

## COVID Compliance Operational Plan

This updated operational plan provides a guide to help parents and practitioners be fully aware of all the steps that continue to be taken to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 at St Marks Pre-school

The guidance used to inform this plan is detailed below:

Actions for early years and childcare providers during the Coronavirus outbreak

The actions the pre-school will take will continue to focus on prevention of transmission and response to infection.

### **Prevention**

#### Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell

Children, practitioners, and other adults must not come into the pre-school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or have tested positive in the last 10 days.

If anyone in the setting becomes unwell during the pre-school session, with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home and advised to follow 'Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household who are over 18 years old and not double vaccinated should self-isolate for 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms. Any persons who are double vaccinated or under 18 years of age do not need to isolate and can continue to attend pre-school.

If a child becomes unwell during a pre-school session, parents will be contacted immediately and requested to collect their child. If there is a concern about COVID-19 symptoms the child will be moved to a space where they can be isolated either in the outside classroom or behind a closed door in a well-ventilated room in the pre-school building. A supervising practitioner will stay with the child, wearing additional PPE in the form of a face shield. The child will be looked after there until a parent arrives to collect.

If the child needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they will be taken to the accessible toilet. This toilet will be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

Any practitioners who have helped someone with symptoms, and any children who have been in close contact with them, do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case they should arrange a test) if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive, or they have been requested to do so by NHS test and trace.

## Cleaning hands

When in doubt, practitioners and children should wash hands thoroughly and often, using liquid soap and water. Hand sanitizer that is 70% ethanol or stronger is a second preference, followed by disposable wet wipes.

Practitioners should wash their hands, and/or help the children in doing so:

- Upon arrival in the morning, re-entering the building throughout the day and on departing from pre-school
- Whenever one's hands are visibly dirty
- After using the toilet
- After coughing or sneezing into one's hands, or into a disposable tissue
- Before and after eating
- Before and after messy play activities e.g playdough
- After physical contact with others
- On removing disposable gloves (practitioners)

If handwashing is not immediately possible (in the playground/front garden), practitioners must use hand sanitiser and wash their hands as soon as possible. A small amount of hand sanitiser can be used with children, this needs to be supervised by a practitioner.

Hand Sanitiser sprays must be kept out of reach of the children and in a cool place.

Children's hand washing will be supervised where necessary to ensure that it is thorough, and soap is used.

For practitioners if forearms are exposed to respiratory secretions, they are to include their forearms when washing their hands, washing their forearms first.

## Ensuring good respiratory hygiene

Promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. The pre-school will ensure that there are enough tissues and bins available in the setting to support children and practitioners to implement this routine. Pre-school practitioners will ensure younger children are helped to get this right, using visual prompts and verbal reminders, including encouraging children to cough or sneeze into their elbow.

In line with current advice from Public Health England it is not an expectation that practitioners or children will generally wear face coverings whilst at pre-school. The pre-school will keep this under review, following any updated guidance from Public Health England.

## Enhanced cleaning

Thorough and frequent cleaning will be required

- Toilets will be cleaned twice daily using standard cleaning products.
- All high-contact surfaces, including tables, door handles, taps and light switches will be disinfected at least once daily.
- The kitchen will be cleaned at least once daily using standard cleaning products.
- Any pre-school clothing that is used must be washed daily. As hot a wash as possible.
- All cups, plates etc. will be washed in the dishwasher. The few items to be hand washed must be dried with disposable paper roll.
- Resources will be cleaned on a daily basis inside and outdoor resources as necessary. A slightly reduced number of resources will continue to be provided at any one time and any toys that are not easily disinfected will be put away until the end of the coronavirus pandemic. Resources will be cleaned by putting them in the dishwasher/washing machine in a string bag, spraying with anti-bac spray/wiping with anti-bac wipes or using a steam sprayer.
- Electronic devices such as tablets and computers will be cleaned using anti-bac wipes before and after use, and personal mobile phones should be cleaned at least once a day. Washing hands before and after use.
- Rubbish bins will be emptied before they are completely full.
- Mopheads to be stood in Milton/bleach at the end of every day, so that the mopheads used are always clean. Mopheads to be washed as necessary.

