



**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Infection Control in the Childcare Setting

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## Introduction

There are important actions that children and young people, their parents and those who work with them can take during the coronavirus outbreak, to help prevent the spread of the virus.

In childcare settings infections are spread via:

- Direct transmission from someone infected with the virus who is coughing and sneezing
- Indirect transmission from touching contaminated surfaces by viral droplets

Infection control precautions can help reduce risk of transmission via these routes.

## Key actions

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend settings
  2. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
  3. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
  4. Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
  5. Minimise contact between groups where possible
  6. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
  7. Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
  8. Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the setting community
  9. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice
- Actions 1 to 4 must be in place in all settings, all the time
  - Action 5 must be properly considered, and settings must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances
  - Action 6 applies in all specific circumstances
  - Actions 7 to 9 must be followed in every case where they are relevant

## Preparing your setting for the return of children and young people

- Review your cleaning schedules to ensure that they are robust and will achieve a clean environment.
- Ensure that the cleaning products that are in use comply with the guidance for cleaning in non-healthcare settings.
- Ensure that there are hand washing facilities as soon as a child or member of staff enters the building.
- Ensure that there are stocks of gloves, aprons and a small stock of surgical masks in case a child becomes unwell during their session.
- Check all bins to ensure that they are foot pedal operated, have enclosed sides and a flip lid.
- Consider developing simple messages for parents to inform them of when a child should be absent from the setting.
- The setting should consider identifying a lead for outbreak management and to develop a simple plan of what to do should an outbreak occur.
- Remove unnecessary items and try and keep the area as clutter free as possible. This will make effective cleaning a lot easier.

- Remove soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts).
- Ensure that liquid soap is dispensed from a dispenser, ideally wall mounted although it is acceptable in the home environment to have a free standing liquid dispenser. All dispensers should be single use and no “topping up” should take place.
- Display posters to encourage good hand washing.
- During this period it may be advisable to restrict the use of sand play, water play and playdoh. If sand, water and playdoh is in use it should be renewed more frequently.
- Communal fruit should not be available at this time. During snack times food should be placed on an individual plate for each child. Children should not be able to help themselves to food from a main plate.

## Infection control in childcare and education settings

This guidance should be read in conjunction with health protection guidance for schools and childcare facilities and with the specific COVID-19 guidance for education and childcare settings tabled in Appendix 1.

### Preventing the spread of coronavirus

Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend the setting.

It is important to ensure that all staff and children follow the “stay at home guidance” if they are symptomatic, have had a positive test for coronavirus or have had contact with someone who is positive for coronavirus.

### Hand hygiene

**Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual.**

Regular hand washing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19); it is an easy virus to kill when it is on skin. This can be done with soap and running water or with alcohol hand sanitiser if hands are visibly clean.

Hand hygiene is a key element in preventing the spread of any infection and this applies to both staff and children. Frequent hand washing should be encouraged. Hands should be cleaned when children arrive at their setting, after break times, if they change rooms, if they have coughed or sneezed and before and after meal times.

We would encourage staff to be bare below the elbows when at work in order to facilitate effective hand washing. Staff should wash wrists and up to elbows.

Children should be taught the correct hand washing technique using liquid soap and warm water. Hand should be dried adequately using paper towels. Consider how to encourage young children to learn and practice these habits through games, songs and repetition.

There are resources available on the e-Bug website and Public Health England School Zone (see link in Appendix 1).

Children should be supervised with hand washing and small children and infants should have their hands washed by their carers at the appropriate times.

Alcohol hand gel can be used by staff as long as hands are visibly clean, and they use the correct hand hygiene technique to apply alcohol gel.

Children can use alcohol gel to supplement hand hygiene practices. Children should be supervised at all times around alcohol hand gel to prevent accidental ingestion. Carers should facilitate the use of alcohol gel for small children.

## Respiratory hygiene

**Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.**

Children should be encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose.

Children should use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste (‘catch it, bin it, kill it’).

Ensure that bins for tissues have a bin liner and are emptied throughout the day. Staff should empty bins using gloves and disposable apron and wash hands immediately after. Do not decant bins, just tie bin liner and replace with a clean liner.

Where possible, all spaces should be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units.

Prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation.

You can continue using most types of air conditioning systems as normal. However, if you use a centralised ventilation system that removes and circulates air to different rooms, it is recommended that you turn off recirculation and use a fresh air supply. See link to the guidance in Appendix 1: Air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus outbreak (HSE, 2020).

## Enhanced cleaning

**Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach.**

Existing procedures for the cleaning of the environment will already be in place, and these should be reviewed to ensure that all areas of the environment are cleaned according to a cleaning schedule. This will include the cleaning of all:

- High and low horizontal surfaces
- Flooring including the edges, corners and skirting boards
- Bathroom and toilet areas
- Frequently touched surfaces in the bathrooms such as taps, door handles, door plates and flush handles
- Other frequent touched areas such as corridor rails and door plates
- Toys should be cleaned according to a schedule. Ideally toys should be wiped over with a detergent disinfectant after each session. During this period there will be less play equipment in use as some toys are not compatible with frequent effective cleaning.
- Any soft furnishings should be washed at regular intervals or be steam cleaned.

