



## Addendum to Sickness Policy to Take Account of Covid-19

### **Staying Safe with Indigo**

In order to continue to ensure the safety of our children, young people, families and staff, it is an expectation of The Indigo Group that all persons involved with any of our services are adhering to Scottish Government guidelines around the pandemic at home and out in the community. We have set out the following information, in addition to our existing sickness policy (which you can ask for a copy of at your child's service) to help families understand how we will operate as regards ill health in relation to Covid-19 within services.

### **Preventing the spread of infection**

An essential element of preventing the spread of infection is that of stringent hygiene practices, including cleaning and personal hygiene. The main ways in which we will manage this are:

- Frequent hand washing for staff and children.
- Washing hands using warm soapy water for up to 20 seconds (singing a song with a child is a great way to keep them washing), including: on arrival, before leaving, after toileting, before and after, eating, playing outside and at regular intervals during the day.
- Having 'good respiratory hygiene'; children and young people will be encouraged in a variety of ways including demonstrating good respiratory hygiene and encouraging children/young people to avoid touching their faces. We will talk regularly about covering their mouths and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze or, if not available, into the crook of their elbow, not their hand. Dispose of tissues into a lidded bin or disposable bag and immediately wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.

Please note: Antibacterial hand gel is not recommended for children/young people when soap and water is available, we will continue to encourage the use of soap and water for children and young people in all possibilities. Antibacterial hand gel will not be used by children under 12 months.



### **Cleaning**

As part of our response to COVID-19, we have created enhanced cleaning procedures across all of our services to ensure that the high touch areas and surfaces such as doors, lights and surfaces are cleaned regularly throughout the day with specific cleaning hours doubled during service time.

**Early years** - playrooms are steam cleaned each evening and the resources are cleaned daily. For children wishing to explore materials such as sand, water and playdough, this is done on an individual basis which ensures that each child has access to their own resources and does not use that of another child.

**OOSC/Indi Youth** - bases are cleaned daily before and after use and the resources are cleaned daily. For children/young people wishing to explore materials such as playdough and slime, this is done on an individual basis which ensures that each child has access to their own resources and does not use that of another child/young person.

Rigorous checks are being carried out by senior staff to ensure that the procedures are being fully adhered to at all times.

### **Physical Distancing**

Scottish Government guidance is clear, physical distancing for children and young people in early learning and childcare settings is not appropriate. This decision is based on the evidence that shows minimal transmission between children and from children to adults of Covid19 and also the knowledge that children and young people, especially our very youngest children, need physical contact both their wellbeing and their development. For this reason, the following changes within the services have been made:

- Staff will NOT physical distance **from** children and will comfort and hug children when needed.
- Staff **will** commit to physical distancing from each other and from parents and other adults in the services as far as is practically possible.
- At our early years bases parents/carers will be asked to drop off/pick up their child from the reception area or designated playroom access points.
- For OOSC/Indi Youth the parent/carer will be asked to drop off/pick up their child/young person from the front door.
- No parents/carers will be allowed in the settings.

- Parents will be asked to practise safe distancing of 2m whilst waiting to drop off and collect their children and will follow guidance for entry/exit to collection/drop off points.
- The playrooms have been re-planned to ensure that no more than 30 children are in the one playroom and different 'groups' of children as far as is practically possible will not mix indoors.
- The balance of learning experiences will move towards outdoors; **therefore, parents are asked to ensure children always have suitable outdoor wear at nursery.**
- For early year's children lunch and snacks will be eaten within their playrooms.
- Young people over the age of 12 will continue to physically distance from each other and staff as per the most up to date guidance.

### **Dealing with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 within the setting**

Scottish Government guidance states that any staff, child or young person who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must follow the Test and Protect guidance, (<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>) which includes staying at home, self-isolating, and contacting the NHS for advice on testing. Those who do test positive for COVID-19 will be asked to continue to self-isolate for 7 days and their close contacts, identified through contact tracing, will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days.

- **In the event of a child developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the setting, a parent/carer/emergency contact will be contacted and they must be collected as soon as possible and isolated at home in line with the NHS guidance.**
- Whilst waiting for the child to be collected, a staff member will take the child to the allocated isolation area for Early Years this will be the parent's room. In OOSC this designated area will be the family room (Castleton) and the GP room (St Barts). Indi Youth will be the meeting room.
- The staff member responsible for the child during this time will be a staff member from their group. The staff member will wear appropriate PPE including a face mask while waiting with the child.
- In an emergency, the manager/supervisor may require to call 999 if the child becomes seriously ill or injured.



### **What if my child/young person has a temperature?**

If your child has a temperature before coming to their service, your child should not attend and you should contact your GP or NHS24 for further guidance, you should also inform your child's service by telephone. If while in service, your child presents a fever of 38 degrees or higher, we will contact you and ask you to collect your child. Your child should receive a COVID-19 test and where relevant, self-isolate for 14 days before returning to the service. Managers will require a copy of the test results before your child returns.

***We do however understand that particularly for babies under 3, a temperature can be common for a number of reasons. For cases such as these, there may be some exceptions such as a teething baby, which will be risk assessed in partnership with the parent on an individual basis.***

For further NHS guidance - <https://www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/test-and-protect>

### **Guidance on cleaning the setting after a case of COVID-19**

Coronavirus symptoms are similar to flu-like illness such as cough, fever, shortness of breath etc. once symptomatic, all surfaces that a person with suspected symptoms has come into contact with will be cleaned using disposable cloths and the recommended detergents (as stated within The Indigo Group's COVID-19 cleaning schedule).

These include:

- All surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with bodily fluids
- All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones and play resources.
- All waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, masks, aprons etc. should be double bagged, tied and disposed of.

On behalf of The Indigo Group, please be reassured that we are following guidance on COVID-19 procedures and will adapt our practice and procedures accordingly as evidence and guidance changes. We are fortunate to have 2 Trustees on our Board who have Public Health backgrounds and have been helpful in supporting the team to successfully navigate the myriad of guidance and evidence to help keep our families and staff safe.

For further information on COVID-19, see appendix 1



## Appendix 1

### Information about Covid-19

Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The virus was first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

Most people infected will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. The symptoms are:

- New persistent cough
- Temperature above 37.8
- Loss of taste

### Who is at risk?

All individuals accessing the setting are at risk including: staff, children, parents/carers of the children attending and any other individuals involved in the day to day operation of the setting.

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

If you believe that either yourself, your child/young person or a member of your household is displaying any of the symptoms relating to COVID-19, you must inform your service manager, it is also your responsibility to ensure that they do NOT attend any of our services during the required isolation period.

It is essential that your contact details and emergency contact details are updated on your child/young person's enrolment form, paying particular attention to any previous emergency contacts that may either be vulnerable or shielding in relation to COVID-19 and in the case of your child/young person being sent home from nursery with suspected symptoms, it would not be recommended that those emergency contacts are in contact with the child/young person.



### How COVID-19 is spread

From what we have learnt about the virus, COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 meters) with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the main mean of transmission.

There are 2 routes by which people could become infected:

- Secretions can be directly transferred into mouths or noses of people who are in close contact with an infected person, and could be inhaled into the lungs
- It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes.