

the children's house

Operational Plan for Reopening 1 July 2020

'Every setting should carry out a risk assessment before opening. The assessment should directly address risks associated with coronavirus, so that sensible measures can be put in place to control the risks for children and staff' Source: *Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from June 1 2020*.

This operational plan details the actions we are taking under the headings:

1. Premises
2. Risk Assessments
3. Grouping of children
4. Staffing
5. Wellbeing and Safeguarding
6. Learning and Development
7. Food/Mealtimes
8. Communication

This plan has been informed by the following guidance:

- *Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from June 1 2020*. (Department for Education)
- *Planning guide for early years and childcare settings* (Department for Education)
- Resources from National Day Nurseries Association and Early Years Alliance.

A full risk assessment sits behind this document and is available for parents/carers. These risk assessment is a live document and will be kept under regular review by the management team. A summary of our actions can be found as a 'Seven Steps to Safety' plan on our website. Should you seek any further details around the nursery operations and risk assessments in light of recent developments, please see our Nursery Manager, Jo Robinson.

1. Premises

| Action |
|---|
| <p>Arrivals and Departures Access to the Building</p> <p>Early years settings have been advised that they should limit the amount of people from different households entering the building, where possible. Therefore, we recommend that only one parent or carer, where possible, brings/collects the child/children to and from nursery to minimise this, as far as is possible. There will be a member of staff on duty to help to manage this new process when we reopen on July 1st 2020. If a parent or carer needs to speak to the child's keyworker, we can arrange for this to be done either in person (social distancing in place, as much as practically possible), by phone, e-mail or by using the baby diary for non urgent information and updates. There will be the opportunity to speak to a member of staff at each of the entrances and any messages can be passed to respective keyworkers if they are working in the base room. Special Books can be taken home to update and returned at a later date.</p> <p>Social distance signage will be clearly marked at reception and immediately outside the building.</p> <p>Cleaning stations will be posted at each entrance to the building.</p> <p>Staff members will sign children in and ask parents/carers to confirm that their children are in good health.</p> <p>The 0-3 year base rooms will be staffed between 7.00am and 6.30pm and the 3-4 year base room and Prep Class (Hall) will be staffed from 7.30am - 6.30pm. Where possible, entry to the building will be by outside doors directly onto the base rooms and via the garden. Where this is not possible, room staff will meet and greet parents and children at the main reception doors. There will be cleaning stations at entry points for children, parents and staff to sanitise their hands.</p> <p>0-2 year children will present to reception and enter the nursery garden via the wooden gate to the left of reception. Entry to the baby room will be via the baby room garden, where a member of staff will meet and greet and a handover will take place between parent/carers and Keyworker. Keyworker and child will wash hands in the changing area of the baby room.</p> |

2-3 year children and parents will ring the intercom and be met at the front reception door by a member of staff from the 2-3 year base room, who will then take the child/children up to the base room. Upon arriving in the base room, Keyworker and child will wash hands in the base room sink.

3-4 year children that attend the classroom upstairs will also be met at the front door by a member of the team and the child/children will be accompanied up to the base room by the staff member, where they will be able to wash hands.

Prep Class children can enter the building via the back garden, via the gate to the left of reception. Room staff will meet and greet by the Hall doors, under the overhang. Upon entering the building, children will be able to wash hands in the Disabled toilet sink.

Parents and carers are welcome to ring the nursery as they arrive so that team members can help to get their child/ children ready to go home. Floor markings outside will denote the 2 m rules outside reception and the outside entrances. Parents and carers that prefer not to wait outside one of the nursery entrances can choose to wait in their cars if there is a queue outside the reception doors.

We have provided a 'More About Me' form on the nursery website - if any parents/carers are concerned that their child/children might struggle to settle back into nursery life, please complete the form and let the team have it before your child returns. This will enable us to make some transition plans to support the children. Upon reopening, children can be invited to attend pre-visits on the days that they would normally attend with their key groups, from 1st July and by prior arrangement. Parents and carers, in special circumstances, can enter the building as long as they observe the cleaning protocols and social distancing, for example, if a child is too unsettled to leave their parent/carer at the door. Favourite resources can be on display to re-pique children's interests, although the guidance to settings suggests that bringing resources from home should be restricted. Familiar team members, where practically possible, will be on hand to meet and greet.

