

Children Returning to Nursery

Health Information for Parents and Carers



This leaflet was produced by Camden and Islington Department of Public Health
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Public Health are keeping this guidance under constant review.

Translated versions are available.



ISLINGTON

Should I be sending my child to nursery?

It is understandable that people are worried about COVID-19. It is important to remember that for most people who do catch it - and especially very young children - the virus will be mild.

Nursery is the best place for young children to learn and develop emotional and social skills, but the health and safety of staff, children and families is the top priority. Nurseries are putting in place a number of safety measures aimed at protecting children, staff and families and reducing the spread of the virus as more children return to nursery.

Each family will need to make their own decision whether it is safe for their child to return depending on individual circumstances and whether anyone at home is shielding or clinically vulnerable. The chance of getting coronavirus and becoming seriously ill depends on many different things including age, gender, other existing illnesses, where in the country you live and your job. If you have any concerns about your child's safety, or anyone else in your home please discuss your concerns with your nursery or your GP.

Some communities, for example Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are thought to be at higher risk; this risk may be related not just to ethnicity, but also to the presence of additional health conditions such as diabetes and hypertension, as well as other factors. If you are concerned about the risk for anyone in your family, and whether or not your child should return to nursery, talk through your concerns with your GP or your nursery. You can also discuss these with your health visitor: for contact details see

Bright Start Islington Health Visiting.



The local advice on clinically vulnerable children and their families is:

If your child is shielded/clinically extremely vulnerable

They should not yet attend nursery.

If your child lives with someone who is shielded

They should not yet attend nursery. As more children return to nursery over time, children living in a household with someone who is shielding may be able to attend, if the child is able to understand and maintain social distancing.

Some young children may find this difficult. We recommend that you discuss this with your GP and the nursery.

If your child is clinically vulnerable but not shielded

We recommend that you discuss this with your GP and the nursery. Your child can attend, if you and your doctor decide that they will be safe.

If your child lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable but not shielded

Your child is allowed to attend, but because some children find social distancing rules difficult to follow, you should make this decision based on your own family circumstances and the arrangements in place in your nursery. You might want to particularly think about this if you live with grandparents or older relatives, or if anyone has any medical vulnerabilities, especially if you are from a BAME community. We recommend that you discuss this with your nursery and GP.

If you are concerned about the risk for anyone in your family, talk through your concerns with your GP or your nursery. You can also discuss these with your health visitor: for contact details see **Bright Start Islington Health Visiting**.

What steps will nurseries take to keep children safe?

The Council has been working closely with nurseries to prioritise the safety of children, staff and families, and each nursery will open to more children when it is safe to do so.

The steps each nursery take may look slightly different (they will need to consider their own nursery environment, staff availability and the needs of the children), but they will all include these 5 key actions:

1. Frequent hand washing, good hygiene and regular cleaning
2. Ensuring children and staff only come to nursery if they are well
3. Clear procedures if a child or staff show symptoms at nursery
4. Protecting shielded and clinically vulnerable children and their families, by following medical advice on who needs to stay at home
5. Young children will not always be able to keep away from other children and adults, and they need some physical contact. Children will be kept in small groups with staff who learn and play together, and keep distant from other groups. Keeping children within the same group is similar to keeping within family groups. It limits the amount of social mixing to help reduce the spread of the virus.



What happens if someone has symptoms of COVID-19?

1. If your child or anyone in your household have symptoms

- a **temperature**
- a **new, continuous cough, or**
- a **loss of or change to their sense of taste or smell**

please let your nursery know, and keep your child and the rest of your household at home.



2. If a child or member of staff gets these symptoms in nursery, they will be sent home with advice about what to do.
3. Anyone with symptoms needs to self-isolate along with all of their household. Find out how to get a test, and how long to isolate, at [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)
4. If the test is negative, and the person no longer has symptoms, the child and their household can leave self-isolation and return to nursery.
5. If a child or member of staff tests positive, then the rest of their small group will be sent home to self-isolate for 14 days. The households of these other children do not need to isolate, unless their child also develops symptoms.

What can I do to keep everyone safe?

Check that everyone at home is well before your child goes to nursery and stay at home if anyone has symptoms of COVID-19.

Hygiene

Handwashing is vital. Wash hands regularly for 20 seconds, with soap and running water, especially before and after nursery, before and after eating, and after using a tissue or the toilet.

Social distancing outside nursery

Only one parent or carer should take your child to nursery. Do not stay and chat with other parents outside nursery. The safest and healthiest way to travel to nursery is outdoors: on foot, by bike or scooter.

Keep vaccinations up to date

Please make sure that your child is up to date with their routine vaccinations. You can see the schedule at www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them and arrange these through your GP surgery.

Welcome Back!

Nursery will do everything they can to keep children safe and happy.

Most children will adapt quickly and well to a different way of being in nursery and the nursery will provide support to those who need more help.



Keeping the nursery community safe is a team effort. There is a vital role for families to play so that children can learn as safely as possible.”

Julie Billett, Director of Public Health for Camden and Islington