

Dear parents,

This month is a very different newsletter!

You will have seen that the government are proposing that children return to childcare settings on 1st June in small groups. We will be delighted to see our children again and for them to try and get back to some level of normality in these very strange times.

We have been given guidance that outlines how we can best enable the children to return safely and the following link is a guide for parents to read.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

This covers the kinds of things that are expected from us and the expectations from you, if your child or any member of your household becomes ill. It covers the fact that from June 1st any child and staff member who is ill can be tested as capacity will, presumably, be far greater by then.

We will be doing all that is reasonably expected from us to keep children and adults safe from COVID 19 in terms of staggered breaks, extra vigilance over washing hands, timetabled outdoor play in groups and smaller class sizes. We will sanitize toys after they are played with and clean the handles of toilets and doors more frequently.

What we do not feel that we can promise though is that your children will socially isolate. We would particularly emphasise that within the early years it will be impossible to socially isolate and where reasonably practical we will adapt our nursery environment.

Nursery is a place where we socialise; we co-operate, we play, we discuss ideas and we help each other. We look after children who are upset or hurt; we ask children to solve problems together. We want children to play and enjoy the experience of being in Nursery. Nurseries are places where we learn to be together not isolated; nurseries are families.

We are now going to give you the information, within questions and answers about what will happen when children come back to Nursery on June 1st. In this way, you will be able to make an informed decision about whether you want to send your child to Nursery, after June 1st, 2020.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Will Nursery be open for all children from the 1st June?

This will be a staggered approach when we open on the 1st June as we plan to have less children than normal in each space for infection control. This is so we can make sure that our systems and processes, routines are safe and that risk assessment is accurate and precise. Therefore, we have followed guidance and contacted key workers/essential workers, parents that are returning to work needing childcare and provision for 3 and 4 year olds as stated by the government. Following this criteria has allowed us to use a staggered approach to opening the Nursery with less children starting all at once.

Q: Is it safe for my child to be in Nursery?

Although, we cannot offer any guarantees - that is for the scientists. What we can do is assure you that the proper risk assessments will be in place and we will endeavor to apply all the control measures to limit infection spreading, as per government guidelines.

Q: Will my child be with their friends?

As far as possible. However, because children are in smaller groups, once they are within this group, they will be unable to meet with other friends, within other classrooms or groupings such as mixed outdoor play. This is to keep to infection control guidelines.

Q: Will the children be learning in Nursery, as normal?

Learning will still be planned using the Early Years Foundation Stage but the primary focus will be on friendships (social and emotional development) and readjusting back to the Nursery routine.

Q: Will my child have members of staff from their room with them?

We will make sure that there is at least one member of staff from your child's room (Heroes and Rolos will have pre-school staff from the unit rather than their individual class). This is to ensure children have consistent faces to help them settle back into their routines. The staff will all be on the same working rota 8:30-5pm so that they are there to support children throughout their whole session.

Q: Will the kitchen be open when my child returns to Nursery on the 1st June?

Nursery will be operating on reduced numbers so will be unable to offer catering facilities at this time as our kitchen staff are still on furlough. Food delivery slots are still impossible to secure online and there are limitations to the amount we are allowed to buy; even providing evidence that we are a business! We kindly ask that you bring a packed lunch for your child which is clearly labelled. We will still be able to provide breakfast, snacks and tea for your child.

Q: Will Nursery fees be reduced if my child is bringing a packed lunch?

Due to unforeseen circumstances and sustainability we will not be able to reduce fees. We will still provide breakfast, snack and tea for children attending Nursery. This will not be a permanent thing and we will evaluate this monthly.

Q: How will you keep my child safe if they return to Nursery on the 1st June?