Ensuring correct recording of times of arrival and departure of children and staff is also a key element of safety. Staff will record this information and sign children in and out, rather than parents and carers as part of our cross infection controls.

Access to the Building

Access to the building for contractors, deliveries and visitors will be kept to a minimum, for example if providing an essential service or essential support for a child's health and wellbeing. Deliveries will be made to the front door and any essential visitors will be expected to comply with our hand washing and social distancing policies. Showrounds for new families will be undertaken virtually or at the end of the nursery day, for the foreseeable future

Cleaning and Hygiene

Once children are back in the setting, all frequently touched surfaces, equipment, door handles, and toilets, used during the day, will be cleaned thoroughly several times a day, with appropriate anti-bacterial sprays and disposable cloths. This will be undertaken in accordance with the guidance [cleaning in non-healthcare settings](#)

- Cleaning outdoors e.g. bikes, bats, hoops, climbing equipment and other touch points
- Toilet seats and taps will be cleaned after each child uses them
- Hand rails will be cleaned at several points during the day.
- Staff toilets need to be cleaned at least once a day (provide cleaning wipes for doors and touch points, hand-wash, paper towels, tissues)
- Daily cleaning of surfaces, doors, handles, tables and other touch points
- Equipment and resources will be cleaned frequently (a comprehensive cleaning plan is available on request). Some resources can be sterilised in the industrial steriliser.

Crockery/cutlery

All crockery and utensils will be sterilised through the industrial steriliser as per our usual practice, after each snack and meal time.

Children's bags

Where possible, we would like to request that children bring their spare clothing, slippers and other items to nursery in a bag that is not made of soft fabric and that can be sprayed with anti-bacterial spray. This might mean that this is a simple carrier bag with the child's name on.

Handwashing/Infection Control

We will:

- follow the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#)
- ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available.
- ensure that all adults and children:
 - frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly. Review the [guidance on hand cleaning](#)
 - 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
- ensure that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently
- consider how to encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition
- ensure that bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day
- ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

Laundry

In line with guidance, we will wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. We will use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an unwell person can be washed with other people's items. Blankets and sheets will be washed after each use. Disposable 'bed roll' can be used in the 2-3 and 3-4 year rooms when the children sleep on the mats.

Waste

All waste will be disposed of in line with guidance in [cleaning in non-healthcare setting](#).

Water Systems

All water systems have been periodically flushed whilst the building has been closed.

Fire Safety

Fire evacuation routes will not change. As per usual we will

- carry out regular checks of alarms systems, call points and emergency lighting
- carry out regular hazard spotting to identify escape route obstructions
- check that all fire doors are operational

Fire drills will continue to be held as normal.

Ventilation

Good ventilation is essential at all times. Natural ventilation via windows or vents will be used as far as possible and where available occupied room windows should be open. The nursery base rooms are also equipped with air conditioning, which was serviced in February 2020. Cleaning of the system will be actioned, if there is a positive Covid-19 case in nursery, before it is used.

Working in Offices Safely

In addition to above actions we will ensure:

Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses, using our usual cleaning products.

Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, such as door handles, keyboards, and telephones and making sure there are adequate disposal arrangements.

Clearing workspaces and removing waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a day.

Limiting or restricting use of high-touch items and equipment, for example, printers or telephones.

2. Risk Assessment

Actions

It is crucial to balance the importance of providing a high quality learning environment that meets the needs of the children and their interests, whilst ensuring that infection control is maintained.

Risk assessments

All planned activities will be risk assessed in light of coronavirus, in conjunction with relevant staff where applicable, and due consideration given to how usual practice may need to be adapted. All risk assessments will be kept under review and are available on request.

