

## **Wee Mack's Covid-19 Risk Reduction Policy**

At Wee Mack's we are committed to reducing the risk of Covid-19 outbreaks by following the guidelines recommended by the Scottish Government.

Please see below the additional operational measures we have put in place.

### **Cleaning**

- Table-tops, chairs, doors, light switches, banisters, equipment sinks, and toilets will be cleaned daily.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and hard surfaces, including equipment staff used by staff (e.g. telephones, keyboards, door handles, and tables).
- Daily cleaning of toys and equipment that children have access to before each session.
- Soft play equipment cleaned after each use.
- Resources such as sand, water and playdough (if in use) will be accessed only by one cohort (group of 8) children.
- Children should be discouraged from bringing toys from home to Wee Mack's, except in the case of a personal comforter which should not be shared or handled by any other child.
- Blankets should be used for individual children and washed after use.
- Where children sleep or nap in the setting, children will have individual bedding, stored in named bags and these will be laundered weekly.
- Surfaces in dining or snack areas will be wiped down and disinfected in between use by each group of children.
- All crockery and equipment used in the provision of meals and snacks for children will be cleaned with general-purpose detergent and dried thoroughly before being stored for re-use.
- Staff will use their own cup/cutlery and ensure these are cleaned straight after use.
- Staff areas will be cleaned daily

### **Ventilation**

- The nursery will be frequently ventilated by opening of doors and windows, where is safe to do so.

### **Enhanced hand hygiene & hand washing guidelines**

- Hand-washing facilities will be available for all children, including soap and warm water, hand dryers for children over the age of 2 and disposable paper.
- Antibacterial hand gel may be used when soap and water is not readily available, such as when outside, but never for children under 12 months of age.
- a supply of antibacterial hand gel will be available to parents and staff at the entrance to the setting.
- Staff will ensure enhanced hand hygiene measures are in place including washing their own hands and the hands of all children
- Children will be gently discouraged from touching their face
- Children will be taught to use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and shown how to dispose of tissues appropriately.

## Handwashing Guidelines

### When should hands be washed?

- Before and after eating or handling food or drink
- After using the toilet, potty or changing a nappy
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching animals or animal waste
- After contact with contaminated surfaces (e.g. food-contaminated surfaces, rubbish bins, cleaning cloths)
- After touching the face
- When coming in from outside (including on arrival at nursery)
- When moving between different areas of the nursery

### How to wash hands:

- Use clean, warm running water
- Use liquid soap (we are not required to use soaps advertised as antibacterial or antiseptic)
- Wash hands for a period of 20 seconds
- Never share water in a communal bowl
- Dry hands thoroughly using paper towels/hand dryers
- When going on outdoor trips, continue to promote good hand hygiene
- Cover cuts and grazes with waterproof plasters

### Tooth brushing

- ***We are awaiting guidelines from Childsmile regarding the practice of brushing teeth***
- Tooth brushing will continue if it is considered appropriate to do so.
- Only one child will be cleaning their teeth in the sink at any one time, and sinks will be cleaned between use
- Toothbrushes will be stored separately and in closed containers.

### When a child or staff member becomes ill:

- Staff and children who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must follow the Test and Protect guidance, which includes staying at home, self-isolating, and contacting the NHS for advice on testing.
- Those who do test positive for COVID-19 will be asked to continue to self-isolate for 7 days and their close contacts, identified through contact tracing, will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days.

### ***We are awaiting specific guidance of how children under the age of 5 can be tested for COVID-19 from the Scottish government***

- Posters on what to do if a child or staff member feels unwell will be displayed at reception and staff areas, including guidance on the appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) adhering to HPS non-healthcare facilities guidance. If there is a suspected outbreak in a setting, for example if there are multiple cases among different groups, then the local health protection team may recommend the closure of the setting to prevent further transmission.

- If a child becomes unwell while in the setting, a ventilated space will be made available where they should wait until they can be collected by their parent.
- Contact between any other children in the setting will be restricted.
- We will contact the local health protection team if we have 2 or more cases of Covid-19 for advice.
- We will maintain an accurate register of absences of children and staff and whether these are due to suspected or confirmed COVID-19. This will be used as a guide to future staffing requirements where Covid-19 is present.

### **Caring for children in small groups**

Social distancing is not recommended for young children for the following reasons laid out by the Scottish Government:

- It is neither practical nor beneficial in terms of child development.
- Physical distancing between young children and their keyworker would not be appropriate.
- It is important for children to feel secure and receive warmth and physical contact that is appropriate to their needs, in particular when they are receiving personal care, need comforting or reassurance. Keyworkers will need to be close to the children, particularly young children and should feel confident to do so. This includes staff feeling confident to continue to cuddle children in line with their needs.

Therefore Wee Mack's will care for children in small groups (cohorts).

