



Safe Operating Procedures during Coronavirus (Covid-19) – COVID Secure

Version 12– 26th March 2021

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In the event a **child, team member** or **member of the household** tests positive for coronavirus, the result must be reported to the **nursery management**. If the result is received out of nursery hours, please contact us 24/7 on **01245 373749**.

Please be prepared with the following information:

✓ Name of the person who tested positive	✓ Date of first symptoms
✓ The nursery they attend	✓ Date of test
✓ The bubble/ homebase they are in	✓ Your contact details

Introduction

In these exceptional circumstances we must all comply with the latest Government Guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19).

These Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) are based on Public Health England and DFE¹ guidance for nursery schools and their key workers. Detailed guidance or evidence supporting a procedure can be found in the accompanying footnotes.

Nursery schools play an essential role in society and we must make adaptations to the way we work to keep our children, parents, and team safe during this time. The fundamental principle of this guidance is to ensure distancing between identified groups and to implement enhanced hygiene practices. The design of nurseries as relatively small communities with further subdivided rooms, greatly assists our ability to create physical distance between groups.

The scientific evidence is that COVID-19 appears to affect young children less often and with less severity². There is also growing evidence that children do not play a significant role in transmission to adults³.

¹ [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june)

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

³ <https://dontforgetthebubbles.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-data-top-10.pdf>

Attendance

Children and team members who are not displaying coronavirus symptoms⁴ are welcome to attend the nursery. Anyone who has experienced coronavirus symptoms must have completed the required isolation period⁵ and be symptom free or achieve a negative test result before returning to the nursery. If a member of a household is unwell or isolating, all members of the household must isolate for the required period.

Shielding advice⁶ for all adults and children will pause on 31st March, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of children who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to settings, as can those who have family members who are shielding.

Lateral Flow Tests (LFT)

As of March 22nd, staff members are invited to participate in asymptomatic rapid COVID-19 testing⁷, including those who have had vaccination. Staff members, including relief can opt in to participate in the programme and request a home test kit from their Manager (7 Lateral Flow Device LFD self-tests per kit). It is recommended staff members test twice a week at home, tests to be taken 3 to 4 days apart. Rapid testing is only for those without symptoms of Coronavirus. Staff members are responsible for self-administering the test and providing their results.

All staff members engaging in the programme are responsible for reporting their test results (positive, negative or void) straight away to NHS Test and Trace online via www.gov.uk/report-covid-19-result and in addition, must inform their Manager of their result that same morning.

If a positive LFD result, the staff member must self-isolate immediately and book a confirmatory PCR test. If the test result is void (invalid) the staff member should take another test as soon as possible. A negative LFD result is not a means to relax protective measures, SOP's must continue to be adhered to in full.

Drop off and collection of children

To minimise traffic in the nursery, parents are asked to drop off and collect their children at either the main entrance or a dedicated entrance for different homebases rooms during specific times of the day. We would kindly ask those parents who are dropping off and collecting their children wear face coverings to do so. Parents waiting to drop off and collect are asked to maintain social distancing by standing at least 2 meters apart in a safe area. To minimise physical interaction, only key information will be shared on handover with more detailed handover information added to the Parent Zone App. The team member and parents should maintain physical distancing as much as practically possible.

Temperature and symptom monitoring

Routine temperature testing is not advised as a reliable method for identifying coronavirus. Parents and team members should follow the national advice on the kind of symptoms to look out for that might be due to coronavirus:

- A new continuous cough and/or
- A high temperature

⁴ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

⁵ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/what-to-do-if-you-or-someone-you-live-with-has-coronavirus-symptoms/>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

⁷ [Households and bubbles of pupils, students and staff of schools, nurseries and colleges: get rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/households-and-bubbles-of-pupils-students-and-staff-of-schools-nurseries-and-colleges-get-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

- A change to or loss of the sense of taste/smell

Temperature after routine vaccinations

If a child has recently had a routine vaccination it is common that a mild fever may occur. If a temperature develops within 2 days of a vaccination and no other coronavirus symptoms are present and coronavirus is not suspected isolation or getting a test is not required. This guidance is in line with the NHS advice.

Travel to nursery

Wherever possible team members and families should travel to the nursery alone, using their own transport. If it is necessary to share transport, journeys should be taken with the same individuals with the minimum number of people at one time. If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed. Face coverings are advised on public transport to help protect others.

Shared Provision

Parents are encouraged to limit the number of settings their child attends, ideally only attending the same setting consistently. However, we recognise this may not always be possible for some families to return to work/ who need greater flexibility for their childcare.