We will continue to review measures that reduce the risk of transmission in the nursery, using: [Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#). We will continue to involve the staff team in developing policies for the nursery and ensure that they are personalised where necessary, for example for staff who have responsibility for providing 1:1 support for children or for children with additional needs.

We know that, unlike older children and adults, children in the early years cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff.

We therefore heed the hierarchy of measures set out in the protective measures guidance:

- ensure parents are advised to keep children with any symptoms at home
- ensure staff who are symptomatic do not attend work
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

We are amending policies and procedures to reflect current government guidance:

- Creating a procedure for isolating child who is showing symptoms of coronavirus
- As above for staff
- Reviewing and amending other procedures with the staff team
- Ensuring every practitioner is aware of revised procedures

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Staff members in nursery will not require PPE, beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed for children whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE, or if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from any child displaying coronavirus symptoms. If a child becomes unwell and is awaiting collection from parents, the supporting staff member will have access to normal PPE plus a face mask and face shield.

Taking temperatures

We have been advised that settings do not need to take children's temperatures every morning or throughout the day. Public Health England's guidance is that routine testing of an individual's temperature is not a reliable method for identifying coronavirus. There is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in a childcare setting.

Suspected cases

All staff and children who are attending a childcare setting have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario. Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation. If the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their immediate group within their setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

Anyone who begins to display coronavirus symptoms while in the setting should be sent home immediately and follow government guidelines on [what to do if you or someone in your household develops symptoms](#). If a child is waiting to be collected, they should be separated from their group and isolated with one member of staff if this is possible.

A facemask should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from a child who is symptomatic and awaiting collection and if contact is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a facemask should be worn. If a risk assessment determines there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing or spitting, then eye protection should also be worn. Settings should ensure they are prepared to respond in line with the [guidance on protective measures in education and childcare settings](#) and [guidance on using PPE in education, childcare and children's social care settings](#).

Once the child or member of staff has left the setting, settings should follow [Cleaning of non-healthcare settings](#) to ensure areas they have been in are disinfected and any PPE and other waste is disposed of safely.

Testing

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger group may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

Information on [testing](#) will be made available to parents

3. Grouping of Children

Actions

Grouping needs to ensure that the same staff and children are in smaller consistent groups. This may mean some changes to staff hours and days they work.

Great care has been taken to try to ensure that children and staff are grouped together as consistently as is possible.

0-2 year children will stay in their base room and garden and enter the building through the 0-2 year garden. They will be supported by the same staff at each session, as far as possible. All snacks and meals will be taken in the base room and outdoor play will take place in their own garden. No walks with the 6 seater 'kinderwagons' can take place until there is further easing of social distancing measures.

2-3 year children will enter the building via the front reception doors after being met by a member of staff from their base room. Consistent staff will stay in the room at each session, as far as possible. Children will take their snacks and meals in their base room and will use the outdoor play space on a rota with the other base rooms.

Children aged 3-4 years will access nursery through the main reception doors and be met by a staff member of their group and accompanied upstairs to their base room. Where possible, staff will be deployed with key groups on a consistent basis and children that have 1:1 support will remain in their base room group with consistently deployed 1:1 staff. There will be some sessions in which the 3-4 years group in the upstairs base room will split into two smaller groups and access different parts of the classroom (the room has been arranged to allow for this). In these sessions we will have blue group and red group. Prep Class will remain in the hall, with members of the Prep class staff team, as far as is practically possible. Staff will be deployed on a rota that is fixed which will enable us to keep the same staff with the same groups of children as much as we can. Snacks and meals will be taken in the room and the outdoor play area will be used on a rota basis with other groups, each group cleaning the play equipment upon the end of their outdoor session.

As many of our key people will not have returned to work by July 1st, it will be difficult to re-unite all children with their key person. However, the children will return to nursery and be grouped with staff that they are familiar with and who they will know from being in their base room. Staff will remain with each group consistently until their colleagues begin returning to work when nursery numbers increase.

Information will be gathered from parents about children's interests, any concerns and anxieties prior to them returning and then ongoing, as per usual practice. Our *Welcome Back* pack includes further information on this.