- Cohorts are groups of up to 8 children who will work together consistently throughout sessions
- Cohorts will work with the same staff members, as much as possible, throughout the session during both indoor and outdoor learning and play.
- There are times when other staff members may need to provide cover for children from another cohort. However, this will be for limited periods and physical distancing will be maintained between adults.
- Staff will ensure strict hygiene practices are carried out if they are caring for different groups.

### **Minimising contact between cohorts of children**

- The aim of small cohort working is to limit the number of close contacts for each child and member of staff. This will reduce the risk of spread of infection in our nursery to help keep all children safe. Therefore cohorts of children will not be in close contact with other cohorts, and cohorts will not mix freely. There is evidence that risk of transmission is reduced with distance. Brief or transitory interactions such as passing in corridors or crossing play spaces to access other space are considered low risk. Maintaining physical distances between cohorts will reduce risks further. Cohorts of children will be supported to stay 2 metres apart wherever practicable and appropriate.
- To provide capacity to accommodate this guidance, a flexible approach regarding the use of space will be undertaken. This can include the use of loose furniture to create spaces within playrooms, floor markings for circulation, and so on.
- To maximise capacity and decrease the number of items requiring cleaning, while ensuring the children still have adequate resources and furnishings to support quality experiences, furniture and unnecessary items will be removed from the play zones.
- Adequate space is available for cohorts to transition between spaces (i.e. from indoors to outdoors or to the toilet) while minimising contact.
- There will be minimal sharing of equipment or resources between cohorts and cleaning between uses in accordance with requirements.

- Physical distancing between adults remains a fundamental protective measure applicable at all times.
- We will maximise use of outdoor spaces wherever possible

### **Physical distancing/drop off and pick up**

- Physical distancing between adults in the setting also applies to parents at pick up and drop off
- Adults should stay 2 metres apart in line with physical distancing principles.
- All staff rooms, bases and offices will be designed to ensure the physical distancing rule of 2 metres is able to be maintained.
- Parents are asked to suggest a drop-off time that suits their situation, taking into account time of work, older siblings attending school and so on. We will then allocate you a window of time to drop off so that less parents and children will be arriving at once.
- You will handover your child to a member of staff at the entrance and not enter the building unless absolutely necessary (taking into account the needs and age of your child).
- Your route into the nursery and drop off point will be discussed at your child's settling in visits. Your child will also be taken through the routine of what they should do on arrival at nursery.

### **Settling-in**

- Your child will be supported when attending nursery for the first time, and for subsequent sessions until they are comfortable with the routine.
- A virtual tour will be offered to you and your child in the first instance.
- Where possible your child's first visit will be undertaken in an outdoor area between you, your child and an assigned staff member, separately from other children.
- We will take measures to familiarise children with the layout of the nursery and movement patterns as part of their settling in process.
- Enhanced transitions may be put in place for children with Additional Special Needs.
- Appropriate visual aids, clear signage and colour coding on walls and floors will help children to understand movement around the nursery

### **Blended placements**

- Blended placements (defined as arrangements where children are attending two or more settings), will only be possible for children whose parents are both keyworkers at managers discretion and only after a thorough risk assessment has taken place.

### **Provision of meals and snacks**

- Staff will follow usual good hygiene practices when preparing or serving food or assisting children with packed lunches. There is no need for additional PPE at meal and snack times.
- Children will have staggered mealtimes and will be arranged in their cohorts during mealtimes
- This may require children to stay in their play zones to eat
- The outdoor environment may be used for dining on occasion

## **Physical capacity**

- The physical capacity of Wee Mack's nursery may be affected by public health measures, including the need to work in small cohorts, minimise contact between groups as far as is possible, ensure physical distancing for adults, and ensure enhanced hygiene practices. Therefore our advertised capacity may not reflect our actual capacity, so places will always be granted upon individual assessment.

## **Allocation of places**

Where capacity is limited, priority access will be given as follows

- children who may be provided with access to daycare services under section 2 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- children eligible for the funded entitlement of 600 hours of ELC i.e. eligible 2 year olds and all 3 and 4 year olds
- key worker families requiring critical childcare

Any remaining capacity will be used to meet the childcare needs of other working families. This will include provision for children from birth to 3.

## **Staff**

At induction all staff will be given the opportunity to read and discuss the following:

- Health Protection Scotland guidance,
- The Strategic Framework for Reopening Schools and ELC, and
- The framework document COVID19- a framework for decision making

All staff will be trained to ensure that they are clear and confident in implementing the required public health measures and processes.

Our staff will also have access to:

- resources for the workforce to aid them in supporting children and families who have been affected by bereavement
- training in supporting children who have experienced lockdown as a stressful and even traumatic period

We will observe these practices as closely as we possibly can, whilst still providing quality childcare which best supports the welfare of each child, in line with GIRFEC principles.

**This Policy is in addition to our Cleaning, Infection Control and Healthy Eating policies.**