

# **Pioneer Childcare**

## **COVID-19 Policy**

Pioneer Childcare will keep abreast of current government advice in relation to COVID-19.

We are committed to maintaining services for children and families and maintaining working hours as usual for employees unless government policy or UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) advise otherwise.

Pioneer Childcare is committed to safeguarding children and staff from infectious diseases. All staff are expected to follow the safeguarding procedures in this policy in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Staff should also be prepared to adapt their working patterns if the virus (or any other known outbreak, such as Strep A/Flu) affects the usual running of our breakfast and afterschool clubs and Holiday Camps.

### **Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 (and other known viruses)**

The procedure below must be followed by staff at all times in our clubs, throughout the workplace and elsewhere while COVID-19 is a risk. This procedure is based on government advice for everyone nationwide.

It is particularly important to wash hands often and thoroughly (for at least 20 seconds) with soap and hot water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. Turn away from others and cough and sneeze into a tissue (or sleeve), then throw the tissue in a bin. ([Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#))

Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (e.g., door handles, light switches, taps, keyboards, mobile phones).

Stay at home from work, school and club if experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

Staff must ensure that children are following good hygiene practices in our clubs and help them to understand the importance of:

Washing their hands at key times (as above).

Coughing and sneezing into a tissue and putting their tissues straight into a bin.

Not touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

Letting a member of staff know if they start to feel unwell.

Club Managers must ensure:

They lead through example.

There are adequate supplies of hand soap, tissues, and cleaning supplies in club.

Tissues are available for children and staff at all times.

There are bins available for used tissues.

Waste is disposed of hygienically.

All staff are following this policy while COVID-19 is a risk.

All staff remain level-headed and professional in relation to Coronavirus news.

Staff are reassuring children to help them to manage any feelings of anxiety or worry.

Staff are making it clear to children that it is not acceptable to make jokes or be unkind about anyone who is affected by the virus or is unwell.

Staff are kept up to date with company updates regarding COVID-19.

Any children and staff who have suffered a bereavement are supported in club.

### **If a Child or Staff Member develops Symptoms of COVID-19 at work or club**

The procedure below must be followed if anyone becomes unwell at club:

- Inform the child's parent/carer and let them know that their child is displaying symptoms and needs collecting from the setting as soon as possible.
- If a staff member displays symptoms, they will be advised to go home straight away (or follow the procedure below until they are able to return home)
- In an emergency, call 999.

Whilst waiting for the child's parent/carer to arrive (or an ambulance, if urgent) we will:

- Find somewhere safe for the child or staff member to sit comfortably (at least 2 metres away from other people). This may be a room or area where they can be isolated, with a window open for ventilation, where possible.
- Staff will wear PPE if caring for the child while they await collection **if direct personal care is needed** (such as for a very young child or a child with more complex needs).
- Advise the child or staff member to avoid touching people, surfaces and objects, to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin.
- If they need to go to the bathroom, they should use a separate bathroom if available. The bathroom will be cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriate Manager as soon as it is practicable.
- If a staff member is required to leave early and their absence compromises staff ratios, be prepared to adapt sessions if there is no one else available to cover.
- Disinfect surfaces that the child or staff member has touched, and surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids once they leave. Use disposable cloths and detergent.
- Everyone who has been in contact with someone who is unwell must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds.

There is no requirement for the member of staff who has helped a child with symptoms, or for any children who have been in close contact with them, to go home or self-isolate.

### **What happens if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the setting**

We will follow the current guidance for providers on managing coronavirus within our clubs.

We ask parents/carers to notify us if a child is absent due to illness.

### **Isolation Requirements**

Government requirements to isolate were withdrawn in March and April 2022.

There is no longer a requirement to self-isolate or take daily tests.

### **Operational Changes**

Pioneer Childcare will do its utmost to maintain services as usual. We recognise however, that COVID-19 could affect business as usual and that our services may be required to adapt to changing circumstances and government policy.

We will plan as much as possible for all foreseeable operational changes. Examples of the operational changes which will be considered are shown below:

- If increased staff sickness affects staff ratios in our clubs, company managers and office staff will cover sickness absences.
- If there is increased staff sickness, club activities will be adapted to suit the reduced ratios in order to ensure children's continued safety.
- If a club is forced to close because the host school is required to close, staff will be asked to work at a different club and children may be accommodated at another club location if this is possible.
- In any of the above situations, all but non-essential work will be postponed.
- If staff members are not required to work in clubs as usual, alternative work will be offered to make up their hours where possible.
- If managers and office staff are required to work from home, they will continue to work their normal working hours where possible.
- Risk assessments will be completed for individual children and staff who are at increased risk.

If the impact of COVID-19 on business as usual is significant, Pioneer Childcare will inform the stakeholders who are affected as soon as possible as to how they will be affected. We will make sure that contact details for all staff and parents/carers are up to date.

Pioneer Childcare will follow all available advice in order to limit the impact on the business and our stakeholders.

### **Temporary Interruption of Provision**

We recognise that in the worst instance, our clubs and offices may be forced to close for a period of time. This could happen, for example, in the following situations:

- If Pioneer Childcare assess that children's safety is at risk by keeping a club open (due to temporary unavailability of staff for example).
- If the Health Protection Team decides that a club or office needs to close due to an outbreak of COVID-19.
- If a host school is closed.
- Through Government action or regulation, the UK government decides that schools, childcare settings and workplaces need to close, or that everyone either locally or nationally should self-isolate at home.

In the event of a closure, parents/carers and staff will be notified as soon as possible, as will any feeder (pick up) schools. Ofsted will be informed within 14 days.

Pioneer Childcare will use government resources to try to limit the impact on the business, staff and parent/carers as much as possible.

Pioneer Childcare will keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 employment advice for employers provided by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS). Advice for employers and employees can be found using the following link: <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

**This policy may change to reflect the latest UK government response to COVID-19 (or other known viruses).**

**Contact numbers**

Public Health England, Sussex Health Protection Team:

In-hours: (Monday – Friday 9am–5pm) 0344 225 3861, hold, then option 3

Out of hours: 0844 967 0069

This policy was adopted by: Pioneer Childcare Ltd	Date: 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2023
To be reviewed: 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Signed: <i>J. Wilkins</i>