Keeping children and staff together in small groups

Providers are expected to ensure that there are no more than 16 children in a group in early years settings. Initially, we are looking to limit group sizes to 8 children. We will keep this under review as the situation and guidance evolves. We will continue to meet at least the minimum staffing ratios of

0-2 years old 1 adult: 3 children

2-3 years old 1 adult: 4 children

3-5 years old 1 adult: 8 children

Government guidance advises *'to minimise as far as possible the number of education and childcare settings their child attends.'* As a result, for the remainder of the summer term, unfortunately we cannot facilitate 'shared care' between the children's house and another early years provider. For example, if a child attends three days at the children's house and two days at pre school, we ask that parents/carers make a decision about using one early years provider until further notice. This will be reviewed at the end of August.

4. Staffing

Actions

As numbers of children attending nursery will initially be lower than before lockdown, our team will return in a phased way. 1:1 conversations have been held to determine the timings of these returns. The reinduction process for team members will include information which will detail amended policies and procedures.

We will also hold reinduction interviews which will cover new policies and procedures and will also consider individual circumstances, any changes to working patterns and staff wellbeing. We will be asking every member of staff to undertake a short Prevent Covid-19 online training course.

Additionally, the team will be asked to complete a health declaration form to confirm their fitness to work.

Our team have been and will continue to be involved in the dynamic risk assessment process.

We will ensure changes to roles and responsibilities are clearly communicated to the team and ensure they understand the rationale for small groups and social distancing

5. Wellbeing/Safeguarding

Actions

Children

Ahead of children returning we will develop a *Welcome back* pack which will include information for parents and carers and also a sheet which families can complete to share any particular experiences or feelings which they feel our team should be aware of.

We will actively plan how children will be supported to address the specific issues that may have arisen due to coronavirus, taking into account children's individual needs and circumstances. The coronavirus outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children. We will be alert to harms that may have been hidden or missed while they have not been attending settings. We will consider the mental health, pastoral or wider health and wellbeing support children may need, including with bereavement, and how to support them to transition into the setting after a long period of absence. We will also liaise parents and carers to identify specific support for children and how children's needs may have changed and to prepare for their return to the nursery. National Day Nurseries Association 'Separation Anxiety' Factsheet will be made available to families.

Readjustment to the routines in a setting may prove more challenging for some children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), particularly those who have been attending a different setting if their usual setting has been closed. We will endeavour to ensure nursery will have the staffing needed to support children with SEND at safe ratios, that there is a member of staff designated as a SENCO or interim SENCO and how this can best be accommodated in the planning of groups of children in your setting. We will also involve parents and carers in planning and agreeing any changes to support, including reviewing Education Health and Care (EHC) plans.

We continue to encourage attendance of vulnerable children and consider the best way to support them to transition into the setting according to their needs and their individual family circumstances. In cases where children are considered vulnerable and do not attend provision as expected, as with normal practice, we would follow up with the parent or carer – and social worker and local authority where appropriate – to explore reasons for absence. We work with local authorities, and school nurses and health visitors where relevant, to monitor the welfare of vulnerable children who are not attending provision, and other children they might wish to keep in touch with for safeguarding purposes.

Staff team

- Staff well-being and safety is a priority and we acknowledge the responsibility to look after the staff so they can be there for the children and families.
- 1:1 discussions prior to returning and reinduction meetings will provide opportunities for team members to discuss any concerns. Team members will also complete Health Declaration forms. Our open door policy enables team members to discuss any wellbeing/safeguarding issues with a member of the management team on a 1:1 basis.
- The team are actively consulted on risk assessment processes and practices.

6. Learning and Development

Actions

The priorities at this time are helping young children to adapt to their new routines and supporting children to settle back into the setting, especially where there have been staffing changes. Focussing on the Prime Areas of Learning (Communication and Language Development, Personal Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development) will be key. Montessori's grace and courtesy and practical life activities will support this. Part of this will be supporting children to learn, in age-appropriate ways, about how they can keep themselves safe, including regular hand washing and using tissues. If any parent/carers would like to send photographs of what their child/children have been doing at home we will use them to prompt some interesting discussions in the base room.