- We will ensure that children and adults avoid contact with anyone who has symptoms of COVID19.
- We will keep a designated room empty in Nursery so that it can be used by a child or adult who may show any COVID19 symptoms until they are collected.
- Ensure frequent hand washing cleaning and good hygiene practices are in place. The children will have hand sanitiser (alcohol free) applied to their hands when they arrive at the main red gate. They will then go straight to their classrooms and wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- We will clean the setting more regularly and throughout the day such as sterilizing toys and washing toys.
- Staff will continue to wear gloves and aprons while serving food and changing children (these are colour coded for each task) .
- All of our staff returning to work have completed a course called: 'Illness and Infection Control' so they have up to date knowledge in relation to infection signs and prevention.
- The Nursery will be open from **8.30 am until 5 pm** (these times will be evaluated as we go). These times will ensure we have all of our staff in at the same time so they can help maintain control measures such as hand washing. In addition, having all our staff in at the same time will support with children's emotional development as children will have been away from Nursery for such a long period of time.

-We will still have designated drop off times: **8.30am 9am** and **9.30** and collection times **4pm 4.30** and **5pm** so that we can maintain social distancing with parents at the gate. There will be traffic cones placed in the Nursery car park (2 metres distance) which we will ask you to stand at while collecting and dropping off children. If your child attends half a day they will be able to be dropped off and collected during the following session times: morning **8.30-1:30pm** or afternoon **12-5pm**.

-Children are not required to play at a two metre social distance because this is impossible for younger children, although the smaller classes will ensure that there is better spacing than usual.

- If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in Nursery they will be sent home and advised to follow the [staying at home guidance](#). If a child is awaiting collection, they will be moved to an empty room where they can be isolated behind a closed door with appropriate adult supervision and a window opened for ventilation.

Q: What happens if your child has a sibling in Nursery will they be in the same class?

Yes, we will try and keep siblings together so that we can maintain high quality infection control (households will be isolating together if any member is showing COVID19 symptoms).

Q: Do I have to send my child to Nursery?

No. This decision is for you to make, at an extraordinary and difficult time.

Q: Can my child wear a face mask? Will staff in Nursery be wearing masks?

Children do not need to wear a face mask, this is because children do not know how to wear them properly, they adjust them with their fingers and then potentially spread the infection. Nursery staff will only wear masks in Nursery if a child has suspected COVID19 symptoms and they are moved into one of our empty rooms where they will isolate with adult supervision until they are collected.

Q: I am unwell and classed as clinically vulnerable should I send my child to Nursery?

If someone in your child's household is extremely clinically vulnerable, they should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Q: Do I have to decide now if I want my child to return to Nursery or inform you that I am keeping them at home?

We kindly ask you to confirm as soon as it is possible for you to make a decision so that we can plan for the staff we will need in. However, it is important to remember that all of these plans may not go ahead, if the R rate increases and the infection begins to climb again.

Q:I am a fee paying parent when do I have to pay for my child's first week back at Nursery on 1st June?

When the Nursery closed we asked that parents paid a holding deposit which would pay for your child's first week back in Nursery. Therefore this holding deposit will pay for the week commencing 1st June. Fees will then be paid as normal on Friday 5th June for the following week. If you haven't cancelled vouchers or payments you will be able to carry these forward. Sam is keeping track of vouchers and payments that have been sent and will notify you when you return to nursery.

Q: What happens if my child is not coming back on the 1st June will I lose my deposit as I want them to return at a later date?

No you will not lose your holding deposit this will pay for the first week that your child attends Nursery again.

Q: Will events such as parents evening, and pre-school graduation still happen at Nursery?

Unfortunately not. We want to keep all the children safe in Nursery and minimise the contact they have with people. We do not have the facilities or space to maintain social distancing during big events so they will not be able to go ahead. However, we will try and provide alternative experiences. For example, the children celebrating graduation with nursery friends.

Q: Will my child be taking part in off site activities such as forest school and library visits?

No.Children will not be taken off the Nursery site so that we can restrict social contact with members of the public.

We have tried to make a best guess at the questions you might want answering, however please send any further questions to either of our Nursery emails rose@littleswans.org.uk or sam@littleswans.org.uk . You can guarantee, if you are thinking them, others will be too.

Finally, we wanted to let you know how proud we have been of the children over the last couple of weeks. Whether they have been a key-worker child at Nursery or they have been home, we know they have been a credit to themselves and you. We have thoroughly enjoyed seeing the observations that you have uploaded onto the learning journey and we want to thank you for all the support you have given them and the Nursery during this time.

Kindest regards and keep safe,

Nursery management