If a second setting is being attended parents must notify both nurseries. Contact will be made to share Safety Operating Procedures/ Risk Assessments. To reduce the risk of transmission parents must ensure their child wears clean, fresh clothing between settings and use ideally a different bag/ comforter (if applicable). If this is not possible these must be cleaned thoroughly between settings.

Parents must inform management of any positive cases of COVID-19 at your second setting.

Implementing social distancing

A level of physical interaction within nurseries is unavoidable. The key to reducing the risk of coronavirus transmission is to maintain small groups and minimise physical interaction between these groups⁸.

Homebase rooms & Key Groups

Wherever possible children and team will remain within their homebase room groups. Normal child to staff ratios are maintained. Meals and snacks should be served in home base rooms.

Communal spaces & outdoor classrooms

Children accessing communal spaces will be encouraged to wash their hands as they move between areas i.e., homebase room to outdoor classroom. Most toilet and changing facilities are in homebase rooms, however in the case a toileting area is communal more regular cleaning will be implemented.

Homebase transitions

Information sharing with the new Key Person will be conducted via the ParentZone App and Microsoft Teams. During these measures, children will not visit their new homebase ahead of their first day but will be supported with this change through age/stage appropriate planned activities.

⁸



Team breaks

Social distancing (2 meters) must be maintained in team rooms. Team members are encouraged to take a break off site or in a separated garden area if possible but should avoid high traffic areas such as local shops or cafés. If team members live near to the nursery, they may choose to take their break at home.

Cross Site Working

Working patterns should be arranged on a weekly basis. Team members needing to work across two or more sites in one week should have access Lateral Flow Tests and test ahead of attending each site.

Visitors and meetings

Attendance in the nursery should be restricted to children and team as much as possible. All meetings and interactions should continue but by using MS Teams where deemed possible.

Visitors

During these measures, visitors to the nursery should be limited. However, there may be occasions when a visitor is considered necessary, due to nature of their work and their inability to carry this out virtually, for example external professionals like Speech and Language Therapists or other professionals that support delivery of a child's EHC plan. Decisions should be considered on a case-by-case basis which takes into account the needs of, and circumstances specific to the child.

All visitors will be required to wear a face covering, adhere to the social distancing rules, use hand sanitiser on arrival and use the hand washing facilities. All visitors should check in on the NHS Covid-19 App using the QR code on the front door and will sign into the visitor's book. The visitor should minimise their movement around the nursery and only enter homebase rooms where necessary, using the outdoor classroom space is preferred. The visitor should minimise their interaction with other children and team members.

Stay & Play sessions, Prepared for School Workshops and educational visitors are postponed until restrictions are lifted.

Settling in sessions

Initial information sharing will be conducted between parents and the Key Person via e-All About Me and Microsoft Teams where possible. Children joining nursery will be offered settling in sessions prior to their first day. Parents will be invited to attend their child's first settling in session, this will be limited to one parent for up to 1 hour. As above the parent should minimise their movement around the nursery and only enter their child's homebase room, using the outdoor classroom space is preferred. The parent should minimise their interaction with other children and team members. The use of Microsoft Teams and the ParentZone App to reassure parents is encouraged.

Contractors Visits

Specific contractors are permitted into the nursery for example fire alarm, extinguisher, pest control and intruder alarm engineers. The above visitor procedures must be followed whilst on site regarding face coverings, social distancing, hand sanitiser and signing in on entering the nursery. Contractors should also follow their own organisations covid procedures. Contractors are always supervised by a senior member of the nursery team. Areas where contractors need to access will be clear of staff and children as practicable, keeping interaction to an absolute minimum and conforming to social distancing guidelines.



Nursery views and tours

Prospective parent views and tours should be conducted using Microsoft Teams. Managers should continue to provide a virtual tour on the iPad and encourage interaction between prospective parents and key persons. Out of hours tours can be arranged at the Managers discretion, the same visitor procedures are applied regarding face coverings, social distancing, hand sanitiser and signing in on entering the nursery.

Meetings

No physical group meetings should take place in the nursery. All meetings will now take place on Microsoft Teams.

Interviews

First stage interviews are conducted via MS Teams. Final interviews are permitted to be carried out on the nursery but should be held in a space where social distancing rules can be adhered between the interviewee and the interviewers. Candidates will not be offered a tour of the nursery and will not enter homebase rooms.

