



Coronavirus Policy: updated to include new guidance & infant siblings

Statement of Intent

To welcome our children & families back to Footprints CEC safely, we have considered relevant guidance from:

- The Department of Education (DfE) - Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for widening opening from 1 June 2020
- The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) – Management of face-to-face interventions in private practice and independent clinics in the UK
- Public Health England (PHE) - COVID-19 infection prevention and control (IPC) guidelines
- The Department of Education (DfE) – Special Schools and other specialist settings (COVID-19) updated March 2021
- The Department of Education (DfE) – Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) Operational Guidance (Feb 2021)
- The Department of Education (DfE) – Safe Working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) updated March 2021

We have considered this guidance when developing new operating procedures to protect our staff, children, parents and other visitors. These procedures were originally developed in line with our plan for Phase 1 of reopening, which involves offering face-to-face sessions to a limited number of families from 10 August 2020 until 24 August 2020. These procedures will be continually reviewed, in line with all current and changing government guidance and from ongoing input from the Covid-19 Working Group and our staff team.

All aspects of our service delivery have been risk assessed to develop our operating procedures. This assessment directly addresses risks associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) and the measures to control those risks for staff, children, parents, and other visitors. This includes the steps set out in the DfE guidance **Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings** to ensure that we are 'Covid-19 Secure'.

In our setting, preventing the spread of coronavirus involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, sneezing and coughing whilst in close contact) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces). The main protective measure identified for Phase 1 to reduce transmission is to have limited small group sessions for a specific cohort¹ only. Further essential measures include:

¹ Children and families whom have been unable to access our Zoom sessions and those children and families whom have found that the Zoom sessions are no longer working for them.



- Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms of coronavirus
- Frequent hand washing and good respiratory hygiene practices
- Providing and using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) with systems and policies in place that govern its use
- Regular cleaning of our premises
- Minimising contact (e.g. hands-on facilitation)

Please be aware that by accessing conductive education services provided by Footprints CEC or by returning to work, you accept the charity cannot take any responsibility for any incidence of Covid-19. You also agree to act in accordance with this procedure and understand your responsibility in the current circumstances of the pandemic to ensure compliance with the measures as set out by the latest government guidance.

Whilst we appreciate that this is a new situation and some reminders may be required, persistent failure to follow the procedures set out in this document may lead to support services being withdrawn for families or disciplinary actions being taken against team members.

1.0 Methods

1.1 Face to face or virtual support

While Footprints CEC centre has been closed, our education team introduced several remote support services, including homework programmes and Zoom sessions. These were offered to all our families.

During the first lockdown period (17 March- 10 August 2020), it was found that virtual support was not suitable for all our children. As time has passed, a number of our families have reluctantly withdrawn from the online provision preferring instead to wait until we were in a position to offer conductive education in a classroom setting and face-to-face. This cohort has become our priority group and, therefore, were the only families to be offered a place in Phase One.

We will consider where our families are travelling from and withdraw access to face-to-face sessions in relation to local spikes and localised restrictions.

1.2 Attendance

Staff, children, parents, and any other visitors, must not approach or enter Footprints CEC if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)² unless they have had a negative test result for that

² The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal



episode of symptoms. If symptoms reoccur, a further test will be required before an individual can return to the centre, even if a negative test was carried out.

- On arrival at the centre, every individual must be asked if they have or a member of their household has been in contact with anyone with coronavirus symptoms.
- Should any individual disclose contact with someone with coronavirus symptoms, they must be advised to go home and use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service.
- If anyone is displaying coronavirus symptoms or living in a household where someone has symptoms, then the required isolation period must be completed before they are allowed to return to work/sessions. All individuals entering the premises must report any coronavirus symptoms that they or a member of their household are displaying immediately. It is each individual's responsibility to report this information, and this is critical to the safety of our children, families and staff members.

Temperatures of every individual entering the premises will be taken using a non-contact thermometer. Anyone with a fever of 37.8°C or higher will not be allowed to enter the premises. Non-contact thermometers are not as effective in the outdoors; therefore, temperatures will be taken in the entrance area. Parents must wait for confirmation of no fever before proceeding to the classroom for their session.

