



Dear Parent / Carer

Firstly, we at Acre Wood hope you are safe and well. We have remained open during the last 8 weeks to care for the children of key workers and following guidelines from the Government and Department for Education we are now being asked to prepare to 're-open' on the 1st June. These are current guidelines, and should the situation change we will advise.

As part of this process we have in conjunction with the Department for Education and Public Health England put together a new set of operating procedures which will be implemented from the 1st June. Whilst it has been widely reported that Covid-19 is not a 'young children's disease', hence we and Primary Schools have been asked to open, it is imperative that we safeguard our staff, children and parents.

These guidelines are intended to assist us as Early Years Management in implementing precautionary measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our setting. We will build on these considerations and guidelines on an ongoing basis to form our Site Operating Procedures (SOP). These guidelines are based on Public Health England and Department for Education guidance for educational settings and their key workers.

The fundamental principle of this guidance is to ensure physical distancing between identified groups and to implement good hygiene practices. The design of settings as relatively small communities for day care on non-domestic premises and further subdivided rooms, greatly assists our ability to create physical distance between groups and cluster children into specific cohorts or 'bubbles'.

Please read the following pages and familiarise yourself with the details. We know that childcare settings will play an important role in allowing parents to return to work, but we need all the parents to partner with us and the staff to ensure this is done in a sensible and considered approach. We are very much looking forward to welcoming your children back albeit under the 'new normal'.

May we take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support for the setting over the recent weeks and we can't miss the opportunity to thank all of our staff too, particularly for those who have worked tirelessly to provide childcare to our key workers.

Yours Sincerely

Amanda & The Acre Wood Team

Focus Areas of consideration

Children	Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only children who are symptom free or have completed the required isolation period should attend the setting. • Management may consider taking temperatures of children on arrival and risk assessing with regular health questionnaires for returning children. <i>Please Note: this is not a requirement.</i>
	Physical distancing/ grouping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be organised into small groups or rooms within early years settings. Wherever possible these small groups or 'bubbles' should not mix during the day. • Care routines including provision of meals, nappy changing, and toileting should be within the space allocated to each 'bubble'. • The use of communal internal spaces should be restricted as much as possible. • Outdoor spaces will be used by different 'bubbles' exclusively throughout the day. • Distancing of beds/cots will be facilitated. • Please see below for bubble groups. More detail on which bubble your child will attend will be forthcoming over the next few days.
	Wellbeing and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be supported in age appropriate ways to understand the steps they can take to keep themselves safe including regular hand washing and sneezing into a tissue. • Children will be supported to understand the changes and challenges they may be encountering as a result of Covid-19 and staff need to ensure they are aware of children's attachments and their need for emotional support at this time.

Workforce	Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will only attend the nursery if they are symptom free, have completed the required isolation period or achieved a negative test result. • Any staff displaying symptoms will be asked to self-isolate and access and appropriate government test under Key Worker guidelines. • Management will take temperature of staff on arrival and risk assessing with regular health questionnaires for returning staff. • Consideration will be given to limiting the number of staff in the nursery at any one time to only those required to care for the expected occupancy levels on any given day.
	Physical distancing/ grouping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will remain with the small group of children, the 'bubble' of children who they are allocated to and not come into contact with other groups. (See 'bubble' plan below) • Emergency revisions to the EYFS have been implemented which provides some flexibility on ratios and qualifications to make this feasible. • Social distancing must be maintained during breaks. This may be achieved through a range of strategies including the staggering of breaks and additional space allocated to team breaks. • Staff members will avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc. • Where possible, meetings and training sessions should be conducted through virtual conferencing.
	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff members must receive appropriate instruction and training in infection control to include increased sanitisation, and the standard operating procedure and risk assessments within which they will be operating. • Management will complete an on-line staff supervisory with all returning staff members to discuss and highlight the Covid-19 plan and answer any questions the staff member may have before returning to work. Each staff member will receive online certification of Covid-19 training.

Parents	Physical distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only parents who are symptom free and or have completed the required isolation periods will be able to drop off or collect their child. • We aim to limit drop off and pick up to 1 parent per family and use designated drop-off and collections points as advised. • There will be arrangements for separate drop off and pick up areas and for parents to avoid entering the nursery unnecessarily. • When parents are waiting to drop off or collect their child, physical distancing should be maintained in a safe area. • Consideration will be given to allow parents to enter the nursery for the purpose of settling in sessions if not doing so would cause a child distress. The setting will consider measures to minimise contact between the parent and other children and staff members.
	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will receive clear communication regarding the role they play in the safe operating procedure and all measures being taken to ensure the safety of their children and themselves.

