Covid – 19 guidance for parents

In response to the outbreak of corona virus we are implementing a number of temporary changes to our policies, procedures and services. This document aims to inform parents what changes we’ve made and the rationale behind these decisions. Any further updates to these procedures will be noted below and for convenience adjustments will be noted separately on our website.

Social distancing

All best endeavours will be made to encourage social distancing within the setting where practical to do so. During mealtimes, handwashing, use of toileting facilities and so on. However, during play children will not be prohibited from socializing and engaging with one another and whilst good hygiene will still be a necessity, distancing will not be strictly enforced during these times.

We firmly believe that the additional measures set out below will sufficiently protect children and their families, allowing us to strike a healthy balance between managing risks related to covid – 19 and preserving the positive experiences of children in the setting.

Should you have any specific concerns or enquiries please get in touch with the setting through the usual channels and we will be willing to make reasonable adjustments if necessary.

Setting access & admission

Our usual operating capacity has been limited to ensure that the setting does not become overcrowded. Doing so will allow us to closely monitor small groups of children as well as enabling us to trace contact between children more easily. We apologise in advance if this prevents you from being able to make a booking for a particular session, but trust that families understand that it is a precaution that we are taking in order to mitigate risks.

Furthermore, whilst queueing to enter the setting in the school car park, there will be marked distances for families to stand in. We ask kindly that you do not approach other families during this time and observe the social distancing rules that you will likely already be adhering to in your daily lives. We trust in good faith the families will co-operate with this system. A similar procedure should be followed when collecting children and as you leave the setting, we ask that you negotiate a route past other queueing parents respectfully and using your own best judgment when doing so.

Whilst dropping children off or collecting children from the setting, unfortunately parents will not be permitted to enter the setting and will have to remain in the school car park. Upon alerting staff via the door buzzer, a member of the team will escort your child either to or from the door as necessary. Should staff have a concern or, if you would like to speak privately to a member of the team, an area within the building has been designated to facilitate this. The designated area is away from the main activities of the setting and the room is at no point in shared use with children. Due to staffing constraints, we do ask that you only request use of this private meeting space when absolutely necessary.

In addition to the above measures, children will have their temperatures checked prior to entering the setting. Any child registering a temperature above 37.2 degrees will not be admitted into the setting before school or during the school holidays. During after school sessions the child will be segregated and supervised by a designated member of staff and parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child immediately or otherwise arrange alternative pick up. Please note that should a child be excluded from a breakfast club session the school will be informed that the particular child had registered a temperature outside of normal ranges and will make their own decision on admission to school with this information.

Symptomatic children or any child with a confirmed case will also be prohibited from entering the setting. Either in the instance of a confirmed case or should a child be excluded due to an abnormally high temperature reading taken before entering the setting, that child will not be allowed to attend a session until such time that they have had a covid –19 test with a ‘negative’ result.

We understand that some of these measures may seem uncharacteristically strict, however we trust that parents understand we have not made these decisions lightly and all of these procedures are to ensure, as best as we possibly can, that the children within the setting are protected. Members of staff will also be required to meet the same criteria before the start of each session and will continue to rigorously adhere to them throughout the epidemic.

In line with Bedgrove Infant School’s adjusted opening hours, we will be making an additional session available, **opening at 1pm each Friday.** In addition, throughout the lockdown, we will be open for the majority of bank holidays. Please get in touch with the setting using usual channels to make a booking. Our early Friday sessions will be bookable through Parentmail.

Children’s experiences

We aim as best as possible to provide children with the same rich experiences that they will have become used to at Grover. Some adjustments have been made with regards to toys, staffing and children’s routines throughout the session.

Children are required to wash their hands as soon as they enter the session and frequently throughout the session to minimise the transmission of the virus should our admissions policy fail to prevent any carriers of the virus from entering the setting. Staff are similarly required to wash their hands upon entry and throughout the session.

A thorough cleaning schedule has been devised to ensure that all surfaces, including mats, tables and large pieces of play equipment are routinely disinfected in addition to our current cleaning of toilets and other shared or communal spaces. Some play equipment, such as dressing up clothes, soft toys and a number of soft furnishings have been removed from use due to their porous natures and difficulty to ensure proper cleaning. Other play equipment, such as construction toys, dolls and so on, have been separated into two groups, one to be used, the other to be thoroughly cleaned. The two sets of equipment rotate, allowing us to effectively maintain the cleanliness of the toys on offer. We have made our best efforts to select equipment that will be varied and stimulating and offer similar opportunities for play and learning on any given day.

Children’s experiences interacting with practitioners will also be affected. Staff will still play, support and interact with the children; however, we will be observing social distancing where possible and will avoid direct physical contact unless absolutely necessary. Such instances might include tending to injuries or intimate personal care. In these instances, staff will be sure to maintain high standards of hygiene and make use of personal protective equipment appropriately.

Children in extreme emotional distress will still be comforted, and, in line with our usual policies, comforting physical contact will only be used where staff deem it absolutely necessary. Outside of such instances, children will be gently encouraged to observe some boundaries related to physical contact.

Finally, due to the smaller cohort of children within the setting, some members of staff that children have built relationships with, may not be present at the setting on a particular day. Our team has arranged the staffing to be as regular and consistent as possible. This may mean that your child may not get to see a member of staff that they’ve grown fond of and the whole team would like to express how much we miss the children and we look forward to seeing them soon!

We thank you all for your co-operation and understanding

Grover Out of School Club team