Individuals who have been identified as 'Extremely Clinically Vulnerable' and have received a letter confirming this are not permitted to enter Footprints CEC premises until they have been informed that it is safe for them to return external settings. Anyone living in the same household as someone identified as 'Extremely Clinically Vulnerable' can only attend Footprints CEC if they can stringently socially distance themselves from this person at home.

Where staff have concerns about returning to work, these will be discussed and addressed individually.

Staffing will be closely matched to the number of children attending sessions each day.

1.3 Physical distancing / Grouping

Only one parent/carer per child will be permitted to enter Footprints CEC and join the session. The parent/carer will not complete the paper signing-in sheet. A separate Fire Register clipboard will be prepared for each group in advance.

Every effort will be made for the child's key worker to be the only professional in direct contact with the child. If this is not possible, a different member of the education team may work with the child. Physical contact will be limited wherever possible but is a necessary part of conductive education; therefore, social distancing is not achievable for the conductor/conductor's assistant and the child during the session.

The use of internal communal spaces must be restricted as much as possible; however, brief transitory contact such as walking through areas to gain access to others is acceptable and identified as low risk.



All adults must not have any physical contact with one another, including handshakes, hugs etc.

Social distancing must be maintained at all times. Staff will be encouraged to take some time outdoors during their break to reduce staff numbers in communal areas and get some fresh air.

Staff must bring in their own eating and drinking utensils and take these home each day. Any communal eating and drinking utensils will be removed until further notice. No utensils or food items belonging to staff will be permitted to remain on Footprints CEC premises overnight.

1.4 Wellbeing and Education

Children must be supported in age and ability appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves safe and carry these out. This includes regular hand washing, coughing, sneezing into a tissue or elbow and binning the tissue (catch it, bin it, kill it) and encouraging them not to touch their mouth, eyes, and nose.

Children will be supported to understand the changes and challenges they may be encountering as a result of Covid-19.

1.5 Training

All staff members will receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control, this Coronavirus Policy and Procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating before returning to work. They will also be required to complete online training on Infection Prevention and Control and Preventing COVID-19 and the correct use of PPE.

All meetings and training sessions, wherever possible, will be conducted through virtual conferencing or online resources.

Training will be ongoing, and all staff will be advised of the importance of asking for clarification if they are unsure about anything relating to the COVID-19 Secure guidance. Staff must raise any questions or concerns they have as soon as possible and speak with their line manager immediately if they feel practices could be improved or need to be reviewed.

1.6 Communications

Parents will receive clear communication regarding their role in the safe operating procedures and all measures being taken to ensure their children's safety and themselves.

Communications will be sent via email (to the email address they have provided). Parents will be required to confirm receipt, understanding and agreement to all measures before their child's return to Footprints CEC.

Signs and posters will also be used to remind all individuals entering the centres of the operating procedures and measures in place to ensure these procedures are followed at all times.



1.7 Visitors

Access to the centre will be restricted to children³, their parent/carer and staff as far as practically possible.

Visitors will not be permitted access to the centre unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance). Where essential visits are required, these will be made outside of the usual operational hours wherever possible.

Any areas where a visitor has been will be cleaned thoroughly immediately following their departure.

1.8 Travel

Wherever possible staff and parents/carers should travel to the centre alone, using their own transport. If public transport is necessary, current government guidance on the use of public transport must be followed. If staff have to travel to work together, this should be in groups of no more than two, and they should sit diagonally in the vehicle with one in the front and one in the back to maximise the distance between them.

Parents will not be permitted to leave mobility aids, including wheelchairs and walkers etc. in the classroom.

1.9 Hygiene

All children, staff and visitors must wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser upon arrival at the centre, before and after eating, and after coughing and sneezing.

Hands must be washed with soap and water regularly and for at least 20 seconds. Paper towels will be available, and there will be no multi-use hand towels in use. Alternatively, hand sanitiser gel can be used if soap and water are not available for any reason. Children, parents/carers and staff members will be actively encouraged and reminded of the need to wash their hands frequently.