Students

Early years settings are encouraged to support colleges with student placements to protect the pipeline of future early years staff. Early Years students are included in the definition of critical workers. Student placements will re-commence in April 2021. Students will be required to have lateral flow tests twice weekly and will follow the same SOP's as team members.

College and Training Centre Tutors and Assessors will be permitted into the nursery when it is considered necessary, when work cannot be carried out virtually, for example to carry out an observation of the student. The above visitor procedures must be followed whilst in the nursery regarding face coverings, social distancing, hand sanitiser and signing in on entering the nursery. The Tutor/Assessor should minimise their movement around the nursery and only enter homebase rooms where necessary, using the outdoor classroom space is preferred. The Tutor/Assessor should minimise their interaction with other children and team members.

Hygiene & Safety

Good hygiene and cleaning practices significantly reduce the spread and transmission of the coronavirus. Enhanced hygiene and cleaning practices must be implemented, rigorously followed, and validated.

Cleaning

An enhanced cleaning schedule has been implemented. Communal areas, toilets, touch points, shared resources and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly. A senior person is responsible for validating and recording cleaning schedules.

Hand washing

The rate of handwashing must be significantly increased⁹. All team must wash their hands with soap and water upon each arrival to the nursery and children should be encouraged to do the same. Adequate supplies of soap and paper towels are provided at identified handwash stations. Hand sanitizer should only be used in areas where hand washing facilities with soap, water and paper towels

⁹ <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

cannot be provided. Hand sanitizer is not required after hand washing with soap and water. A hand sanitizer station will be provided in the lobby of the nursery with all visitors required to use it.

Uniform

Uniforms should be washed more regularly, ideally after each use. Washing uniforms with detergent in a normal wash is effective at reducing the risk of transmission. If a team member has come into contact with a person presenting coronavirus symptoms, the uniform should be washed at a higher temperature for longer¹⁰.

Nursery Laundry

Nursery laundry continues to be collected by The Professional Nursery Kitchen and washed by industrial machines with specialist detergents, in line with NHS laundry standards. Ensure the laundry bag is not overfilled and is securely tied before collection.

Risk Assessment

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 should be added to all new nursery risk assessments until these restrictions are lifted. If a planned activity or action could increase the risk of transmission, the activity should be avoided. If in doubt, the assessor should seek advice from a member of the senior management team.

Resources

Play equipment in communal areas (e.g. outdoor classrooms) should be sanitized between groups. Soft furnishings and resources with intricate parts that are difficult to clean should be removed from home base rooms. Sand and water should be changed daily, and container sanitised.

Items brought from home

Families should be discouraged to bring items from home into the nursery. Comforters are permissible if not having them would cause a child distress.

Responding to a person displaying symptoms of COVID-19

A child displaying symptoms

In the event of a child developing suspected coronavirus symptoms¹¹ whilst attending the nursery, they should be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance.

Whilst waiting for a parent/carer to collect the child, they should be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation. The team member most closely associated with their care should care for them on a 1:1 basis¹². Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available for the team member if they feel it is appropriate.

If the child becomes very unwell, it may be necessary to call 111 or 999¹³. Normal procedures on child illness must be observed.

Targeted and enhanced cleaning should then take place in the areas of the nursery the child had accessed¹⁴.

¹⁰ <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/infections/can-clothes-and-towels-spread-germs/>

¹¹ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

¹² <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-in-children/>

¹³ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-in-children/>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

A team member displaying symptoms

In the event of a team member developing coronavirus symptoms whilst attending nursery, they should leave the nursery as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with NHS guidance. If they are unable to travel alone, they should wait in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window should be opened for ventilation.

Targeted and enhanced cleaning should then take place in the areas of the nursery the team member had accessed.

PPE Equipment

Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in nurseries to protect against COVID-19 transmission. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are the most effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Gloves and aprons should continue to be worn as normal for nappy changing and the administration of first aid.

A PPE box is available if a team member is required to care for a child displaying coronavirus symptoms or when deep cleaning after any person has displayed coronavirus symptoms.

PPE Box Contents:

1. Face Mask
2. Eye protection/visor
3. Disposable gloves
4. Disposable aprons
5. Tissues
6. Hand sanitizer
7. Antibacterial/viral wipes

PPE should be disposed of safely after use¹⁵ and the equipment replenished.

Responding to a confirmed case

Testing

All children, parents, team members and members of their households are eligible for a [COVID-19 test](#), should they display coronavirus symptoms.

In the event a child, team member or member of their household tests positive for COVID-19 they must report it immediately to the nursery management, or if out of nursery hours to our 24/7 phone line **01245 373749**.

