

the children's house

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www.thechildrenshouse.org.uk

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We write to you to set out the arrangements we have made as we aim to open The Children's House from 1 July.

Before we set out these arrangements, we would like to take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for their understanding and cooperation since we had to close from 23 March. We know that this period has been challenging for many families, in particular when you have had to juggle work commitments with managing childcare, if you have children with special educational needs or disability, or if you are a single parent.

We are pleased to let you know that, further to the government's announcement that early years and childcare providers will open, we are working hard to take the necessary steps to be ready to welcome back all children.

Which children can attend from 1 July?

The government is now encouraging all eligible children to attend their early years setting, if parents/carers are happy with this. Thank you for your prompt response to our recent questionnaire about your plans which has enabled to move ahead with our planning.

For the vast majority of children and young people, coronavirus is a mild illness. If you are unsure whether your child should attend the setting due to a health condition that they or someone they live with has, please contact us so we can discuss the details with you.

Protective measures we are taking in light of coronavirus (COVID-19)

First and foremost, it goes without saying that the safety of your child and of our staff is our top priority. We are working hard, following the latest government guidance, to develop and implement a number of new ways of operating. This will allow us to open as safely as possible, focusing on measures that will help limit the risk of coronavirus transmitting within our setting.

Some of the steps we are taking in readiness for reopening include:

- Asking that anyone who is displaying coronavirus symptoms, or who lives with someone who does, not to attend the setting. That includes children and staff who work here.
- Keeping our children in small groups with as much consistent staffing as possible, and minimising contact with other groups around the setting.
- Cleaning our hands more often than usual. We have developed routines to ensure children understand when and how to wash their hands, making sure they wash them thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensuring our children understand good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and ensuring a good supply of tissues and bins throughout the setting.

- Implementing an enhanced cleaning schedule, ensuring surfaces touched by children and staff are cleaned regularly and throughout the day, including table tops, door handles and play equipment.
- Asking parents and carers to physically distance from each other and from staff when dropping off and collecting their children and to limit drop off and collection to one parent or carer per household. We will provide further details about these arrangements shortly.
- Asking children not to bring toys or other items from home to the setting unless this is essential to their health and wellbeing.

What can parents and carers do to help?

We are currently working on an operational plan which will be available on our website in due course. This will detail how you can help us to minimise the risk of infection and keep all children and our team safe. Copies of full risk assessments will be available on request.

Testing

Once early years and childcare providers open to more children, all children who are attending a childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario. The aim is to enable children to get back to childcare, and their parents or carers not to need to self-isolate any longer than is necessary if the test proves to be negative. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect other children and staff in their setting.

We ask all parents and carers to ensure they organise a test for their child, in the event that they develop coronavirus symptoms, and notify us immediately of a positive test. Further guidance is available about [getting tested](#).

Conclusion

We hope that this letter has given you the initial information you need to understand what arrangements we have made to enable children to return to us from 1 July. We are looking forward to welcoming your child/ren back and we hope that you are assured that we have taken all possible steps to ensure safety for all in our setting. We will make more of these details available in the coming weeks. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let us know.

Yours faithfully

Theresa Ellerby

Director

Sylvia Tiffney MBE

Director