Staff and children will be encouraged to follow the 'bare below the elbows' procedures (as used routinely in hospitals for infection control). They should wear clothing that ends at the elbow, and no watches or other jewellery except a plain wedding band should be worn. The forearm and wrists should be included in handwashing, and evidence shows this to be a very effective method of infection control.

Touchpoints such as door handles and light switches should be wiped down frequently; antibacterial wipes will be available around the centre for this purpose. All deliveries will be disinfected upon arrival and ideally left to rest unopened for as long as possible.

Tissues must be immediately disposed of in a pedal bin with a lid, and then hand washing must take place. All internal bins must be emptied frequently (at least three times during the day at 12 noon, 3.30 pm and 6 pm if the centre is in use) and disposed of hygienically and safely. Each staff member will be responsible for emptying their bin, tying up the bag, taking this to the external bin and replacing it with a new bin liner. All staff must wash their hands immediately after emptying bins.

³ and infant siblings (0-6 months). See section 4.0 of this policy.



2.0 Health and Safety

Appropriate Health & Safety checks will be conducted before reopening Footprints CEC, including legionnaires' checks.

Windows should be kept open, where possible, to ensure good ventilation.

An enhanced cleaning and sterilising schedule will be implemented, including furniture, surfaces, children's toys, equipment, and communal areas. Each child will have their own, labelled plastic box (with lid) to hold their own equipment. Touchpoints such as light switches, door handles etc.⁴ and handwashing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly. All cleaning will be carried out according to the cleaning schedule provided by our cleaning contractors.

Classroom areas must be cleaned down after each session, and all touchpoints sprayed and wiped with an antibacterial cleanser before the next session can start.

To ensure effective cleaning throughout the centre: soft furnishings, soft toys, toys with intricate parts, and unnecessary items must be removed.

All items requiring laundering must be washed on the warmest water setting possible following the manufacturer's instructions. Anything used for transporting laundry must be disinfected in line with our cleaning procedure.

Children are not permitted to bring items from home into the centre unless essential for their wellbeing and mobility. Wherever possible, any additional items brought in should be appropriately cleaned upon arrival.

2.1 Risk Assessment

All regular activities within the session routine must be risk assessed, and due consideration is given to any adaptations to usual practice and recorded on a risk assessment.

Where deemed necessary, practices must be adapted and any adaptations communicated to staff, children, and parents/carers.

No high-risk activities will be carried out, including but not limited to messy play, eating, toileting, dressing, or any personal care. A parent/carer will carry out any necessary personal care.

Should anyone feel that further consideration is required regarding any activity, the Lead Conductor must be informed immediately. The Lead Conductor must speak to the Management Team to discuss any adaptations and agree to these before their implementation.

2.2 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE will be used where close contact is required; for example, when a member of the education team facilitates a child. Conductive staff will wear a visor when in direct contact with children and an apron, visor and gloves when undertaking any feeding, toileting, personal care or cleaning activities.

⁴ NB: The office telephone must only be used on the speaker function to avoid bringing it close to the face. It should also be antibacterial wiped after use.



As per the Footprints CEC Face-Covering policy, face-masks must be used in communal spaces.

Adequate training will be provided on what PPE is required (i.e. gloves, visors, aprons) and the correct practice for donning/doffing of PPE.

2.3 Supplies

The Manager must ensure that each centre has an adequate supply of essential supplies.

Management/Covid-19 Working Group will ensure that contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies.

The education team must monitor the usage of PPE and cleaning supplies used in the classroom and inform the Manager when additional supplies are needed to ensure that an adequate stock supply meets operational needs. Footprints CEC will not be able to operate without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control.

2.4 Responding to a suspected case

In the event of a child/parent/carer developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst attending Footprints CEC, they must leave the premises as soon as possible and isolate themselves at home in line with the NHS guidance.

Emergency contacts will be updated before the recommencement of sessions in case previous emergency contacts are in a shielded group or circumstances have changed.

