



## **WHITE LODGE SHORT BREAKS COVID- 19 POLICY**

This policy outlines practical measures to reduce the risk of Covid-19 spreading at White Lodge. It details the steps we are taking to protect our young people and staff, whilst enabling us to provide essential care to our vulnerable client group.

We are all required to be mindful that our procedures are well thought out and balanced to ensure that we do not significantly increase young people's anxieties, which will inevitably have a detrimental effect on their mental health and well-being.

### **Background**

- Young people are likely to become infected with coronavirus (COVID-19) at roughly the same rate as adults, but the infection is usually mild.
- The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are a new, continuous cough, a high temperature (over 38 degrees) and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.
- For the vast majority of young people and staff, coronavirus (COVID-19) will not cause serious illness. (*Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing social distancing in education and childcare settings, 24.3.2020*)
- On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, schools, colleges, nurseries, childminders and other registered childcare settings in England were instructed to close for all but the most [vulnerable young people](#) and for young people of [critical workers](#). Vulnerable young people include those who have a social worker and those young people and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Those who have a social worker include young people who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Young people Act 1989. All of the young people that come to White Lodge are defined by the government as 'The most vulnerable'. Therefore, we are required to remain open to meet their needs as long as we have safe staffing levels to do so.

### **Keeping up to date with government guidance**

- The Senior Staff of White Lodge will review government guidance regularly.
- The senior staff will update this policy immediately when new guidance is released and distribute to all staff on site without delay, who will sign to say they have read and understood it.
- Senior Staff will ensure they review the latest guidance, staffing levels, supplies and risk.

## How we can minimise the risks of transmission

- We will take active steps to make sure anyone who is feeling ill stays at home by;
  - Informing parents/carers that if their child becomes ill they must be able to pick them up promptly or have someone on standby to do so
  - Temperature is taken by staff of the young person before accessing the White Lodge premises, if the reading is 38 degrees or over we will not be able to accept the young person. We strongly recommend that parents have the young person tested, if not unfortunately they will not be able to access White Lodge for 2 weeks
  - Temperature is taken of all front-line short breaks staff before they begin to work, if the reading is 38 degrees or over, they will not be allowed to work and asked to have a coronavirus test before they can return to work.
- Review our visitor's policy;
  - Parents to be advised that they should wait in their cars or at a distance of 2 metres away from each other when collecting their young people and dropping off
  - Visitors will be restricted to service needs
- Regular hygiene;
  - Carers will supervise young people to ensure they wash their hands for 20 seconds more often than usual, in particular before meals, on entering and exiting the building and before and after any personal care needs with soap and water or hand sanitiser and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues
  - Posters will be displayed around White Lodge on correct handwashing techniques and carers will actively teach young people the elements of good general hand hygiene
- Activities;
  - All activities will be risk assessed in relationship to Covid19 and off site activities will adhere to individual settings policy and government legislation
  - Off site schemes will not be running and will be reviewed on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 21
- Social distancing;
  - We will prioritise our young people where it is deemed that they, or their families, would benefit most from a short break, this may be in consultation with Surrey County council
  - Where reasonably practical, staff should keep a 2-metre distance, however this cannot be of the detriment to the care of the young people. We will utilise all 3 buildings at White Lodge to facilitate activities that encourage social distancing
  - We will manage the number of children and young people to reflect the environment
- Increased cleaning activity;
  - Cleaning will follow every activity ensuring all hard surfaces, door handles, toilets, key pads and bathing facilities will be cleaned.

## **Wearing personal protective equipment**

When staff are transferring children between buildings masks will be worn by staff. No personal protective equipment is required above and beyond our normal good hygiene practices except for masks when caring out personal hygiene.

New PPE must be used for each episode of care. It is essential that used PPE is stored securely within disposable yellow rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and placed outside in the clinical waste bin.

## **If a young person has symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at White Lodge**

If a young person is showing signs of having COVID-19 staff should contact the parent/carer immediately and ask them to collect their child.

We are not expected to have dedicated isolation facilities at White Lodge, but should implement isolation precautions when someone at White Lodge displays symptoms of COVID-19 in the same way that they would operate if an individual had influenza.

Whilst they are waiting for the parent/carer, the young person should be isolated in a separate room.

## **If a young person has COVID-19**

Under no circumstances should a child/young person use a White Lodge short break service if they have been told to isolate.

## **If a member of staff has COVID -19**

Should a staff member have a positive test, we will seek advice from Public Health.

## **Laundry**

Do not shake dirty laundry before washing. This minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions

## **If a member of staff is concerned they have COVID-19**

If a member of staff is concerned they have COVID-19 and as they are a keyworker, they take priority over testing, if you have concerns contact <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-essential-workers> , please inform a senior member of staff.