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Dear all,

Implementing Protective Measures at Norcot COVID-19

We have carried out risk assessments, health and safety compliance checks and followed the advice for children and staff in the light of government recommendations to ensure that the centre can gradually and safely re-open on 1st June (subject to government advice). We have identified protective measures and discussed their implementation with the staff and governors.

Drop off and collection arrangements

- no parents, staff, children, visitors, families, contractors can enter the centre if they have any symptoms
- only one parent/carer can escort the child to the centre
- staggered drop-off and collection times - children and parents to arrive at different times
- parents to go to their designated gate/door to drop off and collect their child and wait for a member of staff to meet and greet them
- minimum parent to parent contact - no congregation at the gate/door
- wait on the mark clearly identified on the floor

We will keep the same groups 'bubbles' and:

- ensure that children are in their 'bubbles' at all times each day, and different 'bubbles' are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days
- ensure that the same staff are assigned to each 'bubble' as far as possible. These will stay the same during the day and on subsequent days
- ensure that children use the same room allocated to their 'bubble' throughout the day

For cleaning and hygiene we will:

- ensure that the rooms will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day
- ensure that handwashing facilities for the children and staff are regularly cleaned
- ensure that each 'bubble' will have a designated toilet for their 'bubble' use only

- wipe the toilet after each use, a designated member of staff wearing PPE will be allocated
- ensure that sanitisers are available for staff in rooms and other parts of the buildings
- clean surfaces that children are touching, such as toys, books, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters, more regularly than normal
- ensure that the outdoor equipment, play equipment, apparatus, climbing frames will be cleaned at the end of each day
- ensure that all staff and children:
 - frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly
 - clean their hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing
 - are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose
 - use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it') - we will provide visual posters for the children
- ensure that help is available for children who have difficulties cleaning their hands independently, a designated member of staff will be allocated
- consider how to encourage children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition (e.g when washing hands to sing 'Happy Birthday' twice)
- supervise the children when using the toilet, a designated member of staff will be allocated
- ensure that bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day
- ensure rooms are well ventilated using natural ventilation - opening windows
- prop doors open, where safe to do so (we will take into account fire safety and safeguarding)
- ensure proportionate supplies of soap, anti-bacterial gel and cleaning products
- ensure that only designated member of staff wearing PPE is changing nappies and supervising the children in the toilet

Reduce contact within the centre by:

- placing a divider down the middle of the rooms to keep 'bubble' apart
- each 'bubble' will be separated from another 'bubble' whilst outside or in the garden
- staggering outdoor play to ensure that only one 'bubble' is using the equipment at any time during the day
- use outdoor space as much as possible as this can limit transmission and more easily allows for distance between children and staff; and children and children
- children staying in their 'bubble' during the lunch times and snack times - children will be kept apart as much as possible. Children will be encouraged to self feed. If not possible, staff will wear gloves when supporting children
- not allowing 'free flow' across the centre
- noting that some children will need additional support to follow these measures, an advise for SENDCO will be obtained and risk assessment completed

- no allowing parents/carers inside the centre
- having all 'office' communication with parents/ carers over the phone or via email
- having a brief handover communication from the child's 'bubble' member of staff at the designated door/ gate at the beginning and the end of the session
- staff having their lunch breaks outside if possible

Reduce the use of shared resources by:

- having the resources for table top activities or other activities on offer with 2m distance between them if possible
- ensuring that toys or other resources are not used by other 'bubbles' unless they have been cleaned
- removing unnecessary toys and resources in the rooms and storing them elsewhere in the centre - if this is not possible, then covering them by material/cloth that is securely attached
- removing all the soft furnishings that can not be easily cleaned every day
- timely cleaning of the toys or other items that the children put in their mouths, sneeze or cough on
- by seeking to prevent the sharing of stationery and other equipment and materials where possible, clean and disinfect more frequently if shared
- not using an outdoor sand area
- limiting of the provision on offer that requires shared use of the resources
 - no continuous provision available
 - no use of play-dough, shaving foam etc
 - no shared cooking activities
 - no water tray or snack tray
 - no use of soft play area/ ball pit
 - no use of sensory room
- by limiting the amount of shared resources that are taken home and limit exchange of take-home resources between children and staff if possible

