

Dear parents/carers

Friday 20th March - Update

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

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

- It is now formally confirmed that from Monday 23rd March we will be under a partial closure order, and only able to offer childcare to the children where there is a key worker in the household, and children classed as vulnerable.
- The message from the government is clear, if you can keep your children at home do so, but we have to keep the country functioning, and we have to keep high risk members of society safe. Please think about the risks of 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.
- The government has now provided the formal list of what constitutes a key worker. Please check as the list is quite broad reaching and is designed to keep the country moving while inhibiting the spread of the virus. The site has been added to our quick links on our dedicated web page or the link is below. If anyone in your household is a key worker and you wish to continue to access childcare please get in touch with us as soon as possible
- Parents who have already received confirmation from us that you qualify, and your child may attend next week as normal need not seek additional confirmation - everyone on our interim list of key workers is covered under the government's list.
- Parents who have applied for special consideration through our transition week (23/3 to 27/3) we will also be in touch today.
- IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED EMAIL CONFIRMATION FROM US THAT YOU CAN BRING IN YOUR CHILD, DO NOT DO SO, AS WE WILL UNFORTUNATELY HAVE TO TURN YOU AWAY.
- If you are interested in our proposed Nanny Service please let us know asap. If you have already expressed interest we will be confirming arrangements to you today and hope to be able to have this in place for next week. Please bear with us.
- We will operate through the day, and wraparound care for school age children of key workers as normal for our existing customers, as requested by them, or as required by North Yorkshire Council. We have offered our services to NYCC in this regard.
- Those of you who we are now not going to see until this is all over, thank you for supporting us through these difficult times and for the appreciation you showed the the practitioners who care for your children. Your thanks make a big difference to them. Our thoughts are with you and your families.

Link to the government's key worker guidance notes:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

By the end of today we hope to know what our new "normal" service will be within the nursery, and what contribution the Nanny Service may make towards keeping our practitioners in their jobs. We are looking at every cost the business has and how to trim back. The suspension of business rates (albeit it took them three goes to include Early Years in the qualifying criteria) helps a little. We are exploring whether we can support extended hours and weekends recognising that the virus, and the people who are fighting it, does not stop at 6pm on a Friday. We also understand that the government will announce

additional financial support measures today (though Early Years has been an afterthought in every government action so far so I'm not hugely confident). All this adds to the length of time we can last, and our clear objective is to be still here in our current form when this is over and we are once again able to open our doors to welcome back all the children. Part of the journey towards that successful outcome is us helping you where we can and as I stated before, 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. This weekend I hope to be able to take a breath and forecast the financial implications of all that we know on Rainbow for the coming months and this will tell us what funds we have to support parents who are struggling, but if we don't know we can't help. Please engage with us.

Finally a word on what "normal" could look like, and what it certainly will be. Next week we will be stepping up our entry and exit procedures, and our internal social distancing measures to take advantage of the reduced numbers in a large setting. We have a lot of space and staff to deploy and so we will be using that to "distance" the children as best as children will be prepared to be distanced!! More details next week. On any particular day we are reacting to child and practitioner health updates and some days we may need to move staff around, move rooms around, swap and change menus, and sometimes we can't be as up to date on Tapestry as we'd like; please be patient with us. I assure you, our practitioners are giving their all in this setting and I'm hugely proud of them. However, what remains critical and essential to us is the safety and wellbeing of the children. Safeguarding and health and safety will never be compromised so be assured your children will continue to be safe, cared for and loved by our practitioners.

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

Kind regards,

Karl and Harriet Shields

Directors