

THE MULBERRY BUSH MONTESSORI NURSERY

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE:**

**COVID-19**

Following Government and DFE guidance on re-opening the setting we will endeavour to effectively manage the risk of transmission of COVID-19. This policy is subject to change as we receive new information and guidelines.

**SUPPORTING ADVICE AND DFE GUIDELINES:**

* Child, young person or staff member is or lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (*but not clinically* ***extremely*** *vulnerable*), including those that are pregnant. We are advised those that are clinically vulnerable can attend the setting, but need to take extra precautions when we go home such as showering, washing our clothes etc. immediately and maintaining safe distance from vulnerable family members where possible (that’s me, Jo and Siobhan). Please inform me if this also applies to you.
* If a child, young person or staff member is or lives in a household with someone who is clinically **extremely**vulnerable (as set out in the guidance on shielding and will have received a letter giving clear guidance) it is advised that they can only attend if stringent social distancing measures can be adhered to and the child is able to understand and follow social distancing rules. I do not feel this is possible in a nursery setting and I would advise staff or parents in this position not to attend nursery. Please inform me if this applies to you.

**A robust Risk Assessment was carried out by:** Cheryl Knight, the Mulberry Bush staff team and with concerns, views and suggestions shared by parents.

This risk assessment will directly address risks associated with the Coronavirus (COVID-10), so that we can put sensible measures into place to control and manage those risks for the children and staff.

**AIM:**

To manage the risk and rate of transmission**.** Preventing the spread of coronavirus involves dealing with **direct transmission**, through close contact with those sneezing and coughing and **indirect transmission** via touching contaminated surfaces.

**WHO IS AT RISK?**

Children, staff and their families

**HOW CAN WE MEET OUR AIM?**

We have adopted this policy and procedures document that puts in a range of approaches and actions that we will be employed to specifically target the risks surrounding coronavirus and managing the risk of transmitting COVID-19 within the setting.

* Ensure parents fully understand that their child must only attend nursery if they and all members of their household / contacts are symptom free. Stringent Isolation rules must be followed if any member of their household has displayed symptoms of Covid-19
* Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms: Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who may have coronavirus symptoms, or someone in their household who does, do not attend the setting. Strict isolation guidelines must be adhered to if the child or any member of their household or contacts present with symptoms of the coronavirus.
* It is important to reduce contact between children and staff as far as possible, and we will take steps to achieve that and reduce the transmission risk. This will be manageable across the whole setting with the very low numbers of children that currently wish their children to return. If numbers increase our plan will be to ensure children, and staff where possible, only mix in a small group, we will separate the environment and adapt timetables to ensure we keep each small group away from other groups (2 groups).
* What constitutes a ‘small group’? we are advised that the staff to child ratios within the EYFS for three and four-year olds continue to apply, and the DFE recommends using these to group children. The recommended number of children for ‘small’ groups is therefore; for each staff member with EYPS qualification = 1:13 plus all other staff can have groups of = 1:8 to a maximum (in our setting) of 25 children. Following our risk assessment, we feel it would be safer to cap the overall number of children in the setting each day. We will be looking at a maximum group across the setting of 16 and have two groups of no more than 8 during this period. This could mean that we will only be able to offer a place for the oldest children in the setting who will be going to mainstream school in September.
* These small groups of up to 8 children would then be separated into two groups in separate rooms. Routines and timetables would be established so they did not mix unless going forward the guidance changes on social distancing. Brief transitory contact such as passing in corridors is low risk.
* Each member of staff will be responsible for their group.
* Shared areas such as toilets and hand washing areas will be supervised and cleaned after each use.
* Staff will remain on the premises throughout the day and take their breaks with the children.
* Staff will wash their clothes when they go home each day at 600 or where this is not possible, place them in a sealed bag for 72 hours.
* Staff will maintain safe distancing measures when outside of the nursery.
* Parents will be asked to ensure that all members of their household maintain safe distancing measures or safe practice if they are clinical key workers at all times.
* Parents are advised to send their child into nursery in clean clothes each day and wash their children’s clothes at 600 or bag them for 72 hours when they return home.
* Frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices will be adhered to: washing hands for at least 20 seconds with running water and soap, dry them thoroughly and/or use hand sanitiser or alcohol rub, ensuring all parts of the hands are covered.
* Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it. bin it, kill it’ approach.
* PPE: Wearing a face covering in schools and childcare settings is not recommended other than would normally be worn for personal care routines or if a child becomes unwell. However, face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors, where there is a risk of close contact with the children.
* Robust cleaning routines: staff will clean frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, chairs, outdoor equipment and resources throughout the day and at the end of each day. We will reduce the amount of resources that are freely available to the children. We will assess individual items and resources to ensure items available can be washed in hot water, sterilised, sprayed with anti-bac spray or wipes or steam cleaned where possible. We will remove soft toys, dressing up clothes and soft furnishings. We will provide each child with a named colouring/writing pencil pack, pair of scissors and a pot of play dough that will stay in their tray.
* We will be operating a sole provider policy for the remainder of the term. If your child also attends another setting or childminder during this time and is therefore mixing within another group of children, they will not be able to attend the Mulberry Bush until Government advice changes on social distancing in order to minimise the risk of transmission.

