



Dear Parents,

COVID-19 Procedures at Sallywags

We continually review the Government guidance regarding COVID-19 and Early Years settings to make sure we're aware of any updates and are following the most recent guidance. There have been a few changes to reflect the current procedures, and we've made sure the links here refer to the most recent Government guidance.

We hope this will give you the information you need, but please do contact us if there is anything else you want to ask.

Protective measures we are taking

Guidelines regarding control measures have been simplified as follows:

We should:

- Ensure good hygiene for everyone
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated
- Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

We cannot guarantee to protect your child from Coronavirus, but the safety of your child and of our staff is our top priority. We are working hard, following the latest government guidance to allow us to operate as safely as possible, focusing on measures that will help limit the risk of coronavirus transmitting within our setting.

The daily procedures we have in place:

- Asking that anyone who is displaying coronavirus symptoms to self-isolate. That includes children who attend the setting and the staff who work here.
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

From Tuesday 14th December all adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating. Daily testing by close contacts will help to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 will help protect education settings by reducing transmission and will also help keep pupils in face-to-face education.



- We are still asking parents not to enter the setting at drop off/pick up. If you wish to speak privately to Lorraine or Jenny or Pennie please ask, and this can be arranged also you might find this easier to do this by phone on 07552238793 during setting hours (you may need to leave a message and they will phone you back). **From Thursday 27th January our staff will no longer wear face masks at drop off and pick up times unless they choose to do so.**
- Cleaning our hands more often than usual (including on arrival). We have developed routines to ensure children understand when and how to wash their hands, making sure they wash them thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensuring our children understand good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and ensuring a good supply of tissues and bins throughout the setting.
- Implementing an enhanced cleaning schedule, ensuring surfaces touched by children and staff are cleaned regularly and throughout the day, including tabletops, door handles and play equipment.
- We know that children in the early years cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. We will encourage them to distance where appropriate e.g. at register or snack times.
- Transmission is far lower outdoors, so we are encouraged to make the most of outdoor space. As the weather gets colder and wetter this may prove more difficult, but we will continue to encourage the children to play outside and to make use of the play area when we can. Please ensure your child as appropriate footwear and warm clothing available.
- We will provide a simple snack mid-morning. If your child is staying for lunch, we ask that you provide a packed lunch with a drink that the children can manage themselves as far as possible; we will of course help if needed but will strive to keep this to a minimum.
- Storing furniture and equipment that is not in use and/or easily cleaned to make the setting as easy as possible to clean regularly.
- Asking children not to bring toys or other items from home to the setting unless this is essential to their health and wellbeing (please speak to staff about this).

What if I book a place for my child but they won't be coming in?

- In line with usual procedure, you must still let us know as soon as possible if your child will not be attending that day. If we are expecting your child and they do not arrive, we will contact you. We are required to complete a monthly register for Devon County Council.

What happens if I need more childcare or want to attend somewhere else as well?

- Please ask us if we have capacity to take your child for extra sessions if you need it. We cannot promise we will be able to accommodate but we will try. Funding can be split between two providers if you need to attend somewhere else as well, but please speak to us about this. (A notice period may apply if you wish to reduce the number of sessions your child attends in a half term).



My child has a medical condition

Please let us know and follow the latest government guidelines.

What if my child falls ill during session?

If a child becomes unwell during session, we will follow Government guidance as follows:

- contact a parent and ask for the child to be collected immediately
- move the child to an area at least 2 metres away from other people
- reassure and supervise the child (the adult will wear PPE if a distance of 2 metres is not possible)
- Call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured and administer first aid where necessary

Testing

If a child develops coronavirus symptoms, the parent/carer is asked to arrange a test for their child, and to notify us immediately of the test result.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

If there is a confirmed case at Scallywags, parents will be notified.

Are staff being tested regularly?

All staff test twice a week using Lateral Flow Device kits.

If a member of staff tests positive, they will not attend the setting however this is no longer likely to result in the closure of the setting unless we are unable to staff the setting sufficiently.

The government considers COVID-19 to be an exceptional circumstance in which the staff-to-child ratios set out in the EYFS can temporarily be changed, if necessary, for example to respond to COVID-related workforce absences. Scallywags currently operates at a lower staff:child ratio for 3 & 4 year olds than the legal requirement. e.g. Scallywags operates on 1 staff member to 8 children (3 & 4 year olds) whereas the legal requirement is 1:6. (for 2 year olds the legal requirement is 1:4, which we do operate within). Where staff are required to isolate due to Covid-19 and are therefore not available to work, consideration will be given to temporarily changing ratios, where it is safe to do so, to allow the setting to remain open. Staff qualification requirements and basic minimum staffing levels (2) will always be adhered to and if this is not possible the setting will be required to close temporarily.

We will be reporting our results to NHS Test and Trace and will, of course, follow their guidance should a positive test occur, and we will also follow our positive test reporting procedure. If the LFD indicates a positive result, there is no longer a requirement to take a PCR Test except in certain circumstances. <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>



Please see our new **Outbreak Management Plan** for more information on how we will respond to positive cases within the setting

Parents can also choose to test regularly using LFD kits. Sallywags do not need to know if parents are taking their own tests, but obviously if you or a household member tests positive, you would need to inform us that you are self-isolating and if your child will or will not be attending Sallywags.

Does my child have to wear a face covering?

No, children are not expected to wear face coverings. The use of face coverings for children is discouraged for safety reasons.

Will staff be wearing face coverings in the setting?

The Government guidance states that teachers and children at early years settings do not need to wear masks, although staff may choose to do so. The staff would have to wear a mask, and other PPE, while helping a child who develops symptoms of Coronavirus during the session.

Childcare Bubbles and Support Bubbles

Childcare bubbles are no longer advised – this advice was withdrawn on 19th July 21

Further information for parents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/step-4-update-what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges>

We may need to make changes at short notice but will try to keep you informed as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your continued support and patience during these challenging times. We have all had to adapt to new ways of doing things, and we keep learning as we go. If you have any worries or questions, please let us know and we will try our best to help.