**Covid-19 Policy and Procedure for Opening**

**Policy Statement**

We have produced the following policy and procedure inline with the guidelines from the government for Early Years settings.

We will be following the procedure below very carefully and keeping staff and children’s health and well-being at the forefront of everything we do.

Parents will still be being asked to “stay alert” To ensure safety for all and adhering to guidelines.

The following procedure is inline with the “Actions for early years and childcare providers during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak” and made to fit our own unique setting. Some changes have been made to how we operate to meet the criteria of the guidelines.

We will be reviewing this policy daily and changes can be made with immediate effect.

**Procedure:**

* This Procedure will replace the existing Covid 19 procedure and commence on 08/02/2021.
* The Bubble system for under 5’s is still not compulsory and for now we still believe our free flow setting at normal numbers is the safest option. Having our free flow system means more children will choose to be outside at one time and less children confined to small rooms.
* Attending families must comply with the “stay Alert” guidelines, failure to do so will result in your place being terminated.
* We are working with the government to encourage parents and children where possible to walk or cycle to the setting.
* Parents must follow the standard national advice on the kind of symptoms to look out for that might be due to Coronavirus. Any child showing signs of illness of any sorts relating to symptoms of Coronavirus will not be permitted to attend.
* No parents or visitors are allowed access to the setting at any point.

**Outside:**

* Outdoor resources will be cleaned regularly and children will be encouraged to play outside, please always bring suitable clothing for weather. Layers are advised as this is the most efficient way of staying warm.

**Safety of Rooms:**

* Rooms will have no soft furnishings – no rugs, no cushions, no cuddly toys.
* Rooms have had a reduction in available resources to ensure all resources can be cleaned regularly throughout the day.
* We cannot guarantee that the children will be able to social distance and will only be gently encouraged.
* Windows will be kept open to allow a natural air filtration.
* Tissues and hand gel will be available in each room as normal.
* Cleaning products will be available in each room, out of reach from children as normal.
* Children will only be allowed to use the toilet one at a time with a member of staff.
* Please ensure your child wears various layers of clothing as it can become cold inside with the windows open.
* The kitchen has a limit of 2 staff at a time
* The office has a limit of 2 staff at a time.

**Group sizes:**

Staff and children cannot be expected to remain 2 meters apart from each other at all times, therefore we work through the hierarchy of measures below:

* Avoid contact with anyone with symptoms
* Frequent hand washing and good respiratory hygiene
* Regular cleaning of setting
* Minimising contact and mixing

**Lunch:**

* The guidelines state to reduce items from home.
* Packed lunches will be able to be brought in but we **ask that the contents are easily accessible to the children, i.e in tubs etc that the children can open independently.** Please remove items your child cannot open themselves from the packaging before putting them into the lunch boxes. Our staff eat with the children and we need to limit having to touch other children’s packets etc. please also bring their lunch in a wipeable box so these can be cleaned before being put into our lunch box bags. Food from the school is still available if you wish to have these.
* Staff will eat their lunch with the children.
* Hands to be cleaned before and after lunch times.

**Items from Home:**

* **No non-essential items** from home will be allowed to be brought in.
* **No comforters** will be allowed. (we will work with individual needs)
* **No drinks bottles**, drinks will be provided. – unfortunately we will have to ask to stop bringing these in again for now. Please also no drinks with packed luch, drinks will be provided
* Please bring a named bag of spare clothes to be left at the setting – we would prefer this method to sending bags home daily please.

**Arrival and Drop Off:**

* Arrival and departures from our front door only. You are not permitted to enter the school grounds.
* Please Arrive on time and not early to allow safer access for school children.
* **When Queuing please stick to the 2 meter distancing rules**. If you do not we will not be able to permit access that day.
* Please ensure **only one adult** drops off or picks up.
* When you are at the front of the Que please stand at the top of the path.
* A staff member will open the door, please send your child to the front door where they can sterilise their hands and pop their lunch boxes into the lunch bag and enter.
* We will try to ensure a member of staff is outside if you need to pass us a message on drop off and collection times.
* On Collection Please stand 2 Meters apart and ensure only one adult per child.
* Children will be sent out one at a time to their parents. The Child and Parent must leave the que immediately.
* **12pm pick up** – we ask that parents now que to on the path (same path as drop offs) near the side gate bearing right towards the school. We will then bring the children out to you. This is instead of coming into the garden as previous.

**PPE – Personal Protective Equipment:**

* As per government guidelines we are not required to wear PPE.
* We will have one set of PPE in a ready bag in case someone in the setting displays signs of Covid-19 whilst at our setting.

**What if a child or staff member shows symptoms during Preschool hours?:**

* We will be looking for signs of Covid-19 at all times.
* If a Child or Staff member develop a high temperature, cough, runny nose, sore throat or complains of being unwell we will follow our procedure.
* A staff member will apply PPE to themselves.
* We will call 999 in an emergency.
* If I child needs to use the toilet whilst waiting to be collected, the bathroom must be cleaned and disinfected after use.
* If a staff member becomes ill the staff member will go home immediately and the setting will be deep cleaned.
* A child will be given a chair outside away from others to sit on until a parent comes to collect. The staff member will remain 2 meters away. Parents will collect Via the side gate.
* Any siblings of a child showing symptoms must also be sent home and self isolate until results are confirmed.
* Parents and staff will keep us informed of the illness.
* Unwell staff and parents of unwell children should visit [**https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance)**guidance**
* If a member of staff has helped someone who is unwell they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands for 20 seconds and clean any areas the possibly infected person had been.
* If someone with symptoms tests negative for coronavirus (COVID-19) they should stay at home until they have recovered as usual from their illness. They can then safely return to the setting. The only exception to return following a negative test result is where an individual is separately identified as a close contact of a confirmed case, when they will need to self-isolate for 10 days from the day after contact with the individual who tested positive.