### **Cleaning should:**

- use either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine

**or**

- a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants

**or**

- if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses.

Disposable cloths and mops should be used. Always wear an apron and gloves to carry out cleaning and always wash hands after removing gloves and aprons.

**By the end of the summer term**, Public Health England will publish revised guidance for cleaning non-healthcare settings to advise on general cleaning required in addition to the current advice on COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance.

## **Minimising contact and social distancing**

**Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.**

Staff should follow guidance regarding minimising contact and social distancing as this is dependent upon the type of setting and age of the children.

From 20 July 2020, early years settings will not be required to arrange children and staff in small, consistent groups.

Settings should still consider how they can minimise mixing within settings, for example where they use different rooms for different age groups, keeping those groups apart as much as possible. Or for example, if there is more than one toilet block, trying to allocate the toilets to different groups of children. From the test and trace perspective, if there is a person who tests positive, staff or children, then those who have been in close contact will be sent home for 10 full days (the case for 10 full days also) and if there are more cases, consideration will be given to closing the setting for a period of time.

## **Personal protective equipment (PPE)**

**Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).**

Reference to PPE in the following situations means:

- Fluid-resistant surgical face masks (also known as Type IIR)
- Disposable gloves
- Disposable plastic aprons
- Eye protection (for example a face visor or goggles)

The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.

Staff should follow their existing procedures of putting on and taking off PPE when it is used for personal care / nappy changing etc.

Always wash hands before carrying out personal care and after removing gloves and aprons.

**The PPE that should be used in the following situations when caring for someone with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) is:**

- A face mask should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained
- If contact is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn
- Eye protection if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of fluids entering the eye, for example, from coughing, spitting or vomiting

If a child tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and needs to remain in a residential setting, the same type and level of PPE as above should be used.

When PPE is used, it is essential that it is used properly. This includes scrupulous hand hygiene and following guidance on how to put PPE on and take it off safely in order to reduce self-contamination.

Please see the attached link for information on how to correctly put on and take off PPE: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures>

**Face masks must:**

- cover both nose and mouth
- not be allowed to dangle around the neck
- not be touched once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal
- be changed when they become moist or damaged
- be worn once and then discarded - hands must be cleaned after disposal

Schools and other education or childcare settings will not require children to wear face coverings. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus.

If children arrive wearing a mask this can be disposed of as domestic waste. We would advise informing parents about the use of masks in your setting prior to the start date so that they are aware that children will not be required to or permitted to wear masks. Masks can actually encourage the spread of infection due to the touching of the face, the incorrect wearing of masks and the mask becoming wet very quickly.

**What specific steps should be taken to care for children with complex medical needs, such as tracheostomies?**

There are a small number of medical procedures which increase the risk of transmission through aerosols (tiny droplets) being transferred from the patient to the care giver. These are known as aerosol generating procedures (AGPs). Within education and children's social care settings, these are only undertaken for a very small number of children with complex medical needs, such as those receiving tracheostomy care.

Staff performing AGPs in these settings should follow Public Health England's personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance on aerosol generating procedures, and wear the correct PPE, which is:

- an FFP2/3 respirator
- gloves
- a long-sleeved fluid repellent gown
- eye protection

The respirator required for AGPs must be fitted by someone trained to do so. This is known as 'fit testing'. Staff in education and children's social care settings who need support with fit testing should contact the appropriate health lead for the child or young person or the local community infection control team.

Children and young people should be taken from the classroom or shared area for any AGP to be carried out in a designated room with the doors closed and any windows open. If this is not possible, for example in children and young people who require sporadic care, such as urgent tracheostomy tube suction, individual risk assessments should be carried out. In all instances, efforts should be made to:

- ensure that only staff who are needed to undertake the procedure are present and that no other children or young people are in the room
- minimise clutter to make the process of cleaning the room as straightforward as possible
- clean all surfaces and ventilate the room following a procedure and before anyone not wearing appropriate PPE enters. Clearance of infectious particles after an AGP is dependent on the ventilation and air change within the room. For a room without ventilation, this may take an hour

### **How should I care for children who regularly spit or require physical contact?**

No additional PPE is necessary because these are non-symptomatic children in a non-healthcare setting and so the risk of viral transmission is very low. However, additional space and frequent cleaning of surfaces, objects and toys will be required. Cleaning arrangements should be increased in all settings, with a specific focus on surfaces which are touched a lot; see additional information in the 'Enhanced cleaning' section on page 5. It is important that there is no change in the care of any children including those who have behaviors which increase the risk of droplet transmission (licking, spitting, biting and kissing).

## **Management of waste**

Normal waste procedures will continue with packaging, boxing and food containers being disposed of in the household waste or recycled waste.