In the event of a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) the pre-school will adhere to the guidance for cleaning non-healthcare settings provided by Public Health England. The pre-school will review cleaning procedures, following any updated guidance from Public Health England.

#### Minimise contact between groups

St Marks Pre-school will continue to use different rooms for different age groups, minimising unnecessary contact by:

- using different access points at the beginning and end of the pre-school session
- implementing a one way system for parents/carers to access the building
- offering a 10 minute window to drop off/collect children
- requesting that all parents/carers wear facemasks when in the pre-school building.
- staggering the group use of toilets
- providing a number of different stations to wash hands for each classroom
- endeavouring to use a consistent team of practitioners in each room
- where possible, the presence of any additional practitioners will be agreed on a weekly basis, rather than a daily basis

Clear rules with appropriate visual prompts will be shared with the children helping them understand how to keep each other safe: e.g. handwashing, coughing, or sneezing into their elbow.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to limit the number of settings their child attends, ideally ensuring their child only attends one other setting consistently. This is because several children attending multiple settings increases the risk of transmission and infection as they would be mixing with a significantly higher number of children. If a child attending multiple settings was to test positive for coronavirus, several settings would need to close which would affect a larger number of families.

#### Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment

Practitioners at St Marks Pre-school will continue to use an increased level of PPE. This will be reviewed as appropriate and in line with guidance from Public Health England.

The following PPE will be used:

- A disposable face mask, disposable gloves and apron **must** be worn during any nappy changing, changing of clothes that have become soiled and administering First Aid.
- A disposable face mask and gloves **must** be worn when assisting any child with intimate care e.g. wiping bottom.
- Disposable gloves and aprons **must** be worn for all cleaning duties and at snack/lunchtimes with the children.
- A face shield to be used in the event of a child becoming unwell/vomiting/diarrhoea or there is a concern that symptoms are COVID-19.
- A disposable facemask **must** be worn by any practitioners considered 'high risk' and in line with actions from a risk assessment.

Hands **must** be washed before the mask is put on and when the mask is taken off. Those masks that are one time use only, when finished with should be placed in the nappy bin.

All practitioners are expected to wear a fabric/disposable face mask in the pre-school building when parents or visitors are present. When parents/visitors are not present practitioners are encouraged not to wear a face mask unless in communal areas such as the hallway and children's bathroom where it is recommended. In the playground or front garden, practitioners are encouraged not to wear a face mask. All practitioners have been provided with a fabric face mask which must be washed daily. The pre-school maintains a stock of disposable masks for all adults to access if they do not have a mask of their own.

#### **Response to any infection**

### Engage with the NHS test and trace process

St Marks Pre-school will adhere to the NHS test and trace process and know when and how to contact the local [Public Health England health protection team](#).

The Pre-school will expect practitioners and parents/carers to be ready and willing to:

- [book a test](#) if they are displaying symptoms. Practitioners and children must not come into the setting if they have symptoms, and will be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in the setting. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children under 11 will need to be helped by their parents if using a home testing kit
- provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) when asked by NHS test and trace
- [self-isolate](#) if they are over 18 years, have not been double vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

Tests can be booked online through the NHS website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

The pre-school expects parents and practitioners to inform them immediately of the results of a PCR test:

- if someone tests negative, and they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. Other members of their household can also stop self-isolating.
- if someone tests positive, they should follow [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to the setting only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell or taste. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should only continue self-isolating for the full 10 days if they are over 18 years old and have not been double vaccinated.

### Managing confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the setting

St Marks Pre-school will take swift action when it becomes aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). The pre-school will contact the local health protection team. It is expected that this team will also contact the pre-school directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the setting - as identified by NHS Test and Trace. To support them in doing so, St Marks Pre-school will keep a record of children and staff in specific rooms.