Visitors	Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance to the setting will be restricted to children and staff as far as practically possible and visitors will not be permitted to the nursery unless essential (e.g. essential building maintenance). Where essential visits are required these will be made outside of the usual nursery operational hours where possible.
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Travel	Travel associated with setting operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wherever possible staff and parents will be asked to travel to the nursery alone, using their own transport. If public transport is necessary, current guidance on the use of public transport must be followed. Parents will be encouraged to ensure they do not leave travel accessories including buggies, car seats, scooters in the setting premises, but rather in external buggy areas if necessary. There will be no planned nursery outings/trips until further notice.
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Hygiene and Health & Safety	Hand Washing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children and staff must wash their hands upon arrival at the nursery. • Children and staff members will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently. • Additional facilities will be put into place, such as anti-bacterial dispensers and hand washing facilities.
	Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A continuous and enhanced cleaning schedule will be implemented that includes furniture, surfaces and children's toys and equipment. With additional specialist cleaning equipment • Communal area, touch points and hand washing facilities must be cleaned and sanitised regularly. • These will be checked by management on a regular basis. • Soft toys and furnishings will be removed.
	Waste disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All waste must be disposed of in a hygienic and safe manner. • Tissues must be immediately disposed of immediately via clinical waste.
	Laundry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All items within the setting requiring laundering must be washed in line with NHS laundry guidelines. • Items such as towels, flannels and bedding must not be shared by children. • Laundry policy is to be reviewed.
	Risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All activities will be risk assessed and due consideration given to any adaptations to usual practice. It is expected that would include, but not be limited, to the suspension of learning experiences involving materials which are not easily washable such as malleable materials and the suspension of the sharing of food and utensils. • No activities such as: playdough, group baby painting/messy play activities.
	PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government guidance is that PPE is not required for general use in early years settings to protect against COVID- 19 transmission. PPE should continue to be worn as normal for nappy changing and the administration of first aid. • Face masks will be provided for those staff who require to wear masks. (Nursery use only)

Premises and Supplies	Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety checks will be conducted prior to reopening all rooms that have been closed during our Key Worker opening. • Keep windows open where possible to ensure ventilation.
	Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are not be permitted to bring items from home into the setting unless absolutely essential for their wellbeing. Where this is the case items should be appropriately cleaned upon arrival. • All resources required for play and learning experiences of children will be regularly washed and/or sterilised. • Equipment used by staff such as stationary, tablets etc. will be allocated to individual staff members and cleaned regularly. • All soft toys, soft furnishings and items that are difficult to clean will be removed for the areas until further notice.
	Procurement & monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The setting will ensure an adequate supply of essential supplies and contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies. The setting will not be able to operate without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control. • A monitoring system for the usage of PPE will be implemented to ensure is available to all who require it as and when required to meet the operational needs of the setting. When stocks are low, other options may be considered, such as the use of washable tabards. These items will be washed at a high temperature and separate to any other nursery washing. • In the case the supply of food is interrupted, procedures will be implemented to ensure the appropriate food alternatives are sourced and normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed.

Responding to a suspected case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of a child developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst attending the setting, they will be collected as soon as possible and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance. • Whilst waiting for the child to be collected they will be isolated from others in a previously identified room or area. If possible, a window will be opened for ventilation. • The staff member responsible for the child during this time will be a staff member from their 'bubble'. Suitable PPE will be provided for this staff member. • The area will be thoroughly cleaned immediately if the area cannot be left unvisited, and if the area can be left unvisited then cleaned after 72 hours. • The person responsible for cleaning the area will wear appropriate PPE. • In the event of a staff member developing suspected coronavirus symptoms whilst working at the nursery, they will be required to return home immediately and isolate at home in line with the NHS guidance and undertake a test as provided for keyworkers. • Staff will be able to access tests in line with Key Worker guidelines.
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Example of group (Bubble) sizes:

	Age group	Maximum number of children	Maximum number of staff	Maximum number of groups
Bubbles	0-1 years Caterpillars	6	2	2
	1-2 years Ladybirds	6	2	3
	2-3 years Busy Bees	8	2	3
	3-5 years Butterflies	8	1	3

The Nursery Manager will share details of the drop-off and collections plan