If possible, the area must be left unvisited for 72 hours, and then the area must be thoroughly cleaned. The person responsible for cleaning the area must wear appropriate PPE.

In the event of a staff member developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst working at the centre, they should return home immediately and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance. The usual absence reporting procedures will continue to apply to ensure their line manager receives regular updates on the welfare of any staff member absent from work.

2.5 Testing and tracing⁵

Anyone who displays coronavirus symptoms will have access to a test and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario. For government guidance on how to arrange a test visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>.

Where the child/parent/carer or staff member tests negative, they can return to the centre, and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation. If the child/parent/carer tests positive, the staff and other session/group members that have been in contact with them should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for the recommended period. This also applies if a staff member tests positive, child, parent/carer and staff that have been in contact should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for the recommended period. The other household members of those advised to self-isolate do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they live with subsequently develops symptoms.

⁵ See also Section 5.0 Lateral Flow Tests



As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the setting, Footprints CEC will contact Public Health England's local health protection team, who will conduct a rapid investigation and advise on the most appropriate action. In some cases, a larger group may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. Where settings observe guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce the risk of transmission, the whole setting's closure will not generally be necessary.

I have read and understood this Coronavirus Policy, and I agree to act in accordance with the procedures and measures outlined above.

Print name:

Signature:

Date:

2.0 Contingency Plans (Tiered Restrictions)

- **Tier One & Two:** To continue with the policy and procedure outlined above.
- **Tier Three (Process in the event of local outbreaks):** If a local area experiences a spike in infection rates that results in localised community spread, local councils, in conjunction with Government, will decide which measures to implement to help contain the spread and reduce cases. Footprints CEC will follow local authorities' advice; discuss with the COVID-19 working group, and use our risk assessment to decide whether to remain open or return to a virtual offering only. Parents/carers will be asked to wear face-masks in the building and any communal areas shared with The Iona School.
- **Tier 4 (National Lockdown):** In the event of a further national lockdown, Footprints CEC will follow government advice; discuss with the COVID-19 working group and use our risk assessment to decide whether to remain open (should government guidance allow) or to return to a virtual offering only.

3.0 Expectant mothers of children accessing the service

An email will be sent to all expectant mothers as follows:

We want to keep you all as safe as possible, and as such, we are sending this advice (albeit written for employers) from The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

As a precaution, pregnant women are included in the list of 'clinically vulnerable' (e.g. those at 'moderate risk' from Covid-19) because pregnancy, in a small proportion of women, can alter how their body handles severe viral infections, especially from 28-weeks pregnant and beyond.



So, for pregnant women in their third trimester, after 28 weeks' gestation, and those at any stage of pregnancy with an underlying health condition – such as heart or lung disease – a more precautionary approach is advised, along with a recommendation to work from home and significantly reduce unnecessary social contact.

We felt we needed to make you aware so that if you choose to keep attending sessions at Footprints with your child after 28-weeks of pregnancy, you are making this decision with knowledge of the risks and current guidance.

Please reply directly to this email confirming that you have read and acknowledged the guidance and choose to attend at your own risk. However, if you would prefer to stop attending your face-to-face sessions based on this information, please let us know as soon as possible, and we will do our best to offer you an alternative session (via Zoom).

4.0 Infant Siblings (0-6 months)

Where there is no other alternative, and on a case-by-case basis, infant siblings of less than six months of age will be allowed on-site. This is to ensure that the child registered with Footprints CEC is not unfairly disadvantaged and can continue to access our services. All other safety measures, including social distancing and good hygiene, will be adhered to. Older siblings will not be permitted.

5.0 Lateral Flow Tests (asymptomatic testing)

All staff working from the site will be encouraged to take home-based lateral flow tests twice weekly (usually before the first shift and at the end of the final shift) and upload their results to the NHS Test and Trace system. If the test result is positive, that staff member must follow current government self-isolation advice. All positive test results should be reported to management as soon as possible.

Home-testing kits can be ordered for delivery directly from the Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

OR collected from a local centre:

<https://find-covid-19-rapid-test-sites.maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>