



## Coronavirus (Covid-19) Policy & Procedures

We prioritise safety and are committed to reducing the risk of spread to everyone at Acorns2Oaks (A2O) and are adhering to Government, Public Health England (PHE) and The Department for Education (DfE) guidance on managing the risk from Coronavirus (Covid-19).

We have drafted this policy to detail internal procedures to help us reduce the risks and to react quickly in the event of a direct link to any one of our Centres so we can effectively manage the situation.

### POLICY & PROCEDURE UPDATES

***This Policy will be updated in line with current Government directives and operational needs. All updates will be dated and documented in reverse chronological order.***

Unless expressly stated, updates are not intended to replace previous policy or procedures but are designed to enable this document to provide current and up to date guidance for our organisation to operate safely throughout the pandemic and thereafter.

We will inform all respective parties of updates as and when they occur; Employees, Parents and Carers, Service Users, Service Providers.

We will keep in touch with all respective parties by various methods: telephone, email, letters, notices' website announcements and mobile phone texts.

Staff Agreements. A blank staff agreement can be found as an appendix in this document and should be used to obtain consent to adhere to this policy and procedure accordingly.

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A copy of this policy can be obtained from the Nursery Offices or downloaded via our website: [www.acorns2oaksnurseries.net/home/policies](http://www.acorns2oaksnurseries.net/home/policies)

<b>Authorised by:</b> Lauraine Nicholson	<b>Signed:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
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**Promotional Work within the Community.**

For business promotional purposes, we will be carrying out various leaflet drops within the local community.

These procedures are in place to ensure the employees and volunteers carrying out this work do so safely and whilst adhering to current Government directives.

Employees/Volunteers are to:

- Wear masks at all times, ensuring they are not removed to have conversations.
- Wear protective gloves at all times, ensuring they are regularly replaced and disposed of safely.
- Maintain regular handwashing when possible; i.e when returning to workplace or home.
- Maintain social distancing and not enter into close conversations.
- Avoid any properties that they do not feel comfortable approaching.
- Should they develop symptoms or feel unwell they must inform their line manager immediately and either stay at home or return home if this occurs whilst working.

## **A2O CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) POLICY & PROCEDURES – UPDATE 16/03/20**

It will be necessary to amend and update this document in line with government directives. The following details our current policy on staffing and absence as at 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **A) SENDING EMPLOYEES HOME/REQUIRING EMPLOYEES NOT TO ATTEND WORK**

If we are concerned that you may have been exposed to the virus, even though you are not displaying symptoms, we may take the decision to send you home/require you not to attend work. This may occur if, for example, you inform us that you have been in close contact with someone else who has, or may have, the virus. This is treated as a period of suspension for medical reasons. It is not considered a disciplinary sanction; the period of suspension will be in recognition of the possibility that your continued presence in the workplace poses a risk of spreading the virus. You will receive full pay during this time off. Alternatively, we may agree a period of paid annual leave with you. If, during this period of suspension, you develop symptoms, you should follow government guidance on what to do next, which may include using internet or telephone services, and also follow our normal sickness reporting procedures. You will then be treated as being on a period of sickness absence.

### **B) EMPLOYEES WHO CONTRACT THE VIRUS**

If you contract the virus, you should take and follow medical advice on the length of your sickness absence. You are required to produce a medical certificate for illnesses lasting seven calendar days or more, however, we appreciate that you are not likely to be in a position to obtain a medical certificate in usual timescales, therefore you should provide it as soon as is reasonably practicable. During your absence, our normal sickness absences rules will apply and you will receive statutory sick pay (SSP) in pay in accordance with our contractual sick pay subject to meeting qualifying criteria.

### **C) ATTENDANCE AT WORK**

Unless you have followed our usual reporting procedures in relation to sickness absence, are in self-isolation following government guidance or not attending work under our specific instruction, you are expected to attend work as normal.

### **D) TEMPORARY BUSINESS CLOSURE**

As time progresses, it may become clear that the business is temporarily unable to continue its operations as normal. In this scenario, we may be forced to close all, or part, of the business temporarily until such a time as we are able to resume operations. Whilst we will do everything we can to ensure that this does not happen, we may be left with no option but to place you on lay off, or short time working. During this period, your pay will be reduced accordingly and you may receive statutory guarantee pay in line with statutory provisions.

