



20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **Covid-19 Update**

Dear Parents/Carers

As per the announcement on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 from the Prime Minister we are having to close our doors from 6pm tonight to the general public. We appreciate that parents have been eagerly anticipating news from us on what this means for their childcare and plans from here onwards. We did not get the official documentation from the government until very late last night and have been working hard this morning to contact parents who we think qualify for the strict 'key worker' roles or vulnerable children.

### **Key Worker Roles**

The full list of roles can be found on the government website here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

If you have not been contacted this morning but feel that you do meet the criteria then please contact us as soon as possible to make arrangements. Where parents are Key workers we would appreciate if they could provide evidence of this and forward it to [ladybirds0101@gmail.com](mailto:ladybirds0101@gmail.com) we trust that parents will be honest about their roles however we may be required in time to provide evidence so would appreciate this as soon as possible.

Where both parents are key workers we will keep those children's sessions as usual from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March (Except for 7.30am starts), if these parents have been asked to work additional shifts to cover their increased workload then they are encouraged to ask us if we have additional space for their children but this is still only where there is an essential need for childcare to be provided.

In cases of single parents where the other parent is not available to care for the child and the primary carer is a key worker, we will continue with their child's care.

The guidance has not been clear cut on what happens to families who have 1 parent who is a key worker and 1 who isn't. As a setting we have made the tough decision to state that if there is 1 parent available as a non-key worker to care for the children then we will not allow these children to come in for their usual bookings, however, if there are emergency situations where in order for the key worker parent to be able to fulfil their role the child/children need to access the setting then we will endeavour to make space available for

them, but, as much notice as possible would be helpful in these situations so we can make staffing arrangements.

We have made this decision on the premise that we need to not only safeguard the children but also our own staff and the families of the children in our care as they are also the front line people needed to keep everything going.

### **Self-Isolation**

We ask that parents remain vigilant in their isolation and that they don't ignore any symptoms that any household member gets and still isolate the whole household for 14 days from the onset of symptoms of a temperature over 37.8°C or a new persistent cough. This applies to all those still using or working for the nursery. Particular precaution needs to be given to those within the vulnerable groups, parents need to consider if our provision is appropriate for their individual circumstance such as children with asthma or respiratory problems or living with others within the vulnerable groups and act accordingly, as we have had to do with our vulnerable staff members.

### **Change of opening hours**

Due to the uncertainty of staff sickness, we will not be facilitating the 7.30am starts, all staff and children will start at 8am to ensure we don't end up with anyone lone working between 7.30am and 8am in cases where 1 staff member is taken unwell.

### **Fees**

This is a really tough action for us to take and as much as we understand most parents will be in a state of financial uncertainty we also hope that families understand that as a setting we still need to be around for when this all tides over.

As you have been informed previously, our terms and conditions are that if we are closed to you then we expect half fees, however, myself and Janine have discussed, that as we are unsure how long this will go on for it would be unrealistic to expect that from our families. We hope that by reducing this amount and asking you to pay 25% of fees that this will be manageable for you and that we will still be able to maintain the running of the setting.

We are still awaiting official confirmation on what financial support we are due to get from the government or our insurance company but as soon as we do we will be looking at what else we can do to support our families.

To our key worker families using the setting as normal, we will follow the regular procedure for sickness and if your child needs to be off then we will require full fees. And if you book holiday then it will be charged at half fees as long as there is 4 weeks notice.

### **Food Supplies and Allergies**

There have been no actions discussed by the government about how we are expected to provide food for the children in the setting as far as we know. At the moment we have enough in stock to get us through next week, however, it is increasingly becoming difficult to be able to cater for small families let alone all the children due to attend the setting. Because of this, we may get to a point where we ask parents to provide their children with a packed lunch but we will keep those parents informed if we do need to put this in place.

We will have to ask parents of children with allergies/intolerances from Monday 23rd March to please ensure they bring a supply of meals and snacks suitable for their child in case the

alternative foods delivered to us are not suitable for their child. We will, as much as possible, attempt to cater for them still but it all depends on what we can get hold of.

#### **Room Changes/Movements and Staffing**

Understandably there will need to be adjustments made to how the setting runs, we will for the majority of the time be using the upstairs level to care for the children so our babies will be using our toddler room and where appropriate we may have to move older toddlers into our pre-school room. This is to ensure we staff the building efficiently and don't have to call in more staff than needed and in turn putting them at increased risk of non-essential social encounters. We also have some vulnerable staff who won't be attending the setting for the foreseeable and as such will mean there may be different people caring for your children but please rest assured that all staff are familiar with all children in the building, one of the perks of being a small community setting.

#### **Cancellation of Parents evening and keeping in touch**

We will be cancelling our parents evening which was due to take place on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April however we would still love for parents to keep in contact with us through their children's tapestry, please upload photos and videos and hopefully, we can help you with ideas to further your child's development at home.

We are also hoping to be able to provide some opportunities to still be able to join in with activities we provide in the comfort of your own homes, we don't want to lose our community feel or the children to miss out on those key friendships they have with their peers. Details will follow once we have managed to get through the initial stages of this worrying time.

Best Wishes  
Kayleigh