



Dear Parents/Carers,

RE: Updated Covid-19 Guidance from the Department for Education

By now, you are more than likely aware that the Government will proceed with the easing of Covid-19 restrictions **on Monday 19th July**.

As England moves into Step 4 of the Government's roadmap to easing restrictions, the Department for Education has published new guidance which will relax many of the restraints on how nurseries and other childcare/educational settings can operate.

The Department for Education's primary consideration now is to reduce the disruption to childcare and early education as much as possible. Their new guidance states:

"As Covid-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children's education. Our priority is for you to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education and childcare to all children."

With this in mind, I can confirm that our nurseries will now operate in line with the updated guidance provided by the Department for Education. This means that there are some changes that you should know about.

The key changes to how our nurseries will operate from **Monday 19th July** are as follows:

- Parents and staff are longer required to wear face masks/coverings; however, they may choose to wear them if they wish, which will be encouraged.
- It is no longer necessary to keep groups of children apart as much as possible.
- Parents wishing to enter the nursery will be accommodated.
- NHS Track & Trace will be solely responsible for identifying close contacts of positive cases. Therefore, nurseries will no longer be responsible for deciding whether children and staff should self-isolate. However, all nurseries will continue to work with NHS Track & Trace where appropriate.
- Our nurseries will use an enhanced Risk Assessment as part of their day-to-day running. Please speak to your Nursery Manager if you would like to view the Risk Assessment in full.

Although these changes will, hopefully, reduce the risk of disruption at our nurseries, we understand that some parents may still have concerns about the risk of Covid-19. Therefore, we want to reassure parents that all of our nurseries will continue to use enhanced handwashing procedures for children, staff and visitors. In addition, enhanced cleaning procedures will remain, with staff routinely cleaning nursery equipment, toys, and touchpoints. Nurseries will also use ventilation/open windows where appropriate and use outdoor spaces as much as possible.

Please note, if your child has symptoms of Covid-19 then they should not attend nursery and should get tested as soon as possible. If your child receives a negative result, then they can return to the nursery.

The new guidance from the Department for Education is due to be reviewed at the end of September 2021. As always, we will continue to inform parents and families regarding any changes or updates.

I have said this many times before, but I again want to thank all of our parents for your support and cooperation over the last 16 months. Since our nurseries were able to reopen again following the first lockdown in 2020, we have aimed to make life as normal as possible for the children in our care. Again, I am grateful for the role you have played in achieving this aim.

Should you have any queries regarding the latest changes, please get in touch with your Nursery Manager.

Kind regards,

Danielle Butler
Operations Director