**What if there is a confirmed case of Covid-19 in the setting?**

* Infected person needs to self-isolate for 10 days from either their fist symptom or if no symptoms, from the date of their test.
* Infected persons family to Self-isolate for 10 days regardless if they test negative.
* Where the child or staff member who displayed the symptom tests negative, they can return to the setting and household members can end their self-isolation.
* Where a child or staff member tests positive all children and staff should self-isolate for 10 days. If they then show symptoms, they should have a coronavirus test to confirm their illness. If that test comes back positive that individual and anyone in their household who has come into contact with them should begin the 10 day self isolate from the day the symptoms started.

**What happens to Fees during self isolation?**

* If your child is unwell with covid symptoms or a confirmed case or your child is unwell with any other illness your fees will fall under our sickness policy and full fees will be due.
* If we are unable to open the setting due to a positive case we will not enforce fees. However, we do have some options of which you can choose one which best suits your personal circumstances –

Option 1 – do nothing and continue to pay your fees to contribute to the sustainability of the setting.

Option 2 – send us an email requesting a full refund and this refund will be credited to your next invoice.

Option 3 – Decide that you would like to pay a percentage of your fees to contribute to the sustainability of the setting, If you choose this option please send us an email stating the percentage you would be happy to contribute and we will issue a refund for the remaining credit on your next invoice,

**Our Duty of response to a positive case**

* Engage with the NHS test and trace process
* Manage and report to Ofsted and the PHE/DFE advice line.
* To follow all advice from PHE/DFE including contacting parents and staff of whom must self isolate.
* Contain any out break by following local health protection team advice.

**Catch it, Bin it, Kill it approach**

As stated in the systems of control we must use the catch it, bin it, kill it approach. This is something we have always done and will continue to teach. There are child friendly signs around the setting to help the children with this including tissues, peddle bins and hand gel in all rooms and outside.

**Cleaning:**

* Staff will be advised how often to clean their rooms.
* A deep clean will be undertaken at the end of each day.
* Toilets will be cleaned after every use.
* Normal household cleaners will be used, as advised by government guidelines.
* A separate cleaning risk assessment and guidance has been shared with all staff to ensure all cleaning requirements are met.

**Covid 19 Accident form changes:**

* If a child has an accident whilst in our care we will ring/whatsapp the parents to let them know based on severity.
* We will fill out an accident form as usual.
* We will send a picture of the accident via whatsapp and the parent will respond to say they have seen – this will class as a new signature.
* We will sign ‘approved via whatsapp’ the accident form.

**Clinically vulnerable children, Families or staff**

* Clinically extremely vulnerable staff or children in a tier 4 area should not attend.
* Clinically vulnerable children and staff can continue to attend but must stick to our health and hygiene methods of prevention.
* Pregnant staff. Staff can continue to work when pregnant until the 28th week of pregnancy where they are then to have duties away from the setting where possible.

**Sun cream;**

Parents are asked to apply a ‘once a day’ sun cream to their children before they arrive.

Parents are asked to send their child with a sun hat and appropriate protective clothing.

Shade will be provided in the garden and children encourage to play inside at hottest times.

**Breakfast Club**

We will for the foreseeable have no more than 15 children attend our breakfast club where there are children whom are over the age of 5 within the group.

**Symptoms and other symptoms**

Early Years can remain open due to the fact that children are not highly affected by Coronavirus, however we have to remember that staff work closely alongside these children of whom are more vulnerable.

We all felt much more confident in the Autumn term but due to the new variant and the increase in cases the staff team are understandably feeling a bit more nervous and vulnerable.

Due to the vulnerability of staff not wearing PPE and not distancing from the children to ensure we can give them the normal support and care that is essential to Early Years we ask that parents are **extremely vigilant and considerate** of the staff and other children in our care.

We will be considering all of the symptoms below:

* Fever
* Cough
* Shortness of breath of difficulty of breathing
* Chills
* Muscle pain
* Headache
* Sore throat
* New loss of taste or smell
* Congestion or runny nose
* Nausea or vomiting
* Diarrhoea

We will make judgements using these symptoms above as to whether we feel a child is firstly fit to attend the setting and secondly requires a test. We hope that you also consider these symptoms before sending your child into preschool. We hope that this instils confidence in staff and parents that we are doing our upmost to avoid Coronavirus in our setting and also full closures.

**Staffing**

All staff have signed an agreement that they will adhere to the government guidelines whilst inside and outside our setting.

If staffing levels decrease because staff become unwell or have to self isolate due to close contact or a family member having Coronavirus we will have to consider how to open safely. We will at all times stick to the ratio guidelines and work on the priority system in the order below of:

* Children of key workers
* Children of whom are classed as vulnerable
* Children of working parents
* All other children