

Covid-19 Risk Assessment Dolphins Pre-School

This “top-down” overview risk assessment was drawn up in response to the Government’s 11 May (updated 12 May) Publication “implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings” and in anticipation of the Dolphins re-opening on 1st June 2020. It has since been reviewed in response to the downgrading (from level four to level three) of the National Covid-19 Alert.

[Re-statement from our Risk Documents – Likelihood x Severity]

In broad terms, there are two major risks to be addressed. The first risk is that the Covid 19 virus is (unwittingly) brought into the Dolphins Pre-School by one or more infected individuals (children, parents or other carers, staff members or volunteers). The second risk is that once the infected individual is in the setting, the Coronavirus is transmitted and consequently others in the setting also become infected.

Notwithstanding the “high scientific confidence” that Covid 19 has less severe effects on children, we have assigned the severity of contracting the disease as a 5 rating.

Our preventative measures to mitigate risk may be broadly divided into reducing the probability of:

- A. Infected individuals entering the premises**
- B. Direct (person-to-person) transmission of the virus within the premises**
- C. Indirect (via touching contaminated surfaces) transmission of the virus within the premises**

A Infected individuals entering the premises

Prior to re-opening, all parents will have access to the most recent Coronavirus infection guidance available on the gov.uk site. This should ensure that parents are fully aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and that they should self-isolate and that no child from a household with symptoms should be brought to the Dolphins. However, given the prevalence of the disease in the community, and weaknesses with the Government’s test-track and trace programme, it is possible that an asymptomatic infected individual will indeed enter the setting regardless of our protective measures.

B Direct person-to-person transmission

All other things being equal, the probability of direct infection will be reduced by having fewer individuals in the setting at any one time as will be the case in September. New drop-off and entry protocols (detailed below) will preclude parents from entering the setting thus limiting the number of adults in the setting to staff members.

Although the 2 metre social distance cannot realistically be applied to young children, we have taken into consideration how our available floor space could accommodate such spacing. From a total floor area of 117 square metres, around half of this is taken up by tables & chairs and free flow accessible toys & equipment units.

Apart from the main room, there are three other child accessible areas – the children’s toilet, the coat and personal belongings cloakroom area and the lunchbox corridor. To minimise person-to-person direct contact in these potential “cluster” areas, children will be accompanied by a member of staff on an individual or small group basis. There will be a multitude of visits to the children’s toilet for frequent hand-washing purposes.

The Dolphins setting is open plan and free flow with children free to move between all areas indoors and outdoors. The room will be set up as usual, but children will be encouraged to split into groups with assigned activities. For Circle Time, story time and all other large group activities, we will have defined social distancing where possible.

Use of the outdoors patio and garden will be maximised as will natural ventilation from doors and windows.

Toys & resources involved will, whenever possible, be cleaned (disinfected) before a different group uses them.

For mid-morning snack, which was previously taken as a free flow activity, the children will now go to the large group area (for a "holding" activity such as a read-out story or music/rhymes) with handwashing prior to eating. Staff will at that time clear toys and disinfect tables for snack. This routine will also be followed at lunchtime. Weather permitting, children will consume snack and lunch out-of-doors maintaining social distancing.

For assistance with toileting (such as bottom wiping), children will be actively encouraged to take care of their own personal hygiene. However, from experience, most children need assistance with toileting and other hygiene matters. We will continue to display the "Catch it; bin it; kill it" signage and bins will be emptied more frequently. Additional hand sanitisers will be strategically placed around the main room. Close contact during nappy changing is inevitable but PPE will continue to be worn by staff performing this activity.

In the usual course of their play, children will inevitably have falls or suffer other scrapes and mishaps which, as well as First Aid and accident book recording, will necessitate comforting and cuddling by a member of staff. The collecting parent/carer will be required to sign the accident record.

New drop off and entry protocols

The east entry (car park) door which was previously the main entrance and exit for parents will no longer be used for children and parents. A new entrance procedure using the patio east gate will be introduced. We will maintain our staggered drop off times (bolt-on and normal start times) will continue. To minimise adult-to-adult contact, only one parent should accompany the child or siblings. Rather than gathering at the east patio entrance gate, parents and children will assemble in the Nevill playing field, maintaining a 2 metre social distance between them. Parents will be discouraged from lingering and will be expected to depart the setting promptly while maintaining social distance. Also, parents will no longer be able to leave any buggies on the premises

Two members of staff will be positioned within the east patio to welcome and receive children. One of these staff members will monitor children for signs of Covid-19 and dispense hand sanitiser. The other staff member will undertake registration and guide (if necessary, hand on shoulder but not hand-in-hand) the child to the patio door. There, one of the other members of staff will welcome the child and assist them with name-tag collection for registration and coats and personal belongings peg.

New pick-up and collection protocol

Similar to the new entry protocol, parents will now collect their children from the east patio gate, maintaining social distancing. Children will be brought to the gate on a one-by-one basis.

C Indirect transmission of the virus

Prior to opening, the setting will have undergone a complete deep- clean and any unnecessary soft furnishings will have been removed and placed into storage.

Our rule on precluding toys and comforters being brought into the setting from home will be strictly adhered to; the usual relaxation of this rule during child settling-in sessions will be no longer apply.

Children's artwork, which was previously placed in each child's individual tray for taking home as the end of the day, will now remain at the setting for display or discarded. Whenever possible, photos will be posted on Tapestry.

Parents will be advised that lunchboxes, food containers and drink/water bottles should be scrupulously cleaned each day before being brought into the setting.

D1 Someone becoming unwell in the setting

Should any child become unwell during their attendance at Dolphins and exhibits symptoms of Covid-19 then the Covid-19 Sickness Procedure will be followed.

D2 Implications of someone becoming unwell (infected by Covid 19) in the setting

In the absence of a test-track-and-trace programme being operational, the inescapable conclusion under this scenario is that children, their parents/carers and all members of their household will be required to self-isolate in accordance with current government guidelines. This could impact staff and, consequently, our ability to operate.

D3 Implication of opening with severely reduced numbers of children

The full complement of staff would still be required to operate the pre-school. The consequence of any reduction in pupil numbers would be greatly reduced income which could result in non-viability.