

Pre-primary schools

FAQs about schooling on COVID-19 alert

Based on Notice [No. 811/2020 of 21 August](#) and regulation [No. 864/2020](#) of 3 September from the Minister for Health.

Note: These instructions also apply to the work of day-care parents.

1. What preventive measures are in place in pre-primary schools?

Pre-primary schools are operating normally, with the following preventive measures in place:

Social distancing - teachers and other staff must keep **a distance of at least one metre** from each other. If it is not possible for adults to keep a distance of at least one metre from each other, then protective masks should be used. Masks must be worn correctly. For more details, see the [guidance provided by the Directorate of Health](#). Efforts should be made to keep contact between teachers and other staff to a minimum and prevent, as much as possible, their circulation between school buildings and premises.

Social distancing and restrictions on group numbers do not apply to children born after 2005. School staff therefore does not need to practice social distancing with children of pre-primary and primary-school age.

All adults must adhere to the applicable restriction on gatherings. For further information please see, [covid.is](#). Consideration and caution must be exercised towards students, teachers and staff at higher risk from COVID-19.

Parents and relatives bringing children to school should keep a distance of at least 1 metre from other parents and staff. This also applies to anybody entering school premises, e.g. maintenance workers or delivery persons.

8 September 2020

Everybody should pay attention to personal hygiene and wash their hands regularly with handwash and disinfectant. All surfaces must be disinfected and [cleaning](#) instructions must be followed. It is important to observe the preventive guidance in force at any given time.

2. What happens if an infection occurs in a pre-primary school?

Response plans are in place in at schools. Instructions in the event of infection can be found [here](#).

3. What rules apply to the health of students/staff, e.g. regarding flu symptoms?

Pre-primary-school children and staff should not come to school if they:

- a. are in quarantine, in isolation or are waiting for test results;
- b. have been in isolation due to COVID-19 infection and it has not been 14 days since they were discharged;
- c. have any symptoms of coronavirus (colds, coughs, fever, headaches, bone aches, fatigue, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, etc.).

If their illness is something other than COVID-19, pre-primary-school children and staff should have gone at least one day without a temperature before returning to school.

It is important for parents of pre-primary-school children and staff to continue to pay close attention to infection prevention measures and the risk of infection. Please see here for instructions on [protecting pre-primary-school children](#).

4. In which circumstances is it necessary for pre-primary-school children to be tested for COVID-19?

a) If there is reason to believe that a child has come into contact with COVID-19, e.g. because they have spent time with person with a confirmed or suspected infection, they must take a test.

b) If a child and others in their family or close circle have symptoms (i.e. colds, coughs, fever, headaches, bone aches, fatigue, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, etc.), they must also take a test.

If nobody else in the child's family or network has symptoms like this, then it is up to a healthcare professional to decide whether the child needs to take a test.

5. In what circumstances is it necessary for pre-primary-school children to quarantine?

Children need to quarantine, as instructed by a healthcare professional or the infection tracing team, if they have been in contact with anybody, of any age, who has a confirmed or suspected infection of COVID-19. Children who are not formally in quarantine themselves but who are not old enough to know how to keep distance from members of their household who are in quarantine owing to exposure to infection may need to quarantine with other members of their household.

6. What should parents do when in doubt if their child may attend their pre-primary school?

If parents are in doubt as to whether or not their child should attend their pre-primary school, i.e. if they have symptoms or are in any way unwell, if they have come in contact with an infected person or if they have been abroad, the child should remain at home until the parents have consulted a healthcare centre (by phone or via heilsuvera.is) or the infection tracing team, as appropriate, and a

8 September 2020

decision has been taken to the contrary.

7. Is access to pre-primary-school buildings restricted, e.g. for parents / guests / external visitors?

Social distancing and restrictions on group numbers apply to all adults. Visitors born after 2005 must keep a distance of at least 1 metre from each other and adhere to current restrictions on gatherings (the number of people allowed to be together in an enclosed space). Decisions on further implementation are the responsibility of the municipal authorities and the pre-primary-school head. It is important to observe the applicable restrictions at any given time.

8. Do parents and visitors need to disinfect their hands when entering pre-primary schools?

Parents should continue to exercise extreme caution and conform to strict hygiene when entering school buildings, out of consideration for children and school staff. Further implementation is at the discretion of the pre-primary-school head.

9. Will there continue to be additional cleaning and disinfecting this school year?

Infection prevention measures require close attention to continue to be paid to hygiene. The Civil Protection Department of the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police has issued a set of [cleaning instructions](#).

10. May team meetings, staff meetings and department meetings be held? May staff from different departments take their breaks and coffee breaks together?

Yes, but social distancing of at least one metre must be observed and rules on maximum group numbers in enclosed spaces must be followed. Efforts should be made to keep contact between teachers and other staff to a minimum and prevent,

8 September 2020

as much as possible, their circulation between school buildings and premises. This is even more important if there are infection hotspots near the school in question.

11. Is it possible to organise events within pre-primary schools and to take children on external trips?

Yes, provided that it is possible to maintain at least one metre distance and rules on maximum group numbers in enclosed spaces can be followed. Arrangements must be made for good hygiene, i.e. access to facilities for hand washing and disinfecting.

School buildings should also be cleaned especially after such events - see the relevant [cleaning instructions](#).

12. Should the children's coat-hooks and shelves be emptied every day?

It depends on the circumstances of each pre-primary school, e.g. as regards access to coat-hooks and shelves and other infection prevention measures. School heads decide on such arrangements.

13. May parents enter pre-primary schools when arriving to drop off or pick up their children?

Parents and relatives should refrain from entering school buildings as much as possible. When bringing children to school or picking them up, parents and relatives must keep a distance of at least 1 metre from each other and from staff and observe the rules on maximum group sizes in enclosed spaces.

14. May teaching material and toys be shared across departments?

8 September 2020

Yes, but hygiene must be observed and all equipment must be disinfected regularly. See the relevant [cleaning instructions](#) for more information.

**15. May new children be admitted for an adjustment period?
Under what conditions?**

Yes, new students may be admitted for an adjustment period. However, care must be taken as regards the number of parents in the area at any time. The adjustment period should be organised so that accompanying parents do not need use meal facilities or restrooms in the building. Parents must keep a distance of at least one metre from each other and from staff. Only one parent may accompany their child during their adjustment period. School management may require parents to wear masks during adjustment periods. It is important to inform parents about the infection prevention measures in place at pre-primary schools.