St Marks Pre-school will work with the local health protection team to carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact/close mixing with the person during the period that they were infectious. Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin to skin)
- proximity contacts - Extended close contact (within 1-2m for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person
- close mixing includes:
  - a pre-school class
  - a friendship group who often play together
  - staff and children taking part in the same activity session together

St Marks Pre-school will work with the health protection team settings in this situation to guide any parent/practitioner through the further actions it needs to take. Based on advice from the health protection team, St Marks Pre-school will not ask any child/practitioner to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or they are considered a close contact of a positive case if any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

St Marks Pre-school will be guided by the health protection team to decide who must be sent home. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. Children who are aged under 5 years old who are identified as close contacts will only be advised to take a PCR test if the positive case is in their own household. Practitioners who do not need to self-isolate, and children who usually attend the setting, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend the setting as normal.

If a test result is positive, it is expected that St Marks Pre-school is informed immediately, and must isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 10-day isolation period). If any member of the household is not double vaccinated they should self-isolate for at least 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following ['Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection'](#)

St Marks Pre-school will not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

#### Managing confirmed cases of the Omicron Variant of Covid-19

All individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 will continue to be required to self-isolate and book a PCR test, regardless of vaccination status or age.

The government has confirmed that it plans to introduce daily contact testing as an alternative to self-isolation for contacts of positive Omicron cases who are fully vaccinated or under 18 years and six months as soon as possible.

#### Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

If St Marks Pre-school has two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus COVID-19 is suspected, the pre-school may have an outbreak, and will contact the local health protection team (HPT) who will be able to advise if additional action is required. Whole setting closure will be considered only on the advice of the health protection team.

#### Visitors and non-staff members

Wherever possible, St Marks Pre-school will reduce the number of visitors entering the premises. In instances where St Marks Pre-school needs to use other essential professionals, an assessment will be made about whether a professional needs to attend in person or can do so virtually. If they need to attend in person, it is expected that the professional will follow the protective measures in the pre-school, and the number of attendances will be kept to a minimum.

Other visitors to the site, such as contractors will be encouraged to make visits outside of the pre-school hours and guidance on social distancing and hygiene will be explained to visitors on or before arrival. A record will be kept of all visitors where this is practicable.

The use of external providers for sessions which are not directly required for children's health and wellbeing will be reduced with any sessions being held outside where possible.

One parent will be admitted during a child's settling visit to pre-school and at the beginning/end of the pre-school session. Parents will be expected to always wear a mask when in the pre-school building.

The settling period will continue to be flexibly implemented to best support a good start to pre-school. The parent supporting their child during a transition visit will be requested to provide evidence of a recent negative Lateral Flow Test.

## Parental information:

### Parents must:

- put sun cream on their children before they arrive at pre-school. This will be topped up according to the weather, immediately after lunch by practitioners wearing vinyl gloves.
- ensure that no toys or comforters are brought from home and that they explain why to their children. If it is absolutely necessary for a child's well being that a comforter/toy comes with the child to pre-school then this must be appropriately clean on arrival.
- provide a labelled, full water bottle/drink for their child in their lunch bag
- ensure social distancing if waiting to drop off or pick up their child.
- Wear a mask in the pre-school building that they provide for themselves.
- dress their child in fresh, clean clothes each day.
- wash their child's lunchbox in hot soapy water/wipe down their child's school bag using a disinfectant spray/anti-bac wipes
- contact the office to inform the pre-school immediately if their child is unwell and especially if there is a concern that COVID-19 symptoms are suspected.
- Self-isolate at home for 10 days if not double vaccinated in the event of any suspected COVID-19 symptoms in their child or other household family member.

