

## BeyondAutism Early Years' Guidance for Covid-19

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### 1.INTRODUCTION

Keeping children, parents, and staff safe is our utmost priority at BeyondAutism Early Years. This guidance has been developed with advice from Public Health England (PHE), the Guidance "Actions for Early Years and Childcare providers during Coronavirus (Covid-19) Outbreak" by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Covid-19 guidelines provided by our two new settings; The London Water and Steam Museum and the Wandsworth Southside Shopping Centre.

The Coronavirus crisis has presented serious challenges for local services supporting children and young people with SEND and their families. Many of the families that access these services, with or without EHCP's and with or without school placements, will have been relying on them for the care, routine, structure and support they need to get by.

Now with less access to their support networks, both paid and unpaid, these children and families will be facing an even greater challenge as they readjust. Local SEND Support Services are acutely aware of these challenges, and of the spiralling needs and anxieties of the families they work with. But their ability to respond is hampered by the very difficult circumstances they find themselves in.

In these uncertain times for the SEND sector, as a service we must step to the challenge. We aim to support our families as we always do; by talking to each other, learning from each other and doing all we can to work together to lessen the impact of Covid-19 in our Early Years community. To be able to do this, it is essential that we provide a safe space where support and information is available for and from our families.

At BeyondAutism Early Years we want the best outcomes and futures for our families, it is by nurturing our community how we will face the challenges as they come. Together.

We will continue to support the right to an education, inclusion in the community and access to a dignified life for all our families; During these troubling times, we believe it is our ethical duty to do so.

### 2.SAFETY MEASURES IN PLACE

At BeyondAutism Early Years we comply with the public health advice of protective measures that have been in use throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We will implement them in line with a revised risk assessment, to create an inherently safer environment for our families and staff where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced for everyone.

## OUR REVISED RISK ASSESSMENT

We comply with health and safety law, which requires us to assess risks and put in place proportionate control measures to keep everyone safe.

We reviewed our Health and Safety Risk Assessment to include contingencies against the Covid-19 outbreak. We have active arrangements in place to monitor that the controls are effective, working as planned and updated appropriately, for example when any issues are identified, or when there are changes in public health advice.

In our setting we must:

1. ensure that all staff and parents understand our safety measures and how they are applied. Our Health and Safety Officer (Marta Martin Perteguer) will permanently be on site during sessions available to answer any questions.
2. ensure that parents and carers are aware of our safety measures, how this impacts them and their responsibilities in supporting it. Our Health and Safety Officer (Marta Martin Perteguer) will permanently be on site to answer any questions.

By following our safety measures, we will effectively reduce risks in our sessions and create an inherently safer environment.

## OUR SAFETY MEASURES

### GENERAL

#### PREVENTION:

- 1) We will 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 our sessions.

If anyone in the setting has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19): a high temperature, new and persistent cough or a loss of, or change in their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), however mild, they should self-isolate for at least 10 days from when their symptoms started; or if they are not experiencing symptoms, but have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), they should self-isolate for at least 10 days starting from the day the test was taken.

If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms, but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10 day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

As is usual practice, in an emergency, we will call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Anyone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Any members of staff 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. However, they must self-isolate and arrange for a test if 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.

Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household disinfectant after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

2) Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an easy virus to kill when it is on the skin. This can be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser.

Children and parents must clean their hands regularly, including:

when they arrive at the setting

when they go to the toilet

before and after eating

Regular and thorough hand cleaning is needed for the foreseeable future. We will ensure that during the sessions we have enough hand washing or hand sanitiser 'stations' available so that all children, parents and staff can clean their hands regularly.

We will supervise the use of hand sanitiser, given risks around ingestion. Our children should continue to be helped to clean their hands properly. Skin friendly skin cleaning wipes can be used as an alternative.

We aim to build these routines into our sessions culture, and ensure our children follow them.

3) ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. This approach continues to be very important, so we will ensure we have enough tissues and bins available in the setting to support children, parents and staff to implement this routine. As with hand cleaning, we must ensure our children are helped to get this right, and that we all understand that this is now part of how the sessions operate.

PHE does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools. The evidence will be kept under review. PHE advises that for safety reasons, face masks should not be used for children under three. In addition, misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission and there may also be negative effects on communication and thus children's development.

We will not provide snacks for our families in order to reduce risks, families must bring their own and we discourage sharing food between families. However, as we increase our presence in the community we will

offer to accompany families to nearby supermarkets if they wish to buy snacks and practice social skills with their children.

4) enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often. There will be a box for mouthed objects available for all families, all objects in contact with a child's mouth must be immediately put in this box for cleaning if it cannot be cleaned in that same moment.

In order to facilitate cleaning, we will remove unnecessary items from our learning environment. Public Health advice is to remove all soft toys, and any toys that are hard to clean, such as those with intricate parts. Where practicable, we will remove soft furnishings, for example pillows, bean bags and rugs. We encourage families to bring maximum of 2 items of their own (a special blankie and an Ipad for example), parents will be responsible for keeping these items away from other families.

## RESPONSE TO ANY INFECTION

1) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

Staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:

- a. book a test if they are displaying symptoms. Staff, parents and children must not come to the sessions if they have symptoms and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in the setting. All children can be tested, including children under 5.
- b. provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- c. self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. 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.

We request that parents and carers inform us immediately of the results of the test:

- a. if someone tests **negative**, and they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19): they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can also stop self-isolating
- b. if someone tests **positive**: they should follow COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection and should 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. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The at least 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 continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

## 8. Managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

- a. We will take swift action if we become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). We will contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact us directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended our setting – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.
- b. The local health protection team will work with us to carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.
- c. The local health protection team will work with us in this situation to guide us through the actions we need to take. Based on the advice from the local health protection team, we will have to send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact means:
  1. 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)
  2. proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1-2m for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
  3. travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person
- d) The local health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, we will keep a record of:
  1. families and staff in specific groups/settings.
  2. close contact that takes places between children, parents and staff in different groups/setting.
- e) We will not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.
- f) Household members of those who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period, they should follow COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection. They should get a test, and:
  1. if the test delivers a **negative** result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days
  2. if the test result is **positive**, they should inform their setting immediately, and should isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 14

days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection

#### VISITORS AND NON-STAFF MEMBERS (SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS, NURSERY STAFF, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS, ETC)

1. In instances where settings like ours need to use other essential professionals such as social workers, speech and language therapists or other professionals to support delivery of a child's EHC plan or their development, we will decide whether the professionals need to attend in person or can do so virtually. If they need to attend in person, they will closely follow the protective measures in place, and the number of attendances will be kept to a minimum. Where possible to do so, social distancing will be maintained.
2. We will ensure site guidance on social distancing and hygiene is explained to visitors on or before arrival.
3. Where possible, the presence of any additional members of staff will be agreed on a weekly or monthly basis to limit contacts. All parents will be contacted in advance if an external person will be present during a specific session to decide if they would like to attend.

#### WATER AND STEAM MUSEUM

Our sessions will have step free access. There will be an accessible toilet and baby change facilities that are managed and cleaned by the museum following government recommendations.

The spaces we will use during our sessions will be cleaned before and after by the museum personnel.

At least one member of the museum staff will be onsite to welcome our families and to be on hand during our sessions.

We will have hand sanitiser available, but it is recommended for families to also bring their own where possible.

There won't be snacks and drinks available on site, but families are welcome to bring in food and drink from home or nearby shops and cafes including Costa and the Roastery at Kew Bridge Station (3 minutes).

On Wednesday free onsite parking is available. On Thursday parking can be found on Green Dragon Lane.

The London Water and Steam Museum is very close to Kew Bridge train Station (3 minutes walk), Brentford train Station (18 minutes walk) and Gunnersbury station is (16 minutes). The bus stop outside the museum is served by buses 65, 237 and 267, although please note that there are roadworks on Kew Bridge Road and bus stop availability is liable to change. Please check your journey before departing.

Here is a short promotional video from this summer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5nggnfC6B8>

## SOUTHSIDE SHOPPING CENTRE

Our sessions will have step free access. There will be an accessible toilet and baby change facilities that are managed and cleaned by the shopping centre following government recommendations.

The spaces we will use during our sessions will be cleaned before and after the sessions (including between morning and afternoon sessions).

We will have hand sanitiser available, but it is recommended for families to also bring their own where possible.

There won't be snacks and drinks available on site, but families are welcome to bring in food and drink from home or nearby shops and cafes.

**In line with the latest Government guidance on social distancing, we ask that you please observe the following measures during your visit:**



Maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from anyone



Do not shake hands



Wash your hands regularly, and for at least 20 seconds



Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth



Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue if you cough or sneeze



Observe the social distancing visual cues and signage throughout the site



Be mindful of and respectful to our staff and customers at all times



**KEEP YOUR DISTANCE & KEEP SMILING**  
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