We will endeavour to make use of our outdoor environment as much as possible, whilst mindful of our Sun Safety policy. On very hot days we stay out of the sun between 11am and 2pm and respectfully request that parents and carers apply sun protection to their children before they come to nursery. Children that are in our 3-4 year age range will be shown how to use their own sunscreen, so that nursery staff don't apply it for them. Nursery carries a hypoallergenic sun protection cream that children who have forgotten their own supply can use.

Risk assessments will look to minimise the sharing of resources between groups, for example for painting, sticking, cutting and outdoor construction activities, which should be thoroughly cleaned before and after use by different groups. Malleable resources, such as play dough, will not be shared between groups and public health advice is that, as sand pits cannot be thoroughly cleaned between uses, they should not be used at this time. The team will endeavour to find opportunities for messy and malleable play for children to enjoy, for example, water play with soapy water that is changed at regular intervals, shaving foam and gloop that is in individual containers/bags for each child. Mark making equipment and tools will not be shared between the different groups.

We will continue to update children's records (including special books and development tracking) and, as ever, parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to these. Parents and carers can take their child/children's special book home to add photographs of what the children have been doing whilst the nursery has been closed.

Our *Welcome back* pack includes further information on young children's learning and development.

7. Food/Mealtimes

Actions

Menus may need to be temporarily reviewed to take into account availability of produce and access to food deliveries. We will continue to update families on this. We will continue to provide breakfast, morning snack, a two course hot lunch, afternoon snack and a high tea. A new nursery menu will be devised ready for our re-opening on July 1st.

Snack time/mealtimes are taken as a group sitting together in a designated space.

As usual, children will wash their hands before eating and will wash their hands when they have finished their snack or meal. Disposable paper towels, hand sanitiser and wipes will be on hand if needed. Snacks and meals will be taken in key groups in base rooms and use of the dining room will be limited to Prep Class children. Staff serving snacks will ensure they follow food hygiene procedures and rigorous hand washing protocols before and after any food is served. Food will be brought to the room by the nursery cook and will be left outside the room for staff to bring in. After each snack and meal, pots will be left outside the room for the cook to collect. Given that hot food will be carried up and down the stairs, it is essential that trays are not over loaded and manageable in terms of good back health, burns and spills.

We will ensure that there are clear procedures for maintaining stringent cleaning processes for food preparation areas, dining areas and table coverings.

Different coloured cloths, disposable towels or wipes, will be used to wipe down different areas of the nursery with anti-bacterial sprays.

Packed lunches are stored in their own separate nursery fridge and will be sprayed with anti-bacterial spray before being stored and after use.

All crockery and utensils will be sterilised through our industrial sterilizer as per our usual practice.

Staff will wear disposable gloves when helping children with eating. Keeping wipes, hand sanitiser (for children) at the table for quick mop ups.

8. Communication

Actions

We have updated our website, and under the Parents Page you will find a section relating to the reopening of nursery. This includes information on procedures and welcoming children back. A *More about Me* sheet is included which provides an opportunity for families to write about their child's recent experiences, concerns or any changes during lockdown, which you feel the nursery should know about. Please let us know if you would like hard copies posting to you.

Further details on specific risk assessments are available on request.

We will continue to communicate to families by email and our Facebook page (see www.facebook.com/thechildrenshousestallingborough)

We ask that parent/carers please update nursery with any changes to the following information:

- Contact information
- Emergency Contact Information
- Child allergies
- Permissions

We will make available (via email, website and hard copy) a *Welcome Back* pack for children and families which will include new procedures and routines and a form to tell us more about your child's recent experiences and needs.

For those children who have been with us in pre-school (whether they return to us or not before the new school term) we will be undertaking our transition work with their receiving primary school as per usual. Further information to follow on this.

Given that we need to limit access to parent/carers to the nursery for now, we plan to install an external noticeboard by the front for important information, procedures and updates.