



## **Reopening of Preschool on 7th September 2020**

24<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Little Gaddesden Preschool and Forest School. This letter contains all the information about the procedures we have put in place to ensure that we are able to operate safely throughout this Coronavirus pandemic. Our reopening in June was a huge success and all the procedures we put in place worked successfully. As time has gone on the Government have relaxed certain restrictions further, with one of them being that all children can return to full time education from September. With updated guidance in place we have amended our policies and procedures to meet all the necessary requirements and continue to keep all children, staff, and families as safe as we can.

I know that this is a very uncertain time for everyone and there are many questions about how we will do this, and should children be returning? I want to reassure you that we are doing absolutely everything to ensure that we can make it safe for your children and their families and staff to return to the preschool. We are taking advice from Government, Local Authority, representative organisations for our industry and your views as the parents who use our service. Advice is frequently being updated and therefore we have waited until now to ensure we have the most up to date guidance to follow. We are currently putting plans in place so that we are ready to open in the safest way possible. Below, I have explained how we will be operating and what it will look like for the children, you as parents and the staff.

Firstly, I would like to stress that although we have put changes in place within the environment, routine and how we operate, we are trying to ensure that there is familiarity for the children. The children's health and well-being are a priority and if we feel we cannot support and nurture this, then we will not open.

### **Maintenance Work**

The Village Hall Committee have decided to replace the toilet facilities at the front of the building. They had planned for this work to take place back in June/July, but unfortunately it has been postponed and is due to be taking place in September/October. This work will be taking place whilst we are using the hall. We will still be able to operate safely as we have alternative toilet facilities that can be used at the rear of the building and our drop off and pick up points will be different anyway (explained later in the letter).

The contractors will have no access to any parts of the hall that we will be using and therefore will be working in complete isolation from us.

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## **Autumn Term**

Preschool will be reopening on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September and will be operating the normal hours.

We are asking that you limit the number of different childcare & education provision that your child attends and keep their attendance patterns consistent.

## **Social Distancing**

As we know, due to the age of the children we care for social distancing (staying 2m apart) is not possible. It is also not good for the children's welfare and development as it is crucial to children of this age that they have social interaction with others around them. With this in mind we will not be implementing any 2m distance rules for the children. Staff will be encouraged where possible to keep a distance from each other to reduce the risk of adult to adult infection. We will encourage natural social distancing within the environment by spacing out activities and using visual aids that naturally encourage children to stand in particular places (e.g. footprints on the floor).

## **Groups**

We no longer must divide the children into smaller groups. However, we feel with the cohort we have with us in September that it will be beneficial to separate the children for the mornings into 2 different rooms according to their age and ability. This will mean that we will have a Lower Preschool (2-year olds) room and an Upper Preschool (3- & 4-year olds) room. Each group will have at least two members of staff with them. The staff members and children in this group will not change, apart from when a child turns 3 years old, they will move up to the next room. Each group will be isolated into different areas of the building and will not mix at any point in the morning session. Lower Preschool will be based in the committee room and Upper Preschool in the main hall. The garden will be shared, with access available to each group at specific times of the morning so that they are not out there together.

Creating these two separate groups will again reduce the spread of any infection. It is impossible for us to separate the groups for the whole day, due to staffing and the number of children we have attending. This will mean that the children will join for lunch and then remain together in the main hall for the remainder of the day. As I mentioned earlier the Government has stipulated that we no longer must separate children into smaller groups, so they can be together. The main reason we are having two separate rooms is to accommodate the different ages and abilities that we will have across our cohort and ensure we are providing the best learning environment for all children who attend.

Children will be allowed to bring the following with them into preschool each day:

- Labelled water bottle
- Labelled packed lunch (if staying for lunch)

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- Book bag
- Labelled sun hat and sun cream (sun cream should be applied before attending each day)
- Labelled welly boots (if needed)
- Labelled suitable outdoor clothing
- Spare clothes
- Nappies & wipes (if needed)

No other items should be brought in from home, including toys.

### **Environment**

The environment will stay very similar to what it has always been, except scaled down in size. The variety and amount of resources available for the children to choose from will be reduced and rotated to enable them to be cleaned. There will be very little fabric, cushions, or soft toys for the children to play with as these are harder to clean. We are adapting the environment, but still ensuring that it will be bright, colourful, fun, and engaging for the children.