### **E) WORKING FROM ANOTHER LOCATION**

The Company will consider, as part of its general approach to maintaining normal business operations, whether employees are to work from home. Obviously, this will not be possible in every case due to the nature of individual roles. However, we will assess the viability of this option, taking into consideration any equipment needed, at the relevant time and, as a result, you may be required to work from home for a temporary period. Employees should not assume that they will be permitted to work from home and advance authorisation will be needed in every case.

## **A2O CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) POLICY & PROCEDURES –12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2020**

### **1. Hygiene Control**

We are committed to reducing the risk by ensuring effective hygiene practices are in place for both Children and Staff as advised by PHE:

- Wash hands frequently with soap, especially before eating or handling food, after toilet visits, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing.
- Cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, and to discard the tissue immediately into a bin.
- No sharing of food/ drinks/ utensils or towels with others.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, toys and equipment regularly and when contaminated by nasal or oral secretions.
- Ensure supplies such as hand soap, tissues, and paper towels are available for children and staff's use.
- Remain vigilant in ensuring regular and effective cleaning is carried out and our housekeeping is of a high standard.

### **2. Travel Log**

Although the PHE list of countries is specific at the moment, the list is growing week by week. To minimise the risk to everyone accessing our Centres we will maintain a travel log and request that staff and families, of the Nursery children and Youth Club, advise us of any foreign travel they have undertaken since February half term and any planned trips with dates. This procedure will stay in place until we are confident the risk has reduced. The Travel Log will be maintained and monitored by the Senior Management Team.

### **3. Information Sharing**

As with any widespread infection that could pose a threat to their children, parents may be understandably concerned. We will try to reassure parents who are worried by sharing up-to-date information and advice from reliable sources.

- We will monitor the UK and global situation, adhere to government and health advice and provide updates on our dedicated website page: [www.acorns2oaksnurseries.net/coronavirus-information/](http://www.acorns2oaksnurseries.net/coronavirus-information/)
- We will provide relevant updates via letter where deemed necessary.
- In the event of a diagnosis of anyone accessing our Centre, the Travel Log will be shared with PHE.
- Staff are reminded to be aware of the wider implications of sharing information in their personal networks.

### **4. Precautionary measures**

#### ***Health monitoring***

The symptoms of Covid-19 are a cough, a high temperature and/or shortness of breath. These symptoms do not necessarily mean an individual have the illness as they are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu. Staff are to continually monitor the health of children in our care and are to react quickly in the event of any rise in temperature or changes in behaviour, in-line with our ***Child Sickness Policy Sept 2019***

## **Self-Isolation**

The list of affected areas is continually growing - we will try and update these as we become aware. Therefore, to assess risk on a continual basis, the Senior Management Team will be responsible for all discussions with Parents regarding self-isolation.

Affected areas - We ask staff and families that have undertaken any travel to all affected areas not to attend our Centres until they have completed a 14-day self-isolation period in the UK after travel as per current Government Publications.

Other travel - Individuals that have travelled abroad are at slightly higher risk of contracting Covid-19 due to possible contact with other travelers at transport hubs. We ask that anyone showing symptoms of a cough, high temperature and/or shortness of breath and has travelled abroad in the last 14 days does not attend our Centres for 14 days or until they get the all clear from a medical professional.

Individuals that are known to have come into close contact with a person who has a confirmed case of Covid-19 or has been asked to self-isolate are at risk of being infected. We would ask that they do not attend our Centres for 14 days.

Individuals who have been tested for the Covid-19 virus or have seen a medical professional and been cleared as fit are free to return to our Centres.

## **5. Action Plan**

Where we are notified of any cases of Covid-19 among individuals, or their contacts, who have accessed our Centres, we will immediately refer to the Government guidance and contact the PHE. The Health Protection Team will then assess the setting and advise on the course of action. Any confirmed case is to be reported to Head Office.

## **6. Government Advice:**

The Department for Education has launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

phone: 0800 046 8687

email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

(opening hours: 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday)

Government advice on Coronavirus:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Government advice detailing affected areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk>

DfE and Public Health guidance for Educational Settings on Coronavirus:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

