

Rainbow Nursery: Coronavirus pandemic summary of risk management

Introduction and Background

This document provides an overview of our risk assessment and planning within the nursery as we look to reopen our doors to parents wishing to return from the 1st June. It is intended to inform, alongside prevailing general government guidance; a parents decision on when to return their child(ren) to nursery, and act as a focus for two-way communication with our staff on what we are doing and to capture their suggestions on any additional improvements we can make. We are aided in our consideration of these measures as we chose not to close our doors completely in March, but instead to remain open for the children of key worker parents, and this period of 8 weeks so far has enabled us to better understand how we can deliver childcare with smaller numbers of children, in a manner to reduce risk and improve safety for children and practitioners.

Throughout the period of closure when we could take only key worker children we have averaged 5-8 children daily in each of our three nursery age bands. We have not experienced any instances of COVID-19 in staff or children during this time. Early indications from our parent survey suggests our initial weeks of wider reopening will see this increase to average daily numbers of just 10-15 in Baby Nursery and Day Nursery, and 20-25 in Preschool, which, when spread across the additional rooms we have available will allow us to initially maintain small, segregated children groups for much of the time. We also have the added asset of extensive outdoor space which is widely recognised as a safer environment.

It should be noted that at this stage we have been advised to PLAN for wider reopening. The official “green light” for wider opening of nursery settings from 1st June is dependent on a further government review on the 28th May; specifically that the five key tests set by government justify the changes at this date, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the Roadmap are operating effectively.

Sources of Government Guidance

[Opening schools and educational settings to more pupils from 1 June: guidance for parents and carers](#)

[Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)

[Overview of scientific information on coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[Safe working in education, childcare and children’s social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#)

Supporting Medical Information We Have Considered

Medical research in mainstream media has become increasingly politicised, and thus increasingly unreliable for layman use. For every article there appears to be an equal and opposite article in circulation. The latest government guidance states that:

“there is high scientific confidence that children of all ages have less severe symptoms than adults if they contract coronavirus and there is moderately high scientific confidence that younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with coronavirus”

The Department of Education have also issued a summary of scientific information relevant to educational settings.

[Overview of scientific information on coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

There is also academic research proposing that children are much less likely to transmit the virus between themselves, or to adults; than the rates of transmission from adult to adult, or from adult to child. [Children are not COVID-19 super spreaders: time to go back to school.](#)

Rainbow action: This suggests we should ensure that we put at least equal weighting on measures to reduce transmission between parents and practitioners (and vice versa) as we do on risk reduction measures concerning the children.

An observational study, published in The Lancet on the 13th May, looked at 10 cases in Italy of a Kawasaki-like disease in young children that may be related to the presence of antibodies post COVID-19 infection. Symptoms include a high fever, rash, red eyes, swelling and general pain. This went on to be reported in mainstream media given its similarity to a small number of cases observed in London. Prof Alastair Sutcliffe, Professor of General Paediatrics, University College London (UCL), commenting said “The report reflects other anecdotes from worldwide...therefore yes, there is apparently a small risk but no grounds for panic.”.

Rainbow action: This suggests only that we ensure our practitioners are aware of symptoms to look for, especially in children who are thought to be post infection.

Summary Risk Assessment

The following provides our risk assessment of the generic risks associated with coronavirus, and from this identifies the various protective measures we are enacting through our Action Plan, to create a safer environment minimising those risks for the children and their parents/carers and our staff.

Hazards associated with coronavirus pandemic	Who is at risk	Category	Nature of Controls (see action plan for details)
Virus brought into setting	Everyone attending site, though adults to a greater severity, and individuals with underlying health conditions more so.	Symptomatic carrier - easier to identify so lower likelihood	Clear site do-not-attend policy for parents, children, staff, visitors. Temperature checks for staff and children. Encourage parents to regularly monitor themselves and their children for symptoms. Limit site access for non essential activities. Limit movement on site for essential deliveries
		Asymptomatic carrier - no signs so higher likelihood.	Hand washing, temperature checks, minimise the different parents involved in drop off/pick up, face coverings used when 2 meter distance cannot be maintained. Single parent drop off only, and higher risk parents encouraged not to attend site. Consider the practicalities of staggered drop off/pick up times. Staff encouraged to drive separately to the setting, not car share. No items from home brought to nursery.
Virus spread within setting		Airborne transmission	Use of outdoors, regular reminders on respiratory hygiene, small segregated groups of children where practical, physical distancing between adults, room ventilation (doors windows), use of face coverings where close proximity is unavoidable
		Surface transmission	Regular handwashing and /or use of hand sanitiser, regular cleaning of high touch surfaces (door handles, toilet seats etc) and toys. Difficult to clean toys removed from circulation. Regular reminders of personal hygiene (tissues, Catch It, Bin It, Kill It), minimised sharing of resources (pens, tablets). Regular laundry on high temperature as required
Virus exported from setting	Other members of child's and staff's households. Wider community	Symptomatic carrier - easier to identify so lower likelihood	Symptoms clearly known by staff. Isolation procedure defined. Appropriate PPE available. Parent contact numbers up to date.
		Asymptomatic carrier - no signs so higher likelihood.	Temperature checks, testing, hand washing before leaving and advice given to hand wash on arrival at home. Updates to staff/parents on any confirmed cases including timeline and location. Cancellation of child trips offsite until further notice. Junior Club suspension of regular service until September. No items from nursery sent home.

Infection protection and control measures not known, or followed, or able to be followed	Parents and staff	Communication to staff	Policies, Operating procedures, Reminder posters, manager vigilance
		Communication to parents	Clear summarised list of steps parents need to follow produced, issued and available on website. Wider details on current situation, any confirmed cases and broader links to government advice available on single web page.
		Recommendations change over time as more is learned about the virus	Regular monitoring of North Yorkshire Council early Years team updates, continued subscription to .GOV COVID-19 updates, review of any changes to specific advice for Early Years, ongoing monitoring of support provided by industry associations and insurer.
		Insufficient supply of cleaning products	Weekly checks of supplies and maintaining higher stocks than usual operations.
Staff welfare	All staff though practitioners to a greater extent	Mental wellbeing	Ongoing clear communication between management and staff. Communication of the various support available. Contact with staff at home maintained - questions and concerns encouraged. Staff at work encouraged to speak out if they are struggling with "new normal", solo working, small group interaction etc. Mental Health First Aider and staff confidential helpline available
		Physical wellbeing	Staff allowed to wear face protection if they wish to. Hand moisturisers supplied due to skin care issues arising from hand washing and cleaning
Child welfare	Children	Mental wellbeing	Staff awareness and age appropriate tools.
		Physical wellbeing	Age appropriate awareness of the importance of hand washing and respiratory hygiene. Staff aware of symptoms of rare complication likened to Kawasaki.

Parent Action Summary - Infection Control Measures 1st June 2020 until further notice

The following is a (believe it or not) simplified summary of the measures we request you follow to play your part in keeping you, your child, and our staff safe.

- Please keep up to date with and follow government guidance, specifically that relating to self, and household isolation. If you or your child has symptoms do not attend the setting. If you needed to administer Paracetamol suspension or Ibuprofen within the last 6 hours do not bring your child to nursery as this can mask a child's true temperature.
- In the event of your child's practitioner testing positive we will advise you immediately and in line with government guidance your child, and their group, will need to isolate for 14 days.
- Please notify us of any non-attendance as usual, in particular if it relates to COVID-19 symptoms, or a diagnosis confirmed by testing. The nursery phone number is 01937 557 115 and this is our [Rainbow Notification Form](#).
- All the latest information from us will be on our [Rainbow COVID-19 Webpage](#)
- If your contact details have recently changed please ensure we have them. Please remember that if your child develops a temperature while at Rainbow our current extended policy will require you coming to collect them straight away.
- Where age appropriate, when your children are at home please reinforce positive behaviours regarding hand washing and coughs/sneezing into tissues, or elbow.
- Please wash your and your child's hands thoroughly before leaving your home.
- Please do not bring anything from home (toys, comforters, books etc) with your child.
- We ask that only a single parent/carer drops off/collects a child and where possible the same parent/carer attends both drop off and pick up. We strongly advise that household members classed by government guidance as vulnerable do not attend site.
- Given the space we have on site, the reduced numbers, and the fact that small children and tight time slots do not work hand in hand we have decided to not stagger our start/end times. Please use common sense, and maintain social distancing when moving about the site, being vigilant in the car park as always. Follow lanes and one way markings where you find them.
- Door bells, and gates are disinfected twice daily, and a hand gel dispenser has been provided at the high use Day Nursery gate. After safety review of options, and considering age group and car park safety we are continuing to use the Day Nursery garden gate access.
- Baby Nursery and Day Nursery doors in use remain the same. For Preschool we are temporarily suspending use of the front entrance and cloakroom, and children will instead access the ground floor rooms only via the fire doors which open onto the rear play area. Across all age groups we are temporarily stopping parents from entering the buildings in line with government guidance.
- When handing over your child will require close physical proximity to a practitioner, for your and the practitioners safety, we require you to wear a face covering. We have asked our practitioners to also consider wearing face covering at this time, but also to have regard for the specific child's welfare as being handed over to a masked practitioner may be distressing to some children.
- We are temporarily suspending parent sign in/out on the registers. Practitioners will instead sign children in/out and you will be verbally asked to confirm if any medication has been used.
- We are temporarily simplifying our accident, existing injury, and medication documentation to reduce cross contamination risk and maintain social distancing. Details to follow.
- Please check you have access to your child's Tapestry account and check this regularly as we will be using this for messaging on top of it's usual purpose.
- We recommend hand washing on return home from the setting.

We sincerely appreciate your understanding and adherence to our policies and the additional measures we are putting in place. As ever, should you wish to discuss anything contained in here please contact Lisa Watson, Karl or Harriet Shields by email or phone.