### **Opening Times, Drop Offs & Pick Ups**

We have put procedures in place to accommodate the preschools operation as of the 7<sup>th</sup> September. These may change as time goes on if there are any changes to the Government advice. We will be doing an extended drop off and pick up period for all children, so that you can adhere to social distancing guidance and you are not all congregating together at the entrance at the same time. You can drop off and pick up between the times listed below. Please see below:

Opening times: 8am to 3pm

Breakfast Club Drop Off Time	8.00 – 8.15am
Morning Drop Off Time	9.00 – 9.30am
Pick Up Times (12pm session)	11.45 – 12.00pm
Pick Up Times (1pm session)	12.45 – 1.00pm
Pick Up Times (3pm session)	2.45 – 3.00pm

Drop off and pick up will take place via the side door in the garden. Only 1 parent is allowed to be present. We will have a one way system (clearly labelled) in place for you to enter the garden through the gate at the front of the building, drop off / collect your child at the door (a staff member will meet you) and then exit the garden through the gate at the rear of the building. This is to aid the social distancing guidelines and enable all parents to be 2m apart.

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## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

We have always used some form of PPE at the preschool. We will continue to use it in the context that we always have. When changing a nappy, cleaning up a toilet accident, bodily fluids, administering first aid or preparing food we wear disposable gloves and aprons. Staff will not be wearing face masks as this can be too upsetting and unsettling for children and it is particularly important that they can see our faces.

The only time the addition of a face mask will be worn by a member of staff will be if we are isolating a child who is showing signs and symptoms and is waiting to be collected (more details on this further on in the letter).

## **Personal Hygiene & Cleaning**

We will continue to adopt the 'Catch It, Kill It, Bin It' approach to personal hygiene. Children will be encouraged to wash their hands for 20 seconds, frequently throughout the session. We have many fun ways to encourage this using songs and visual aids. Surfaces, door handles, switches, etc. being used throughout the day will be cleaned regularly throughout the session. A deeper clean will take place daily after the session ends. This will be where the resources are cleaned, all surfaces and equipment will be cleaned and ready for the next day. The outdoor equipment will be cleaned in between the groups using them.

## **Forest School**

We have decided to postpone Forest School sessions at our site in the short term, so that we can settle the children back into preschool after the long break. The children emotional well-being is our priority and ensuring they are settled and feel safe and secure at preschool is our focus when we reopen. Once all the children have settled back into Preschool and it is safe for us to visit our Forest site then we will restart the more formal sessions. We are hoping that this will be possible in October.

The Government are advising that being outside is preferable. Outdoor learning and Forest School underpins a lot of what we do with the children at preschool to support and encourage their learning and development. We will be continuing to implement our outdoor learning at preschool and will continue to have the children outside as much as possible. This will consist of using the garden and the surrounding areas, whilst ensuring that the children do not come into contact with anyone outside of their group at preschool.

## **Illness**

Children with general sickness such as a stomach bug or diarrhoea should follow our normal 48 hours absence from preschool.

Cases where a child suffers COVID-19 style symptoms (see listed later in the letter) should immediately book a test through the NHS website or dialling 119 and self-isolate for 10 days from when the symptoms started.

If your child does not show any symptoms, but tests positive for COVID-19 then they should self-isolate for 10 days from when the test was taken. If during this time they then develop

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symptoms, then the 10-day isolation period should start again from the day they develop the symptoms.

**ANYONE WITH SYMPTOMS SHOULD NOT VISIT THE GP, PHARMACY,  
URGENT CARE CENTRE OR HOSPITAL.**

In the event of a person in the preschool having symptoms of COVID-19, staff and children who have been in close contact with them do not need to self-isolate or arrange for a test unless:

- They develop symptoms
- The symptomatic person tests positive
- Requested to do so by NHS Track and Trace.

Where a child is sick at preschool, staff will wear PPE (face mask, apron & gloves) and the child will be taken to a separate area, where they will be isolated from staff and other children. The member of staff will monitor their wellbeing and parents will need to pick the child up immediately once contacted.

### **Coronavirus Testing**

**YOU MUST INFORM US OF ANY COVID-19 TEST RESULTS**

You can access testing through the NHS website or by phoning NHS 119.

If it is a negative test result, your child feels well and are showing no symptoms then they can stop self-isolating and return to Preschool. Other members of the household they are in can also stop self-isolating.

If it is a positive test result, then your child will need to continue to self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms.

After the 10 days they can return to Preschool if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste. If they have a high temperature, then they need to continue to self-isolate until it has returned to normal. Other members of their household should continue to self-isolate for the full 14 days.

### **Signs & Symptoms of Coronavirus**

These are the main signs and symptoms of Coronavirus:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

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- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

### **Further Guidance & Information**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>.

If you have any questions about anything contained in this letter or relating to preschool, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am always available via email.

Thank you for taking the time to read through all this information. We look forward to seeing all of you at preschool in the future.

In the meantime, stay safe.

Kind Regards

Jenny Ivory

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