

Dear parents/carers

Wednesday 18th March - Update

Further details <https://www.rainbownurseryschool.co.uk/covid-19>

Our parent notification form <https://forms.gle/CueTwBqW7XCHeQy5A>

Yesterday's announcement of partial closure from Monday 23rd March clearly has far reaching consequences for the nursery, our staff, our parents and sadly the children in terms of continuity of care. We were, and are providing safe effective childcare under stringent hygiene rules, but we recognise the broader need to protect the vulnerable in society and restrict the spread of this virus.

We are going to be extremely busy today planning how this will be managed so please resist the urge to ring at this moment in time, instead use the parent notification form (link above) and we will get in touch on a first come first served basis when we have answers.

For next week only given the complete lack of notice we, and hence parents, were given we are operating a single transition week for those parents who cannot by definition work from home, and have no alternative options. If you are in this situation get in touch using our parent notification form and we will call you back. This is for the period 23rd to 27th March only and is only for parents who have no alternative. You must have contacted us, and been given expressed approval to bring your child in, do not bring your child in otherwise on the off-chance as we will have to refuse. If we do not have the staff to offer this transition safely on a day by day basis through next week we will prioritise care to key worker's children.

Please think twice before enrolling grandparents over 70 years old, or anyone with an at risk underlying medical condition as defined by the government into your interim childcare arrangements. If you feel this is unavoidable to you please contact us explaining that as we may be able to provide childcare on a case by case basis if the needs justify it.

Thank you to those parents who have already provided their job details in relation to key workers who are keeping the country running in many varied capacities. Our "key worker" explanatory notes are below but are subject to change by the government. We will be in touch to confirm arrangements through today. If you have not got in touch yet please do using the parent notification form.

As the closure is mandated by a public authority fees remain payable for 4 weeks as normal, then revert to zero for any period of closure thereafter. We will through this time retain your place(s) at the nursery and should we still be trading when nurseries can reopen fully we will welcome you back then, subject to available staffing. This affects us all. If your personal or work situation is such that you are, or know you will be in financial difficulties, and unable to pay your bill by the due date please contact us now. These are challenging times for everyone and we want to help if and where we can. We are hoping that we will see some financial assistance from the government, and we hope that we will be able to claim some (albeit limited) support from our insurers, and we would want to be sure that we use those funds to help our customers and our staff get through this crisis.

Should the closure period extend beyond 4 weeks and absent any material government intervention we will be unable to retain anything but a skeleton staff. As such, even if we are still trading, when Boris cheerfully announces we can reopen it could take weeks or months to rebuild the staff team to be able to

safely operate at any reasonable capacity. We will prioritise our parent base and will be in touch along the way to keep you informed.

In more out of the box thinking, we are also exploring whether we may be able to offer a nanny service to parents. We have no idea how, or if this is possible, or if any of our staff would be interested, but if you are interested let us know using the parent response form.

Our current “key worker” definition:

If you, anyone in your household, or anyone who you rely upon in your day to day childcare is in any of the following categories:

- * Any NHS employees
- * Anyone in Health and Social care
- * Carers
- * Police, fire, and other emergency service
- * Armed forces personnel
- * Delivery, logistics and communications
- * Utilities
- * Teachers
- * Prison Service

Our guiding principle is that interrupting your ability to work could endanger the life, health or personal safety and wellbeing of anyone in the community. If you believe your need for childcare should be regarded as essential but doesn't necessarily fall into the above definition, please ring me to discuss. We will use our professional judgement so long as we can be absolutely confident that we can care for the children in a safe and effective manner.

Thank you for your continued support through these troubling times. Stay safe.

Kind regards,

Karl and Harriet Shields

Directors