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13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers and Staff,

## COVID-19 Week 8 Update

Following on from the Government guidance, from the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June at the earliest, we will be gradually welcoming the children back into our Centre. It is important to remember that although the date of 1st June has been announced, this is a potential target date which could change. However, we will be working to this date to be ready to welcome children back into our Centre anytime from 1st June.

As a part of the preparation to re-open, we would appreciate it if you could complete the survey, sent to you separately, by Sunday 3.00 pm at the latest. This will allow us to compile the data to ensure that we have the correct number of children and staff in the Centre. We will need to continue to offer places to our vulnerable children and the children of the key workers. If your child has been offered a place, you will be contacted individually.

By gradually increasing the number of children attending the Centre, we can initially reduce the number of children in the rooms and put protective measures in place to reduce risks. We will implement a range of protective measures including strict cleaning routines, reducing 'pinch points' (such as parents dropping the children off at the start and end of the day) and utilising outdoor space. Staff and children in the Centre will be eligible for testing if they display coronavirus symptoms, as well as any members of their household. A negative test will enable the children to get back to the Centre, and their parents back to work. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect other children and staff in our setting.

Existing space requirements and staff to child ratios for the relevant age group should allow for small groups working to ensure children are kept at a safe distance apart and to ensure high standards of safety. If necessary, we will introduce a temporary cap on numbers to protect children and staff.

Scientific advice indicates that a gradual return, that limits the number of children in educational settings and how much they mix with each other, will help to control the rate of transmission. We will consider a number of issues that we have identified as requiring careful consideration. These are:

- **Risk assessment**- we will carry out a risk assessment before opening which will directly address risks associated with COVID-19 , so that sensible measures can be put in place to control those risks for all children, staff and parents.
- **Room sizes and staff availability**- we will reduce the number of children in each room to create small groups as nursery age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff. If we apply comprehensive infection control measures (e.g. taking steps to ensure symptomatic individuals do not attend the Centre, regular hand cleaning, good respiratory hygiene practice, cleaning frequently touched surfaces and general cleaning of the Centre, minimising contact and handling potential cases of the virus as per advice) then the risk of transmission will be lowered. The staff to child ratios within the Early Years Foundation Stage will continue to apply.
- **Protective measures** - a detailed plan on implementation will follow soon
- **Attendance** - no one with symptoms should attend the Centre for any reason. Children who are self-isolating or are clinically vulnerable or if someone in their household is extremely vulnerable should also not attend.
- **Curriculum** - we will endeavour to deliver the learning and development requirements of the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) curriculum as far as is possible in the current circumstances
- **Transport** - parents, children and staff are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible and avoid public transport.
- **PPE** - wearing a face covering or a face mask is not recommended in educational settings, therefore we will not require the children, staff or parents to wear one.

As parents, you are not obliged to send your child to school during this time. Every family's circumstances are unique and I would encourage you to consider your own personal circumstances very carefully before returning your child to school.

I know that you are all very concerned and will have a lot of questions over the coming days. I would like to reassure you that we are considering every option available to us to ensure that all the children, whether they return to school or remain at home, continue to receive the very best education that we can provide. I will be writing to you regularly to update you on our next steps and what this means for you and your family. I would be grateful for your patience over the next week as we work through the planning process.

Thank you once again for all that you do to continue to support your child at home and for the kind messages we have received over the last few weeks.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Katarina Bingham  
Head of Centre