**If a child or staff member becomes unwell at nursery, we will:**

* Contact parents
* Send the child / staff member home and tell them to follow the guidance of the:

COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance

* Whilst the child is waiting to be collected, they should be moved to where they are isolated either 2 mts apart from other people or to a room behind a closed door, supervised. (go into the garden if possible or open a window for ventilation).
* If they need the toilet it must be cleaned thoroughly after use before it is used by anyone else.
* Staff should wear PPE if they cannot maintain 2 mtrs distance or need to administer first aid or personal care.
* If the child or staff member becomes seriously ill call 999
* Staff member that has been supporting the child should remove PPE, clean the area and wash their hands thoroughly.
* Any staff member supporting a child that is unwell and displaying possible symptoms of coronavirus do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. If the child then tests positive then they should have a test.
* When a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members must self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and children attending with the child/staff member will have access to and are encouraged to have a test if they develop symptoms.

**Testing and Tracing:**

Access to testing is available for all essential workers and can be booked through an online digital portal. The Government is developing a new national test and trace programme. This will bring together an app, expanded web and phone-based contact tracing and swab testing for those with symptoms of coronavirus. By the time settings and schools open to a wider cohort of children all children and those in their households will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus.

* If a child or member of staff tests negative, fellow household members can end their self-isolation and if the child or staff member is no longer unwell, they can return to nursery.
* If a child or member of staff tests positive: the rest of the group and assigned staff within the setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. Others within the setting in a different group and their household members do not need to self-isolate for 14 days unless they or a member of their household/group develops symptoms. (This is the guidance we have been given, but I am not sure I agree with this advice, therefore all parents involved will be notified and following consultation with those parents we may decide to close the setting if we feel this is the best action to manage the risk of transmission of COVID -19).

**Response to a case of COVID-19 being confirmed:**

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

 **Further Actions:**

* Contingency plan to cover potentially higher staff sickness rate and absence.
* We will be operating a sole provider policy for the remainder of the term. You child will not be able to attend different settings as this will increase the risk of transmission.
* Wherever possible parents should travel to nursery alone with their child and not car share or use public transport. If you must use public transport, safe distancing measures must be adhered to at all times.
* Only one parent should come onto the site when dropping off and collecting your child.
* We will offer staggered drop of and collection points where you will be required to hand your child over to a member of staff at the gate and a member of staff will bring your child out to you at the end of the session. Parents will be required to stay in their car or at a safe social distance within the car park so that one parent at a time can drop at the gate and go as they are called forward. Parents and children are asked to maintain safe distancing measures from staff, the other parents and children during drop off and collection times.
* Parents are asked to communicate these routines and good hygiene practices by talking about it at home to reinforce the safety steps that will be in place in the setting in order to reassure your children before they come to nursery.
* Parents that wish to share information with staff will be asked to add a note in their home link book, telephone or email. (please remember we will be working on skeleton staff and will answer telephone messages and emails as soon as possible and where it is safe to do so)
* The days we will operate will support the grouping of children. As we have a small number of children attending, we will need to limit the days we are open to Monday – Wednesday – Friday. We will review this as the numbers of children attending increase.
* There cannot be any flexibility on the days your child attends and you will not be able to increase their days once we open more days as they must stay within their group to minimise the risk of transmission.
* There can be no flexibility in changing which group your child is in to minimise the risk of transmission.
* Lunch Boxes: We will anti-bac wipe all lunch boxes and drinks flasks that come into the setting before they are stored in the fridge.
* Parents are asked not to send any toys or comforters from home into nursery. Resources will be reduced to enable robust cleaning each day. Soft toys and furnishings, dressing up clothes will be removed.
* Whilst we will endeavour to work around familiar routines which will be comforting for the children, we will be placing higher than usual focus on their emotional development and wellbeing during this period. Whilst we will be meeting the EYFS learning and development requirements and still covering the Montessori curriculum we will not be updating Tapestry or learning journeys.
* Staff will arrange the environment so that we are sitting alongside children rather than face to face and encourage children to play alongside each other where possible.
* PPE will be worn by staff when carrying out any personal care and changing routines or when supporting a sick child.
* Regular (20 second rule) hand washing throughout the day for all staff and children.
* Hand sanitisers are fitted in the outdoor play areas, children and staff will be encouraged to use these when coming into the nursery and then regularly throughout the day alongside regular 20 second hand washing routines.
* Children will be encouraged to cough into their elbow and use the snuffle station and dispose of tissues safely, before using hand sanitiser or washing their hands.
* Use the outdoor area as much as possible. This will include lunch times, story times, free play and for more structured learning. We are in the process of having large sail shades erected in the main garden to maximise outdoor play.
* Maintain a robust daily cleaning regime. Extensive cleaning routines that will include fixtures and fittings, resources and outdoor equipment.
* Keep windows and doors open as much as possible to keep air flow throughout the building.
* Visitors, deliveries, maintenance and service engineers will not be permitted to enter the building whist the children are in attendance except in an emergency. If it is absolutely necessary for them to do so, the children will be moved to a different area. They will be asked to wash their hands, maintain safe distance from staff member and all areas, fixtures and equipment touched will be then be cleaned once they have left the building.

Completed on: 17/05/2020 By: Cheryl Knight



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