Actions when someone tests positive (PCR or LFT)

The nursery leadership team will contact the DfE for advice when a positive test is identified and will be guided by the advice given as to who will need to self-isolate depending on the circumstances and when they last attended the nursery. All members who are assessed to be as close contacts (children and team) will be notified to return home or not attend the nursery (if notified out of hours). The affected team and children must isolate for 10 days.

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>



The nursery leadership team will inform all parents and team members at the nursery of the positive case. Children and team members who are classed as extremely clinically vulnerable and clinically vulnerable will be advised not to attend the nursery for 10 days.

The Management Team must report the positive case to contact the dedicated DfE advice line: 0800 046 8687 to seek guidance (Mon -Fri 8am-6pm, Sat -Sun 10am – 4 pm). The advice service will work with the setting to carry out a rapid risk assessment and identify appropriate next steps.

The AHO will also inform Ofsted and the relevant Local Authority.

Essex: early.years@essex.gov.uk

Hertfordshire: COVID.EYSEducation@hertfordshire.gov.uk

It may be necessary to make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) if a team member is diagnosed with coronavirus and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise the settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger number of other children/ team may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. It is not expected that closure of the whole the setting will be necessary where the settings are following advice around infection control.

[Returning to nursery](#)

Children and team members who were required to isolate can return to the nursery after 10 days, providing they have been free of the following symptoms for 48 hours:

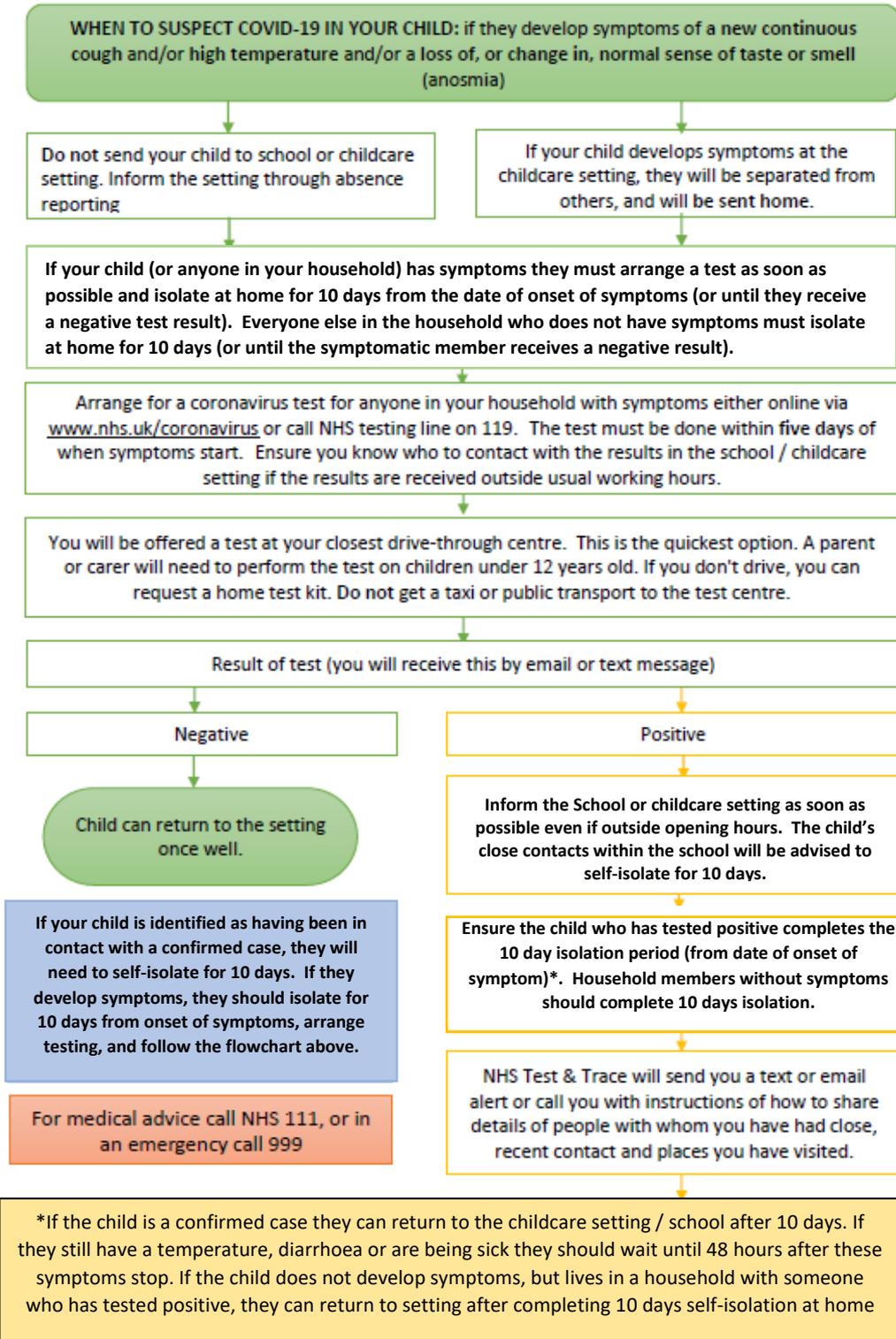
- a high temperature or feeling hot and shivery
- a runny nose or sneezing
- feeling or being sick
- diarrhea
- loss of appetite

