**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS…AND A FEW MORE….!**

Please find below the answers to some commonly asked questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [preschoolcommittee@live.co.uk](mailto:preschoolcommittee@live.co.uk) if you have any further queries.

**Children**

1. **Are there any circumstances in which my child should not attend?**

Children must be 100% fit to attend Pre School. Normally we are very lenient about things like runny noses and colds, but in the current climate, I’m afraid they will not be able to attend and should be kept at home.

If we have any health concerns about a child, parents/carers will be contacted and their child must be picked up without question and asap.

Children must be COVID symptom free or have completed isolation period (according to government guidelines) to attend the setting

1. **What happens if my child attends another setting or childminder?**

Until we are advised otherwise, children can only attend **one** provider. This is due to traceability and infection control

1. **Will children be socially distanced?**

It is impossible to socially distance children of this age, indeed the government guidelines recognise this. It is impossible to eliminate all risk, however, we will be reducing it by having lower numbers of children in the setting (current cap of 20 – would normally have 35) and these children will be working in small groups (maximum of 4) with named member of staff. They will stay in these groups throughout the day and care routines, meals, snacks and toileting will all be done within these ‘bubbles’ whenever possible. The setting will be split into 3 zones and the groups will alternate between them throughout the day. Again, this is to do with traceability should a child contract COVID. Toys and equipment will be cleaned if necessary or appropriate before groups change over

1. **My child is very anxious at the moment, if they become upset will they get a hug?** Of course they will – all staff understand that children will need emotional support at this time.

**Adults in the setting**

1. **How do I know that adults won’t spread illness to my child?**

The same as for children – staff cannot attend unless they are 100% fit and COVID symptom free or having completed the mandatory isolation period. They will be asked to present Manager/Directors with evidence of at least one negative test result before they can return to work.

Only staff who are working that day will be allowed in the setting and there will be no visitors other than for essential maintenance, which wherever possible will be organised out of hours.

Staff will remain with their same groups throughout the day. They will obviously be replaced by a second member of staff if they only work for half a day, but the children’s groupings will remain the same.

1. **What about us parents – how can we help?**

Only parents who are symptom free and or have completed required isolation periods will be able to drop off or collect their child. If possible only 1 parent/carer per family.

**Parents will not be able to enter the building (including the library foyer)**

**Early drop off** – Parents to wait outside main door to hand over children to waiting staff

**Main morning drop off** – We are hoping (currently in negotiation with school) that a one way system will be operating through the main garden wherein you will place your children’s bags and coats on the racks which will be on the decking, and hand your children over to waiting staff. Parents are expected to social distance themselves please. In the event of us not being able to operate this system, parents and children must wait outside the building (not the library foyer) – coat and bag racks will be left for you - and we will collect the children from you.

**Lunchtime pick ups –** Main door again – please wait outside and we will pass your children out to you 1 by 1. These are staggered timings anyway between 12 and 1. Please maintain social distance whilst you are waiting

**Main pick up (3-4pm)** – Main door again – please wait outside and we will release your children to you. This is a naturally staggered timing. Please maintain social distance whilst you are waiting

**Late pick up -** Main door again – we may not run these sessions if insufficient children, however, if we do same arrangements as above.

1. **What if I need to talk to a member of staff?**

Staff will always find time to speak to parents. If possible, we would be grateful if you would phone between 8-9 and 3-4 which are our quieter times, which will mean that staff’s concentration will be on the children rather than anything else and will also mean that we can keep the drop off/pick up system flowing. Emails can be sent at any time and we will respond asap.

If you need to speak to a member of staff in person (or they need to speak to you), at drop off or collection, then they may ask you to wait until all children have been dealt with so they can ensure social distancing and confidentiality.

**Hygiene, Health and Safety**

1. **Can you tell me about hygiene procedures?**

**Handwashing –** All children and staff must wash hands upon arrival at Pre School and frequently during the day after activities and before snack/ lunch time.

**Cleaning –** the setting is professionally cleaned every night and will receive another deep clean in half term. All toys have been cleaned or washed over the last few weeks and although it is obviously impossible to clean a toy or book every time, it is touched by a child, staff will ensure high levels of cleanliness on furniture, surfaces, toys and equipment

All touch points e**.**g. door handles will be wiped frequently.