### Parents must **not**:

- give Calpol to their child at least 4 hours before attending pre-school.
- bring their child in to pre-school if they are unwell, has a cold, or a temperature above 37.8 c.
- provide snack. The pre-school will provide a healthy snack, requesting a termly contribution towards this provision.

Parents are **requested** to help the pre-school keep their children safe by talking to them about and modelling how to:

- wash their hands thoroughly
- cough, or sneeze into their elbow.

### Arrival at pre-school

- Parents will be able drop their child at pre-school from 8.50 am onwards. Parents will be requested to be mindful of social distancing at all times.
- Parents to wear a face mask in the building. To reduce pre-school costs it is requested that parents provide this for themselves where possible.
- Children and parents will access the pre-school building via the main entrance, exiting from each room's fire exit, creating a one-way system.

- Parents will be requested to make handovers brief, with any confidential or specific information that needs to be shared more fully given by telephone to the office or by email.
- Children's temperatures will not be taken on immediate arrival as this is no longer advised as a key indicator of COVID 19.
- A practitioner will be available to offer additional support to parents for those children who struggle with transitioning into pre-school.
- Practitioners will be expected to wear a mask/face shield when greeting parents and children.

### **Departure from pre-school**

- Parents can collect their child between 2.50pm and 3.00pm, following the same procedure as 'drop off' with a one-way system.
- Handovers will be short and specific.
- Practitioners will be expected to wear a mask/face shield when giving verbal handovers at the end of the pre-school session.

### **Children:**

**Intimate care:** Nappy changing/changing of any soiled clothes to be carried out preferably in the accessible toilet or with windows open in the children's toilet area.

**Accident/incident forms;** The online 'Tapestry' accident section will be used to record when and how an accident occurred, detailing the first aid that was administered and by which staff member as well as any other relevant information. A practitioner will discuss the accident/incident with the parent at the end of the pre-school session and mark this as discussed on Tapestry.

If an accident/incident is not shared with a parent the practitioner will inform the senior member of the team present that day, who will telephone the parent.

### **Children's mental health:**

Practitioners will respond sensitively, and answer questions children ask about the Coronavirus. Practitioners will not discuss the current situation casually with other practitioners whilst working with the children. It is important that the children feel that pre-school offers a safe place.

As appropriate children will be offered increased support to regulate their emotions.

A visual prompt sheet will be provided to enable all children to understand our new 'golden rules'.

In the event of a child not being able to attend Pre-school due to self-isolation, the pre-school will provide ongoing home learning experiences and links to activities at pre-school via email, facebook or Tapestry.

### **Children with SEN**

Particular care will continue to be taken in supporting children with SEND to return/attend pre-school. St Marks Pre-school will be alert to the fact that there may be children with additional or worsened social emotional and mental health needs as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19), and that there may also be children who have fallen further behind their peers as a result of time out of childcare settings, or missed diagnosis as a result of a period of absence. St Marks Pre-school will continue to ensure that there is the staffing needed to support children with SEND at safe ratios.

St Marks Pre-school will look to provide masks that have a 'see-through' panel if it is felt necessary to enable effective communication with a child with SEN.

### **The environment:**

The number of soft toys, dressing up clothes, mats, and soft furnishings will be reduced and resources that are tricky to clean will be stored out of use. Any craft resources, including paint provided for activities will be disposed of at the end of each day. The outside sand pit will be available, with children being requested to wash their hands on returning inside the building. An additional mobile sandpit may be provided with a small amount of sand that is changed regularly and resources used cleaned on a daily basis. The mud kitchen will have appropriate resources provided for play with children washing their hands on returning inside the building..

A small number of bikes sit-in and ride cars, or skuttle bugs will be available. Helmets will need to be cleaned on a regular basis with anti-bac wipes.

Following national guidance play will continue to take place outside, using resources that are selected for the day.

Only resources that are easily cleaned are to be available for use outside. The range of resources will be reduced with only those resources that are to be used for the whole day left out. All other resources will be stored away/made inaccessible.

