**Newcastle Nursery Schools’ Federation**



**Monkchester Road Nursery**

**School**

**Ashfield Nursery School and**

 **Al2gether @ Ashfield**

15.6.2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I write to you to set out the arrangements we have made to open Newburn Manor Nursery School to more children. We are hoping that we may be able to open to further children as soon as possible.

Before I set out these arrangements, I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for their understanding and cooperation since we had to close to the majority of children. I 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 have been working hard to take the necessary steps to be ready to welcome back more children.

As you may be aware, we have remained open for some of the time for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children and have been operating with smaller group sizes and additional hygiene and infection control measures. We will remain open for them until wider opening is confirmed.

**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 have been 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. We must stress to you that due to the age of our children **we are unable to ensure children will socially distance from each other.**

**Children who cannot attend include:**

* Children who live with anyone who is ‘clinically extremely vulnerable’ as we cannot fully guarantee social distancing
* Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable
* Children who are medically vulnerable – follow medical advice and speak to your doctor
* Children who are showing symptoms of the virus or live with someone showing symptoms
* Children who are unwell (due to children showing many different symptoms of virus)

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

* Keeping our children in small groups with as much consistent staffing as possible, and minimising contact with other groups around the setting. We are unable to guarantee that children will be in their usual class/group.
* 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 non-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. Please stick to the 2 metre distance when lining up to come into nursery, our footsteps measure 2 metres apart. Parents will not be allowed into the nursery building. The member of staff on the door may be wearing a face shield. There will be a one way system in and out of Nursery – please enter in the small rainbow gate and leave by the large gates nearer to the Primary school.
* Asking children not to bring toys or other items from home to the setting.
* If it is sunny we will ask children to wear a hat, children can wear their own hat from home which must be named or a Nursery hat which we will name for them and use each day. We understand that coats may not be able to be washed/changed daily. We will use spare coats from nursery and spray them at the end of each day with an anti bacterial fabric spray.
* Depending on numbers we will have to have a rota for children meaning they may only be able to return for a week. If numbers are lower we may be able to offer more days. Priority will be given to key worker/vulnerable children, then older nursery children, then risers in Nursery then play group. Once we know numbers of children wanting to return we will be in touch with which group/which dates your child can come in. There will be staggered drop off and pick up times for each group to help avoid too many people gathering all at once and allow us to wash hands of the group of children before the next group arrive.
* If initially you decide not to send your child in and then your circumstances change and you do want a place we will need to ask for a week’s notice as we will have to look at our capacity for this.
* We will not be going across to the Primary School for lunch. Once we have an idea of numbers we may be able to have school dinners brought over to Nursery, otherwise we will ask all children to bring in a packed lunch. If we do have hot dinners then the correct dinner money should be put in an envelope and given to the member of staff at the door.
* We ask that you bring your child in clean clothes each day, children are not required to wear uniform.
* Nursery hours will be staggered in the morning and if a family require full day (30 hours or paid then we can arrange for them to stay till 3pm).
* If the ‘R’ rate rises then we may need to close Nursery again – this advice will be given to us from the Government.
* If we do not have enough staff to work in Nursery due to sickness then we may have to close for some children.
* If you use public transport to get to Nursery please follow guidance from the DfE about this <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

Adults must wear a face mask/covering on public transport but children under 11 do not have to.

Our risk assessment is extremely detailed and you are welcome to request a copy of it, please ring Mrs Dodds or email admin@newburnmanor-nur.newcastle.sch.uk

We have followed strict guidance if a child or member of staff shows coronavirus symptoms in Nursery. If this situation occurs the child/member of staff will be moved to our dedicated isolation room until they can be picked up or go home. All other children in that group will also be sent home until the outcome of the test is known – we will let you know this.

We understand that the Nursery environment will feel very different to children and we are going to do a walkaround video of the nursery for children to see before returning. We have also purchased some new books to support our children’s wellbeing.

We have included questions we have received from parents at the end of the letter and our answers to those questions. We have also attached links to further reading you may want to look at.