**Waste disposal** – All waste will be disposed of in hygienic and safe manner

**Risk Assessment –** Risk assessments will be available to parents should they wish to see them and should be updated regularly.

**Messy Play** – unfortunately messy play, cooking and playdough activities are temporarily suspended. There may be occasions when we may offer a playdough activity, however, this will be done within groups and in a staff controlled manner . One batch of playdough will be made per group and each child given their own piece to play with which will then be placed in a named bag. Sand and the mud kitchen will be on offer outside in a controlled manner, however, children will be closely supervised and careful handwashing will take place afterwards.

**PPE –** Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early years settings to protect against COVID transmission. PPE will continue to be worn as normal for nappy changing and administration of first aid.

**Toys** – Toys on offer to the children will be those which can be easily cleaned i.e. mainly plastic

**Toys from home** – Unless there is a specific toy which is **essential** to their wellbeing, personal toys should be kept at home.

**Fees and Funding**

1. **Will my 30 hour funding be affected?**

Temporary changes have been made to the 30 hours free entitlement so that all eligible parents, including critical workers, are not disadvantaged during the coronavirus outbreak.

Specifically, parents who will not meet the minimum income threshold (16 hours per week at National Minimum/Living Wage) due to lower earnings as a direct result of coronavirus will be treated as meeting that test during the outbreak. This will apply only to parents who need to apply for, or reconfirm, their 30 hours place during the outbreak this year.

1. **If I normally pay for sessions, will I have to pay if I choose not to send my child back to school?**

The Directors have taken the decision, that for the moment, fees will not be charged to those not attending. In the event of the government changing its policy on county funding, this decision may be reviewed. The Directors reserve the right to change this decision at any point.

1. **If I choose not to send my child back, will their place in September be in jeopardy?**

No – children who are not returning this academic year will retain their place in September.

**Please note that we will not be accepting cash/cheque payments for anything, - any payment must be made via bank transfer**

**Operational Changes**

1. **Are timings changing?**

No, times will run as normal - although we may not run the late pick up if we do not have enough takers – a decision will be made about this asap

1. **Do my children have to bring anything different?**

Due to issues with online shopping slots and staff needing to be in the room, we have taken the decision to ask all children who will be attending for the morning session to bring their own snack please in a named plastic bag

All children should also bring a named drinks bottle.

Water will be available for top ups at all times of the day

1. **Will staff still be doing Learning Records?**

No – we need staff in the room looking after the children rather than working in the office. The Learning Records for our Leavers are already nearly complete and will be downloaded onto memory sticks by the end of term.

For our returners – Learning Records will be temporarily suspended – please do keep putting observations on from home – we do love seeing what you have been doing and keeping in touch.

1. **I am not ready for my child to return to Pre School yet but may want to later in the term – will this be OK?**

In theory yes, we do hope so, however, it will very much depend on government guidelines plus whether staff in the setting assess whether it is safe to increase numbers. We have split the term into 3 windows

**Wk beginning 1st June**

**Wk beginning 22nd June**

**Wk beginning 6th July**

These are the three possible entry points for children returning – and we will email parents in advance of these dates to ask whether you wish your child to return. Children will not be able to join in the middle of a window and must wait for the start of the next one.

We will regularly review numbers in the setting in line with the government guidelines and whether we feel we can maintain safety and infection control. As has been said previously, if we need to cap numbers then priority will be given as follows;

1) Children of keyworkers and those with additional needs

2) Children who start school in September

3) Remaining 2 and 3 year olds.

1. **What happens if the government change their minds about reopening schools in their announcement on 28th May?**

This may happen, so please be prepared. In the event of a delay in re opening, we will continue to operate as we do at the moment – for children of keyworkers (on days of work) and those with additional needs only, until we are told otherwise.

1. **Ive heard a rumour that you may be offering ‘summer camps’ during the summer holidays, is that true?**

**Definitely not**. This may have stemmed from the Education Minister talking about the **possibility** of schools maybe offering this at one of the briefings