The whole of the playground will be available to the children of both rooms at the same time.

Sand, playdough and wet, messy activities will be provided. Water play will have anti-bac soap in and children will be requested to wash their hands both before and after any messy play activity. Dry sensory resources will continue to be provided and disposed of at the end of each day

There will continue to be increased ventilation with some windows open in all rooms at all times and draught excluders used at open doors. Heating will be used as necessary to ensure a comfortable temperature. The pre-school will seek to monitor air flow levels in the pre-school building with government provided CO2 monitors.

### **Snack/lunchtime**

Tables will be cleaned with anti-bac spray but left without a tablecloth. Washing of cutlery, plates and cups will be carried out immediately after use, using the dishwasher preferably or hot soapy water. Any drying-up should be carried out using disposable paper roll.

Parents will continue to be requested to make a small financial contribution towards the provision of healthy snack. This will be added to termly invoices.

### **Learning and Development requirements for EYFS**

The pre-school will continue to use reasonable endeavours to deliver the learning and development requirements set out in the EYFS. It is understood that these are exceptional circumstances and the priority at this time is keeping children safe and well cared for. As far as possible, children will continue to benefit from a broad range of educational opportunities.

For all children at pre-school the focus at this time will continue to be on the prime areas of learning, including communication and language, personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and physical development.

St Marks Pre-school will endeavour to continue to undertake the progress check at age 2 during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This check will be discussed via a parent chat, either by telephone or socially distanced in an outside space at pre-school.

St Marks Pre-school will continue to complete all other progress assessments for children attending. These will be shared with parents via the online system, Tapestry and followed by a parent chat, by telephone or socially distanced in an outside space at pre-school.

### **Staffing:**

The practitioner team will be subject to change according to practitioner availability and sickness. All practitioners are expected to support the necessary adjustments to the pre-school environment.

Practitioners will be expected to take Lateral Flow Tests a minimum of twice a week and provide evidence of a negative test result to the pre-school manager or room leaders in her absence.

Practitioner teams will be organised so that as much as possible the same children will be with the same practitioners. Two practitioners from the whole team will be responsible for maintaining the cleaning routines throughout the day and will support supervised hand washing.

Preferably more than two practitioners to access the kitchen at any one time. The kitchen window to be open and the door left ajar as appropriate. No more than two practitioners to work in the office at any one time, with the window open, door ajar and a 'sneeze screen' in use as necessary.

Lunch breaks will be staggered. Breaks will be allocated between 11 am and 1 pm. Practitioners must not eat their lunch at the same time as the children but eat alone or with one other practitioner in the kitchen/Quiet Dragons, ensuring social distancing. If eating lunch outside, with one other practitioner then social distancing must be adhered to. Benches to be placed in the front garden for practitioners to eat at.

Practitioners are advised to:

- not wear necklaces, wrist jewellery, rings or earrings to work. If a simple band ring is worn, practitioners must ensure that they move this ring around and clean the area around the ring thoroughly when washing hands.
- put all clothing worn at pre-school in the wash on returning home. Fresh clothes must be worn each day to pre-school.
- Consider showering, washing hair on returning home.
- Cover all cuts and abrasions, ensure fingernails are clean, short with no artificial nails or nail products.
- Only use your own stationery, including pens (please disinfect these regularly).

Practitioners will be provided with a small bag of disposable face masks that should be kept in an individual's belt bag. The belt bag is to be left at pre-school. A top-up of face masks will be available in the office.

Practitioners are requested to stay as safe as possible outside of work and adhere to government guidance.

### **Staff mental health:**

These continue to be challenging times for practitioners in early years. As individuals each practitioner will respond differently to the stress and strain of managing expectations at work and at home.

Each practitioner is encouraged to remember it's ok to not feel ok, but it's not ok to do nothing about it! Both the room leaders and pre-school manager will be available to answer any questions, follow up any concerns raised and offer support to enable each practitioner to fulfil their role.

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