

**Caversham Heights Pre-School
January 2022**

Staff Covid Isolation Contingency Plan

This document sets out the proposed way in which CHPS would deal with staff absences due to covid isolation. Note that, due to their nature, we expect these situations to arise at short notice. As a general principle we aim to keep the pre-school open as much as possible for as many children as possible with as little inconvenience for families as possible. This document only applies to cases of staff isolation where there is no reason to believe there has been transmission within the pre-school - i.e. other staff and children are unaffected - if that should not be the case then the outbreak management policy will take precedence. The following considerations are outlined:

- A. Ratios
- B. Possible scenarios and actions that would be taken to deal with them
- C. Prioritisation method for partial closure
- D. Measures to ensure any situation can be quickly managed

A) Ratios

The pre-school normally runs to adult:child ratios that are better than legally required:

	CHPS ratio	Legal requirement
Children 3 or over	1:6	1:8
Children 2.5 - 3	1:4	1:4

Additionally, a safeguarding lead must be on site at all times - this means Kath or Hazel.

Our first priority will be to maintain our ratio of 1:4 for 2.5-3 year olds and, as far as possible, 1:6 for over 3s. However, if necessary, we will temporarily go down to the legal requirement of 1:8 for over 3s and remain open for all children.

Note that, as at January 2022, the Department for Education has allowed for temporary increase in ratios in exceptional circumstances. However, CHPS has concluded that it is not able to work safely to any higher ratio due to the multi-room nature of the setting. Therefore we maintain our minimum ratio to stay open as 1:8 for over 3s.

B) Sequential Scenarios and Actions

	Scenario	Description	Action
1	Maintain CHPS Ratios	One member of staff in isolation or two in isolation whose shift patterns are complementary to those still working	Other staff will cover to maintain CHPS ratios. Pre-school remains fully open.
2a	Move to legally required ratios	Two members of staff in isolation with non-complementary shift patterns.	Maintain legally required ratios at all times (higher if possible for some hours). Pre-school remains fully open.
2b	Special case: closure	The two members of staff in isolation are Kath and Hazel	Pre-school must close until Kath or Hazel are able to return
3a	Seek parent help*	A small number of hours (e.g. 1-5) cannot be maintained due to staff isolation	Parent volunteers to cover gaps
3b		Last minute notice of staff isolation means that legal ratios cannot be met at very short notice (e.g. positive test in the morning before a session)	A parent volunteer covers a full session(s) on an emergency basis, buying time to deal with the situation
3c	Seek agency cover	<i>Partial closure looks imminent</i>	<i>Contact agencies and ask for emergency cover. However, it is not expected the cover would be obtained in the current climate.</i>
4	Close for some children	Too many members of staff in isolation to maintain legal ratios	According to pre-agreed criteria, notify some children that they cannot attend until staff return from isolation.
5	Close	Too many staff in isolation to be able to open the school safely	Close the pre-school until it can reopen partially or fully

*Parents can be part of the adult:child ratio. However, without DBS checking cannot be left in a room with children without other members of staff. This is manageable for short periods of time.

C) Partial Closure Prioritisation Method

If a partial closure becomes necessary, places will be allocated according to the following method:

- 1) Vulnerable children and children of key workers will be prioritised for full attendance
- 2) Further prioritisation will be made according to families' ability to manage additional child care at short notice. This will be determined by a parent survey in advance.
- 3) A rotation mechanism will be followed as far as possible to prevent the need for any child to miss pre-school entirely - e.g. each child is asked to drop their attendance by 2 days a week.

The exact decision on prioritising places will be made by the Covid Management Group of the Committee in consultation with the Supervisor and Administrator. This will depend on the exact circumstances of the absence.

D) Quick Management of Contingencies - Measures to Put in Place

- A Covid Management group will consist of at least 3 committee members identified who are ready and able to deal with an issue due to scenario 2b or higher. As it would likely come as short notice, whichever member of this group most immediately available would commence dealing with it. Those committee members should have immediate access to:
 - Full phone and email contact details for every family
 - The ability to email all parents
 - Be members of the parents' Whatsapp group
- A list of children with key worker parents
- A list of families who could/could not deal with the unexpected child care burden
- A list of parents identified who would be willing and able to provide emergency cover, including their mobile numbers
- Effort should be made to ensure as many parents as possible join the whatsapp group