Child who develop symptoms whilst in the centre

- if a child develops cough/temperature/feels unwell, they will be sent home and will need to self-isolate for 14 days, or until tested negative
- the parent/carer will be informed and will be required to collect him/her as soon as possible
- the child will be waiting in a separate room with the window open and the door closed, supervised by a member of staff wearing a mask/shield, gloves and an apron
- if the child gets tested positive for COVID-19, then the whole group that the child was in must be sent home and must isolate for 14 days
- if other cases in the centre are then confirmed, then PHE will advise the head of centre on next steps or possible closure

Our very young children might find this all very difficult. They won't have access to all the practical resources they would normally use and they won't be following the routine they are used to. Children learn by touching, doing, being with others and sharing - all of which will be limited as far as possible to reduce the risk of transmitting/catching the virus. The centre will not be the same. But I can reassure you that the staff will do their very best to make the experience for the children as positive as possible.

I am not going to promise you that we can achieve social distancing between the children and guarantee total safety, but I can assure you that we will endeavour to reduce the risks by implementing these protective measures in the centre. COVID-19 virus is nasty and it is a super spreader.

If you have indicated that you would like your child to come in to the centre, you will be contacted individually to discuss your child's gradual reintegration back to the centre, including the sessions, times and the locations for drop off and collection. The possible attendance of children in the centre are subject to the number of staff available and the maximum number of the children we can have to ensure the protective measures can be implemented.

I am grateful for your patience as we work through this planning process. I really appreciate your understanding and support. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Katarina Bingham
Head of centre

Frequently asked questions

I am a key worker but do not feel that it is safe for my child to return back to the centre? Do I have to?

No. Government guidelines makes it very clear that there will be no penalties for parents who choose not to send their child in. It is your personal choice whether you feel it is safe for your child to return or not.

My child is eligible to attend the centre from 1st June, will she/he attend her/his usual sessions?

No, the sessions that will be offered will be shortened and reduced.

What if my child's keyworker can not come to school, will my child be able to come in?

The priorities will be given to vulnerable children and those of critical workers, followed by the children who are leaving Norcot for primary school regardless whether their key worker is in or not. These children will be put into their 'bubbles' with a member of staff.

My child attends breakfast club and tea club as a part of the wrap-around provision. If she/he is attending the centre from 1st June, will you continue to provide it?

No. The length of the sessions and day will be shortened in order for the staff to clean the equipment the children used before the usual cleaning begins.

I have more than one child attending the centre. Does staggered start mean that I will be dropping them off and picking them up at different times as a part of your staggered start/ finish?

We will do our best to ensure that both of your children will be asked to come in and collect them at the similar time.

When will you recommence invoicing for fees?

Our governing board will be meeting next Wednesday to discuss our financial position. We will contact parents as soon as possible with further information.

My personal circumstances have changed and we are struggling to pay the fees.

Please get in touch with us so that we can find a way that will work for both yourself and us.

If my child is not eligible to attend the centre from 1st June, does that mean he will not be able to attend until the COVID-19 has passed?

No, we will be evaluating the situation regularly as the number of children and staff might change due to self-isolation. Also, if the risk on COVID-19 has dramatically reduced, the government might make a decision for all the children to attend the centre.

My child will find it difficult to settle after a long time not attending the centre. Can I come in to help her him/her to settle down?

No. Unfortunately no parents will be allowed into the centre but you can have a brief handover from your 'bubble' member of staff at the designated gate/ door at the beginning or the end of the session.

Will you continue to upload home learning information to Norcot website/Facebook after 1st June for those children not attending the centre?

Yes. We will be uploading ideas for home learning until the summer holidays begin.