



Date – 31st January 2021

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To be reviewed – 28th February 2021

Covid-19 Pandemic Policy and Procedures

Derby Forest School CIC takes the health of children, parents and staff with the utmost seriousness and will follow the guidelines issued by Public Health England and the Department of Education at all times. This policy is in addition to our other policies and procedures which continue to apply and are available to view at <https://www.derbyforestschool.com/information-pack>

We will only open our sessions when it is considered safe to do so. Childcare is considered an essential service, so we have initially reopened our Nature Nursery. We will also offer limited holiday club places to children either classed as vulnerable or whose parents are keyworkers. Other services will not run until government guidelines allow.

It is now widely recognised that being outdoors is the healthiest place to be during the pandemic as droplets carrying the Covid-19 virus are dispersed into the air and have less surfaces to land on. There is also research that acknowledges the positive impact of sunlight on the virus. We will take as many steps as possible to ensure that we make best use of our environment to prevent the virus spreading within our setting. These will include:

- Aiming to be outdoors as much of the time as possible; as it is now winter, we will need to use the roundhouse for part of our time and will ensure that this is regularly ventilated and cleaned
- Ensuring adequate handwashing facilities – hand wash stations will be accessible in both key areas and staff will also carry hand sanitiser
- Teaching children effective handwashing techniques and supervising these throughout the day
- Maintaining social distancing rules between staff and parents – this will support children’s learning in a natural way
- Staggering drop off / pick up times to avoid overcrowding in the car park and unnecessary contact between adults
- Encouraging older children to think about social distancing where possible, for example playing games that will support this in a natural way

We will ask parents to support us by:

- Remaining in the carpark at drop off / pick up and a staff member will collect / bring children to them
- Having packed lunches and water bottles packed separately to children’s spare clothes bags; this will make it easier for children to manage them independently and ensure staff are not handling children’s belongings more than necessary.

It is accepted by the Department of Education that social distancing is not appropriate or possible within Early Years settings and therefore it is important that parents / carers and staff understand that this is

not something that we will be applying. Very young children need the support of staff both physically and emotionally and it would be detrimental to their wellbeing to attempt to implement social distancing measures. For the same reasons staff will not be using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as face coverings unless a child becomes unwell in our care. The best way to minimise the risk of infection is to ensure that it does not enter the setting in the first place and that all attendees are healthy prior to attendance, therefore in addition to our existing sickness policy the following precautions will apply throughout the pandemic:

- No admittance to any person that is displaying symptoms of the virus; this includes children, staff, parents dropping off / picking up. Recognised symptoms are:
 - A new persistent cough
 - A temperature above 37.8
 - A loss or change to sense of taste & smell
- Children / staff not to attend if anyone in their household has symptoms
- Children not to attend if they have had temperature reducing medication prior to attendance such as paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Not giving medication within the setting apart from where it is needed to manage long term health conditions (E.g Asthma inhalers)

As we are such a small setting children will not be split into separate “bubbles”, initially we will have up to 10 children and 2-3 staff at any one time. Should anyone display symptoms we will take the following steps to minimise risk of infection:

- If a child becomes ill whilst in our care, they will immediately be isolated with a member of staff using PPE, our usual procedures will then apply regarding contacting parents
- If a child displays symptoms whilst outside the setting parents are asked to report this to the manager as soon as possible and to book a test by calling 119
- If the test is positive the government track and trace system will then be activated
- The setting will be closed and all parents / staff will be informed that there is a confirmed case of Covid-19 within the setting and that they must socially isolate for 10 days

We also reserve the right to close the setting if:

- Staff need to isolate and we do not have enough staff to maintain ratios and run safely
- If government guidance changes and we are informed we must close
- We believe that it is necessary to close the setting in order to protect children / staff or to prevent the spread of the virus.

More information about the symptoms of Covid-19 and what to do is available at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Fees and funding

- 4 weeks' notice will be required for changes to contracted hours as normal
- Early years funding has been claimed for the term based on children's agreed hours
- In the event of any closure no fees will be due and fees paid in advance will be credited to the next invoice. Parent can choose to make a voluntary payment of 20% if their circumstances allow but this is optional.
- If children do not attend for any reason whilst the setting is open, for example due to sickness, holidays or a suspected case of the virus within their household fees will continue to be due.