I hope that this letter has given you the information you need to understand what arrangements we have made to enable children to return to us. We understand many of you are uncertain about sending your child back and we respect your wishes. We will continue to post learning opportunities on our website and Facebook page and will try to mirror some of the things we do in Nursery for children at home. We currently do not know what Nursery will be like in September – we await further guidance from the Government.

Finally please let us know if you would like/would not like a place back in Nursery before the end of the Summer term. If you can do this straight away that would be really helpful. Please ring Nursery on 0191 277 4180 or email admin@newburnmanor-nur.newcastle.sch.uk

Once we know how many children need a place we can set up our areas and contact you again about when your child can come in.

Yours faithfully

Kay Mills

Headteacher

**Questions Parents/Carers have asked and our response**

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| **Question** | **Response** |
| Impact on my child, what will Nursery look like and feel like? | Nursery will look different and feel different for the children, but our aim is to make it as ‘normal’ as we can. |
| What will provision be? | See in details above |
| I’m worried about the safety of everyone – children and staff. | The main concern we must stress is that we are **unable to maintain social distancing between children**. We will limit it as much as possible, by children staying in the same small group and in the same ‘bubble’ area. Staff will social distance from each other but once again it is difficult to do this with children, which does impact on the safety of both children and staff. |
| Worried my child won’t be ready for school in September | This is a concern for all families of all aged children. The only answer we can give is that Reception classes will be aware of this and I am sure they will bear this in mind when teaching children. |
| What will happen if my child is upset? | We would aim to settle the child as much as possible in the way we normally would, but we still have to be mindful of social distancing. |
| Will there be teaching sessions? | Staff will continue to play and support learning alongside children when they play.As much as is feasibly possible there will ‘teaching sessions’ e.g., snack time.We will aim to share the same or similar activities for online learning. |
| How many children will you have in? | We are aiming to keep a ratio of 1 adult to 4 children but are unable to have all children in at once. We cannot answer this question until we find out how many children want a place. |
| We would love our child to be able to return to see their friends before they move to big school but I am not going to send my child back yet. | We understand this, we are hoping to have some sort of ‘fun day’ likely in the holidays – this very much dependent on how the restrictions go particularly on social distancing. |
| Will children be able to play with toys? | Yes – but not all toys, we have been advised by public health to remove soft toys and any intricate toys that are difficult to clean. |
| What resources will be taken away for safety? | Soft toys, and not all resources will be available |
| Do you have any idea of numbers that will return? | Not yet |
| I’m worried about too much social distancing | Staff are being advised to social distance for their own safety, and we will restrict children at some points in the day ie, snack and lunch time – sitting on their spot, but during the normal ‘play’ time we are unable to ensure social distancing from each other, children will be with the same group of children for the time they are in, this may not include all of their friends. |
| Can staff be tested weekly? | At the moment this is not possible, staff can only be tested when they show symptoms of the virus. |
| Will children be in on a rota? | Yes |
| What if I need a place as a key worker, would my child be able to go in other sessions with his class? | As a key worker or vulnerable child, you are able to have a place for whenever you need it. We will aim to be as disruptive as possible and keep your child in their same group. |
| I’m worried about my child not getting hugs from the grown-ups | Staff are advised to social distance from children for their own safety. |
| My main worry is changing and accidents, would my child be expected to change themselves? | We would not expect a child to change themselves but will use the PPE that we normally use (gloves and apron) and staff can also wear masks/visors as they are unable to be 2 metres away from the child. |
| Can children play outside? | Yes – we will be encouraging outside play as much as possible, again each group of children and adults will play in their own ‘bubble’ area for a few days or a week, then resources need to be washed. We need to be aware of sun safety so will be asking parents to send in children’s own hats and sun cream |
| What happens if a child hurts themselves? | We will always look after a chid who has hurt themselves but advice is still that staff try to maintain a 2 metre distance. |

Early Years Guidance (all guidance can be found online by searching DfE Coronavirus)

[**https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures)