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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all well and have managed to enjoy some quality family time during this incredibly challenging and difficult period. I know our nursery staff have very much missed all your children and are very keen to begin the process of preparing our nurseries to accommodate a return for your children.

Following the Government announcements and subsequent guidance over this week, the EKC Group has been working hard on putting plans in place for the potential of offering childcare and early education to your children again from 1st June. If all the Government conditions are met for this date then we will begin a process of inviting children back into nursery.

As I know you will understand, this is obviously a complex process but we will be doing everything we can to ensure that you can start to get back to work as soon as possible, whilst we make sure we have everything in place to keep your children and our staff safe. Therefore, over the next week your nursery Manager will be sending you a form to complete which will provide you with options around sessions and timings that may suit you and your circumstances best. This will enable us to plan for staffing levels and make sure we do not have too many children in the setting at any one time.

Please be patient with us as we try to meet everyone's requirements and be understanding that between balancing the health and safety needs, staffing available and parental needs, we may not be able to accommodate everyone's request in the first few weeks but we will ensure there is a fair and equitable response to all our families. I have attached for you a list of FAQs that may be helpful in answering



questions you may have about how the reopening will work for your child and the measures we are taking to meet Government guidelines and keep your children safe. Please read these carefully. I hope this is helpful but if there is anything else you need advice or support with please do not hesitate to contact Michael or Sarah (your nursery Managers) who will be more than happy to help.

Please can you also make sure that if your child is at all unwell or anyone in the household or people you have come into contact with are showing any form of illness, temperature, cough or any other symptoms that you ensure you keep your child at home for 14 days. This is critical in keeping the spread to a minimum and protecting other children and staff.

Keep yourselves safe and well and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Tammy Mitchell
Chief Education Officer

Nursery Reopening Plans FAQs for Parents and Carers

Can I send my child back to Nursery?

If the Government conditions are in place, we will be starting a gradual reopening of our Nurseries from 1st June 2020. We will be asking all families to indicate their preferred sessions over the next week and will confirm by Friday 22nd May which sessions have been allocated to your child.

Is it safe for my child to return to nursery?

As parents, you will be best placed to make decisions regarding whether you would like your child to return to nursery. There is no expectation that you will send your child into nursery over the next few months. At EKC Group we will be doing everything we can to minimise risks to children, families and staff with a range of strategies around cleaning, planned activities and health and safety measures. However, it will not be possible to effectively social distance young children and there are obviously more risks in a social setting than in isolation at home. Please continue to refer to Government guidance regarding your own circumstances and risk factors before making the decision about whether to send your child back to nursery.

What will happen about mealtimes?

In order to keep the amount of risk to a minimum we will not be providing any food to nursery children in the nursery including snacks. We will ask all parents to provide all meals and snacks needed within the session and these will be given to your child at the appropriate time. Drinks will be provided so please do not send your child with a drinking bottle unless it is for their milk. There will not be any facilities on site for preparing meals and we will not be having food deliveries. We will be able to warm up bottles of milk where needed.

What measures will you be taking to minimise risk?

All the nurseries have completed comprehensive risk assessments to support them in reducing risk where possible. In addition to all the normal health and safety policies we have in place, we will be ensuring clear processes for drop off and pick up of children and these will be explained to you before we reopen. In addition, we will be keeping the numbers of children to a lower level to enable them to be more spread out in their play, maintaining small groups who the children will stay with all day so they have reduced contact with other children and cleaning and sanitising far more regularly throughout the day. As per the Government guidelines we will not be wearing protective equipment in the nurseries but even higher levels of handwashing and surface cleaning will be in place during all sessions. As always there will be safeguarding leads and first aiders in the nurseries at all time.

What will my child be doing in nursery?

As is the best practice, sessions in the nurseries will follow routines and help the children settle back into an education setting and get used to being away from home again. We will be keeping many of the same activities as the children are used to but in smaller groups with less free flow opportunities, so the children remain in a smaller area over the day. This will prevent too much cross contact with the resources. Wherever possible we will be taking children outside into the nursery gardens so please make sure your child has warm clothes and wet weather gear as well as sun cream and a sun hat for every eventuality!

Will my child be with their key worker?

When planning for children to come to nursery we will be trying to match staff who know the children well to the groups and wherever possible we will be trying to keep the staff constant for the children across the week. However, under the current circumstances we have reduced staff numbers and need to ensure we are also keeping our staff and their families safe so this may not always be possible.

Will I be charged for my child's sessions?

If your child has funded sessions, then the sessions your child attends will continue to be funded. If you pay for additional hours or your childcare then once you have agreed to the sessions allocated in June, you will be charged for these sessions even if your child does not attend. This is because we will have to staff the provision and you will be using a place another family may have requested.

Will my child be able to come to Nursery if they have medication in the day?

Where a child has any form of medical condition the guidance is very clear that they are safer at home. Due to the current situation, Nursery staff will not be able to administer any medication to children at all during the day. If your child is taken ill during the session, we will take them to a safe place in the Nursery with an adult to take care of them and you will be asked to collect them straight away.