable packaging.

Only above things to be brought into preschool i.e., no toys unless it is a wipeable toy to help a child settle.

All belongings to be named.

Parents to dress children in old clothes that they can easily change themselves.

Parents to encourage children to learn to dress and undress themselves at home.

Parents to abide by the 2 m distance will outside the setting. If more than 6 people stood outside the setting please wait in car until there is a space.

Please remember the closing time is 2:55 pm. This is the time when the last parent and child needs to leave the setting, as staff need to get to pick up their own children from school. Staff children belong to 3 local schools, all of which have different finishing times, due to the pandemic. Please make sure you leave enough time to allow for the fact that only one parent at a time can be at the gate and picking up their child.

If your child is Positive for Covid 19

If your child tests positive please keep them off Preschool for 10 days or 7 days if they test negative on day 6 and day 7 (24 hours apart). This is per Government guidelines. Please do not send them back in Preschool until they are well in themselves.

Personal contact child to child whilst in setting

When doing a group activity keep children separated as much as possible.

Remind children if walking in a line (one in front of the other) to stay a safe distance apart.

Staff responsibility

If staff have symptoms, they will need to self-isolate. If they are a close contact the Government guidance is that they do not need to self-isolate if double vaccinated. However, we have decided that we will treat each case individually and we will ask them not to work in certain circumstances. If it is decided that they can work we ask that they take additional measures to keep everyone safe. These additional measures include

- Wearing a mask if inside
- Taking a LFT test daily
- Making sure that they stay 2 metres apart from other staff members

- To avoid close contact with the children. E.g., not to sit at the table playing with children, let another staff member do this.
- Not being allowed to change children's nappies or other personal care.
- Showing a negative PCR test.

Staff welfare

Any spare uniform in cupboard to be shared out among staff

New uniform to be ordered

Staff provided with hand gel, gloves and aprons for nappy changing. Facemasks and Face shields are reserved if a child becomes ill in the setting.

Staff can use own cotton face mask if they wish to do so

Woods safety

Always be aware the public may have used the woods.

Always use tarpaulins on benches.

When using the narrow pathways keep a safe distance apart.

Use wet wipes and then hand gel in the woods.

Always wash hands when returning.

If a child is unwell at Stepping Stones

Testing is now available for all adults and children who show symptoms. The advice on how to arrange a test is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

If a child or member of staff shows any symptoms of Covid-19 we will follow guidance from South Glos council and Ofsted.

Children/Staff can then only return to preschool if their test result is negative or they have self-isolated for the appropriate time.

If a child becomes unwell at preschool, we will immediately telephone their parents and ask for them to be collected. In the interim, the child will be isolated with a member of staff on the patio area or in the main hall. All other children will be isolated in the garden or main hall or patio where the sick child is not.

For the avoidance of doubt, if your child develops symptoms of Covid-19 then they must not attend preschool. You can find a summary of the symptoms in children here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-in-children/>

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread.

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
- Always adhere to the 2 metre rule for social distancing.
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
- pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
 - before leaving home
 - on arrival at school
 - after using the toilet
 - after breaks and sporting activities
 - before food preparation
 - before eating any food, including snacks
 - before leaving school
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

This policy is to be read alongside the risk assessments related to Coronavirus/Covid 19, the Staff Contingency Policy and the Outbreak Policy.

Updated Jan 22

