

## Welcome!

Families, Children and Learning  
Education and Skills  
Early Years and Childcare  
Hove Town Hall  
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August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Whether your child is starting nursery, pre-school or with a childminder for the first time, or returning back after a break because of coronavirus, a big welcome or welcome back!

We want you to know that your early years setting is doing everything possible to make it a happy and safe place for your child. They are putting in place measures aimed at protecting children, staff and families and reducing the spread of the virus.

Some families may feel more vulnerable in the pandemic, such as BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) families and those with older relatives living at home.

We've asked our public health colleagues for practical advice that **everyone** can follow to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Taking these simple actions is the best way to protect you and your family and people in vulnerable groups.

Do	Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds</li> <li>• use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available</li> <li>• wash your hands as soon as you get home and before you do anything else in the house</li> <li>• cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze</li> <li>• put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards</li> <li>• follow the <a href="#">government guidance</a> on physical distancing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• touching your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean</li> </ul>

Local information and advice about coronavirus is also available on the [Brighton & Hove City Council website](#)

### Should I be sending my child to their early years setting?

We know that people are worried about coronavirus. It's important to remember that for most people who catch it - and especially children - the virus will be mild.

Going to nursery is important for children to learn and develop emotional and social skills. But their health and safety, as well as that of nursery staff and your family is the top priority. A parent whose child returned to nursery told us

*"We're really happy with our child's experience returning to nursery. He was really anxious about going back but it was really helpful to have photos of the staff to show him to prepare him and of the room and entrance. The information provided to us of the measures in place was helpful and reassuring. His well-being and mental health has improved dramatically since returning."*

## What steps are early years settings taking to keep children safe?

The steps each early years setting takes will look slightly different (based on their environment, staff availability and the needs of the children), but they will all include these actions

- ensuring children and staff only come if they are well
- frequent hand washing, good hygiene and regular cleaning
- minimising contact between groups within early years settings
- using the [NHS test and trace procedures](#) if children or staff display symptoms

One nursery said to us

*“The safety measures that we’ve put in place have been great and I feel really confident that we’re doing all we can to make sure all the children and staff are safe to return.”*

## Please do not come in if you or your child are unwell

If you or your child have any of the following it may be coronavirus

- a high temperature
- a new and continuous cough
- can no longer taste or smell things properly

If your child, or anyone in your household has symptoms **please stay at home and arrange for them to have [test](#)**. You can also phone NHS 111 who will be able to help you. That way we can protect the wider community.

## Travelling to and from early years setting

The safest and healthiest way to travel to your early years setting is outdoors: on foot, by bike or scooter.

If you are traveling by bus, please make sure you know about laws for wearing face coverings on public transport. [Brighton & Hove buses has information on their website](#). Exemptions apply, including face coverings being optional for children under 11 years old.

At drop off and pick up times you must maintain physical distancing. This means staying two metres apart from anyone who is not in your own household or support bubble.

## Finally

Being in nursery, pre-school, or with a childminder is good for your child’s wellbeing as well as for their education. We’re following government guidelines and working with early years providers to welcome children back.

[Here](#) is more information about COVID-19 in **other languages**, an **easy read format** and **British Sign Language (BSL)**.

Best wishes



**Caroline Parker**

**Head of Early Years and Strategic Lead for Whole Family Working Brighton & Hove City Council**