

Dear parent/carer

Thank you to everyone who has completed our initial return to Rainbow survey. We would estimate we have received responses from over three quarters of parents (accounting for the key worker parents who did not need to respond) so thank you - it's really helpful for us in planning a controlled, safer return for you, the children and our staff. If you haven't completed the survey yet (existing key workers whose children are currently attending do not need to - we are assuming you will be in for that week as normal) the link is here:

<https://forms.gle/BVN1fbvznSX8VAny7>

On the basis of the responses we have received so far the wide reaching impact of this virus on people's lives is clear. Nearly half our respondents stated that they will return but they simply do not know when, or in what capacity this will be in. While this clearly isn't great for our long term business planning, it is extremely helpful in allowing us to manage down the risks of increasing the number of children in nursery from 1st June. Since the 23rd March, some 8 weeks ago, we have averaged 5-8 children daily in each of our three nursery age bands (about 12% occupancy). Thankfully, we have not experienced any instances of COVID-19 in attending 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 (about 25% occupancy), 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.

While we understand the situation for many of you with respect to your employers / work is still emerging, to manage our reopening carefully in both child groupings and staff allocation we do need a fair degree of certainty on our initial bookings. As such:

- If you have requested your child attends in the week commencing 1st June you will by now have received a confirmation email from us. If not, and you think you should have, check your spam, and then let us know.
- If you are wanting childcare in that week (w/c 1st June) you will need to let us know by Tuesday 19th May, 9am. After that point we will close bookings for the period 1st to 5th June.
- If you get new information from your employer and you need childcare in that week let us know asap but it will be subject to availability, regardless of the booking pattern you previously had.
- If you have not received confirmation from us that we are expecting you in that week do not just turn up at the door, regardless of what your booking pattern was in the past. Thank you.
- We will also close bookings for the week commencing 8th June in the same manner on the basis of information we hold as at Tuesday 26th May, 9am.
- Beyond those two initial weeks, your child's booking pattern will still be retained for when you are willing and able to resume them.

Separately we have been assessing the various risks of virus transmission within the setting and compiling an action plan to reduce these where possible. We hope to be able to share the first version of this with you mid next week and will welcome feedback. There will be changes to rooms, groups, procedures (especially around the "pinch point" risks in drop off and pick up times) and we will ask that you are both accepting and respectful of these given the circumstances we are in, and help keep you, your children and our staff safe by following them.

I would also ask that you start to prepare yourselves, and, (where age appropriate) your children for the return to nursery. After a long period of time at home, with parents, in a "new normal", the return to nursery (especially as it will be different to what they may remember) is likely to be emotionally difficult

for you and them. There will be tears. Yours and theirs. Limiting the risk at drop off will require a distanced, almost impersonal handover which is different from what we all would want, and you would remember from before, but times have changed. I would reassure you that our practitioners are fully aware of this impact on children and are well versed in methods to comfort and settle children - prolonged tearful waving at doors and windows does not speed up this process. It is acknowledged that physical distancing in very young children is difficult to maintain and within their children groups our practitioners will still be in physical contact with the children in their care. There will still be cuddles. An odd thing to write and to have to confirm, but some of you have rightly asked. This will be a constant juggling of risk versus the emotional wellbeing and social development of the children, however, emotional wellbeing will come first, this is what the practitioners are trained for.

Finally I'd like to clarify our current position on fees (our standard terms and conditions and the normal 4 weekly notice period continues to apply):

- On May invoices key worker children attending through May were charged as normal, and the booking patterns for children not attending were retained free of charge.
- Children attending in June will be charged for as normal from their start dates (so if your child returns to the nursery in the week commencing the 15th June, the period from 1st to the 14th will be fully rebated, then charged for from the 15th and thereafter)
- New starter children (welcome!) will only be charged from their agreed start dates as normal.
- As we are officially open from 1st June under normal circumstances booking patterns would be chargeable regardless of children's attendance. However, given the circumstances and the number of parents who have replied that they have no clarity on return at this time, or do not wish for their child to return to nursery at this time, we will for June continue to fully rebate your monthly invoice charge and retain your booking pattern.
- From the 1st July, for parents whose children are still not attending we will begin to charge a monthly retainer fee of 10% of your normal monthly invoice charge. Should your plans change after invoicing and your child restarts at nursery within July then the retainer fee will be refunded.

Should you have any questions on any of the above please do not hesitate to get in touch. Otherwise have a good weekend and we hope to get further information on our revised coronavirus standard operating procedures out to you mid next week.

Kind regards,

Karl Shields