

MAJOR OUTBREAK POLICY

Amendment History

Revision	Author	Description of change	Date
Original	Sarah Mountford	New policy	August 2008
1	CH/ SM	General amendments re opening priorities	March 2009
2	CH/AF	No change	January 2011
3	CH/HS	No change	March 2012
4	CH/HS	Reviewed, no change	June 2013
5	CH	Reviewed, no change	January 2015
6	CH	Reviewed, no substantive changes	November 2016
7	CH & SF	Reviewed, no change	February 2018
8	CH & SF	Reviewed, no change	January 2020
9	CH	Reviewed, no change	July 2022
10	CH, TH & XF	Reviewed, no change	July 2023
11	TH	Reviewed, no substantive changes	September 2025

MAJOR OUTBREAK

Definition: A major outbreak occurs when a new virus or other infection emerges, that can spread rapidly.

Childcare settings are considered high risk areas during a major outbreak, because children are efficient spreaders of infections, particularly those which are air – borne. Staff in childcare settings are therefore also at high risk.

Aim: Kineton Playgroup Ltd should aim to continue operating as normal during a major outbreak. However, contingency plans need to be made.

Closure: Central Government will advise local authorities on closure. Local authorities will then cascade this information to childcare settings. However, the ultimate decision on closure will lie with the centre manager in conjunction with the chair of Kineton Playgroup Ltd. If a decision is made to close during a major outbreak, a review date should be set at the time of closure and communicated to all members of staff and parents.

It may also be necessary to close if insufficient staff members are available due to illness. The correct staff: child ratio must always be maintained.

If insufficient members of staff are available to open as normal, priority will be given to caring for children of parents who work in the public, health, education and emergency services/ sectors.

Staff should come in to work during any closure, unless they are ill themselves or are caring for an ill dependent.

Remaining open:

- Parents should be advised to keep their child away if showing any symptoms.
- Staff should also be advised not to come in if they show any symptoms.
- Ensure that emergency contact details are up to date for all children and staff.
- If any child becomes ill whilst in the building, they should be separated from the other children. This should be done in such a way as to provide comfort for the child. The child should remain with one member of staff until the emergency contact is reached, and the child collected.
- If a member of staff becomes ill during a session, they must be separated from other staff and children and immediate arrangements made for them to go home. A replacement member of staff must be called in to maintain appropriate staff: child ratios. If these ratios cannot be maintained, then children must be sent home (see priorities above) – if necessary the setting will be closed.

Hand washing is the single most important practice to reduce the transmission of infection. The use of alcohol gel after hand washing may also be advised during a major outbreak. All staff must be reminded to read the hand washing policy in the event of a major outbreak.

- All staff, children and adults entering the setting should wash their hands if possible or otherwise use alcohol gel on entering the setting. This will be placed at the entrance to the building.
- All children and adults should be encouraged to cover the nose and mouth when sneezing, coughing, wiping or blowing the nose. Tissues must be single use only and must be disposed of in the nearest waste bin immediately after use. Children may be assisted as required with this activity and staff should wash their own hands after so doing.
- Children should be encouraged to keep their hands away from their noses and mouths as much as possible.
- The environment should be cleaned at least daily during a major outbreak, using warm water and detergent. Particular attention should be paid to frequently touched areas, like surfaces and door handles.
- Parents will understandably be anxious during a major outbreak, and every effort should be made to communicate any changes to them as they occur.