Appendix

Parent and Carer information on suspected cases in children

Information for parents and carers on suspected COVID-19 (coronavirus) in a child

For general information about COVID-19 please go to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>



If your child is identified as having been in contact with a confirmed case, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days. If they develop symptoms, they should isolate for 10 days from onset of symptoms, arrange testing, and follow the flowchart above.

For medical advice call NHS 111, or in an emergency call 999

Advice for parents during coronavirus

Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself.

Whilst it is extremely important to follow Government advice to stay at home during this period, it can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell or injured. Remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still providing the same safe care that they have always done. Here is some advice to help:

 <p>RED</p>	<p>If your child has any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becomes pale, mottled and feels abnormally cold to the touch Has pauses in their breathing (apnoeas), has an irregular breathing pattern or starts grunting Severe difficulty in breathing becoming agitated or unresponsive Is going blue round the lips Has a fit/seizure Becomes extremely distressed (crying inconsolably despite distraction), confused, very lethargic (difficult to wake) or unresponsive Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass test') Has testicular pain, especially in teenage boys 	<p>You need urgent help:</p> <p>Go to the nearest A&E department or phone 999</p>
 <p>AMBER</p>	<p>If your child has any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is finding it hard to breathe including drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs (recession) or head bobbing Seems dehydrated (dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, drowsy or passing less urine than usual) Is becoming drowsy (excessively sleepy) or irritable (unable to settle them with toys, TV, food or picking up) - especially if they remain drowsy or irritable despite their fever coming down Has extreme shivering or complains of muscle pain Babies under 3 months of age with a temperature above 38°C / 100.4°F Infants 3-6 months of age with a temperature above 39°C / 102.2°F For all infants and children with a fever above 38°C for more than 5 days. Is getting worse or if you are worried Has persistent vomiting and/or persistent severe abdominal pain Has blood in their poo or wee Any limb injury causing reduced movement, persistent pain or head injury causing persistent crying or drowsiness 	<p>You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.</p> <p>Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 - dial 111</p> <p>The NHS is working for you. However, we recognise during the current coronavirus crisis at peak times, access to a health care professional may be delayed. If symptoms persist for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a GP or 111, then take your child to the nearest A&E</p>
 <p>GREEN</p>	<p>If none of the above features are present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can continue to provide your child care at home. Information is also available on NHS Choices Additional advice is available to families for coping with crying of well babies  Additional advice is available for children with complex health needs and disabilities. 	<p>Self care</p> <p>Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, call NHS 111 - dial 111</p>

Key Outbreak Management Definitions

Key outbreak management definitions

Possible or suspected (symptomatic) case:	Staff member or child with a new continuous cough and/or high temperature and/or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
Confirmed case:	Staff member or child with a laboratory test positive for COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2 with or without symptoms
Cluster:	Two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 among children or staff in an early years setting/college within 10 days who are not in the same cohort/bubble or Increase in rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19, in their household
Outbreak:	Two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 among children or staff who are direct close contacts, proximity contacts or in the same cohort or 'bubble' in the early years setting within 10 days.
Contacts:	Contacts are those who have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had face-to-face contact of any duration (less than 1 metre away) with the case or • were coughed or sneezed on by the case or • had unprotected physical contact (skin to skin) with case or • Spent more than 1 minute within 1 metre of the case or • spent more than 15 minutes within 2 metres of the case or • travelled in a car or other small vehicle (even on a short journey)
Infectious Period:	From 48 hours prior to symptom onset to 7 days after, or 48hrs prior to test if asymptomatic