In the event of a suspected child or staff member with symptoms of coronavirus, double bag the waste in a plastic rubbish bag and put in a secure place for 72 hours. After this time the waste can be put into the household waste stream.

## **Management of laundry and uniforms**

Laundry may be laundered on site or be taken home by parents/carers; this will depend on the different care setting.

There is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in an educational or childcare setting.

Do not shake dirty laundry and do not place dirty laundry on the floor.

Put items to be sent home straight into a plastic bag which is tied and stored ready for collection.

Staff should launder their uniforms daily at the highest possible setting and then either iron or tumble dry.

## Suspected cases of COVID-19 in the childcare setting

If anyone develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms in any childcare setting, they must be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance.

If a **child** is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If a **child** needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible, this may not be possible if the child is in the home environment. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

If a **child** becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home, a fluid-resistant surgical face mask, gloves and aprons should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn whilst looking after the child who is waiting to go home.

Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms whether that is a child or staff member has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

If a **member of staff** has helped someone who was taken unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after contact with someone who is unwell.

If a **member of staff** develops symptoms of coronavirus whilst on duty, they should go home immediately. Arrangements need to be in place to ensure that there is no delay in this process.

## Response to an infection

The actions to be taken in the event of a suspected or confirmed case are detailed in the St Helens Borough Council Outbreak Management Plan which can be found on the St Helens Borough Council website: <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/omp>. This link includes the outbreak management plan in full, a summary of the plan plus the resource pack for schools and any example letters that you may need.

It is important that all staff are aware of the actions to be taken in the event of a suspected or confirmed case and who to contact.

If you have a query about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to schools, other educational establishments or children's social care in England, contact the **DfE coronavirus helpline - Telephone 0800 046 8687**

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends from 10am to 4pm.

If you work in a school, please have your unique reference number (URN or UK PRN) available when calling the helpline.

Alternatively, you can contact your local infection control team on 01744 457314 or by email on [3boroughs.infectioncontrol@sthelensccg.nhs.uk](mailto:3boroughs.infectioncontrol@sthelensccg.nhs.uk)

### Other key contacts

<b>Public Health England Cheshire and Merseyside Health Protection Team</b>	
Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm)	Telephone 0344 225 0562 (option 1 for Cheshire and Merseyside) or email <a href="mailto:icc.northwest@phe.gov.uk">icc.northwest@phe.gov.uk</a>
Out of Hours PHE Contact: Public Health England first on call via the Contact People	0151 434 4819
<b>St Helens Test and Trace Service</b>	
Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm)	Via Contact Cares on 01744 676767 or the email <a href="mailto:contactcares@sthelens.gov.uk">contactcares@sthelens.gov.uk</a>
Out of hours (5pm to 8pm weekday evenings and 9am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday)	Via Contact Cares on 01744 676767 or the email <a href="mailto:contactcares@sthelens.gov.uk">contactcares@sthelens.gov.uk</a>
<b>0-19 Team (Health Visiting and School Nurses)</b>	
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm	North 0-19 team: Tel: 01744 624 313 South 0-19 team: Tel: 01744 624 925 Woodside Healthcare Centre 0-19 team: Tel: 01744 624 321
<b>National Helplines</b>	
Booking a test	Order a test immediately at <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus">www.nhs.uk/coronavirus</a> or call 119 if you have no internet access
If feeling unwell	Contact NHS 111 or go online to <a href="https://111.nhs.uk/COVID-19/">https://111.nhs.uk/COVID-19/</a>

Local support	
Contact Cares 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week. Contact Cares is the single point of access for all social care and adult health referrals, and the first point of contact for children's referrals.	Via Contact Cares on 01744 676767 or the email <a href="mailto:contactcares@sthelens.gov.uk">contactcares@sthelens.gov.uk</a> .
The St Helens Wellbeing Service provides a range of health and wellbeing support including physical health and mental wellbeing	9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday  Telephone: 01744 371111  Email: <a href="mailto:chcp.sthelens@nhs.net">chcp.sthelens@nhs.net</a>

## Appendix 1

Department for Education (2020)

Guidance - Coronavirus (COVID-19): Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings. Last updated 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

Department for Education (2020).

Guidance - Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care>

Department for Education (2020)

Guidance for full opening: Schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools> Accessed 6th July 2020

Health and Safety Executive (2020)

Air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus outbreak.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation.htm>

Health Technical Memorandum 01-04:

Decontamination of linen for health and social care

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/527545/Social\\_care.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/527545/Social_care.pdf)

Public Health England (2017)

Health protection guidance for schools and childcare facilities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>. Accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Public Health England (2019)

Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

Public Health England (2020)

Guidance – COVID-19: Cleaning in non-healthcare settings. Last updated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings> Accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Public Health England (2020)

Guidance - Actions for schools during the Coronavirus outbreak. Last updated 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing> Accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Public Health England - School Zone – resources for schools.

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools>

Public Health England (2020)

COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings> Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Public Health England (2020)

COVID-19: infection prevention and control (IPC)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control> Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.