



Akhter Early Learning Centre
11 Perry Road
Harlow Essex
CM18 7NS

Tel: 01279 927020
Email: info@AkhterELC.co.uk
www.akhterelc.co.uk

28th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I write to you to set out the arrangements we have made to open the Akhter Early Learning Centre Nursery and Preschool to all children from 1st June.

Thank you

Before I set out these arrangements, I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for their understanding and cooperation since we had to close to the majority of children from 23rd March. I know that this period has been challenging for many families, in particular when you have had to juggle work commitments with managing childcare, if you have children with special educational needs or disability, or if you are a single parent.

I am pleased to let you know that, further to the government's announcement today that early years childcare providers will open from 1st June, we are working hard to take the necessary steps to be ready to welcome back all children.

Which children can attend from 1st June?

As you may be aware, we have remained open for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children since 23rd March and have been operating with smaller group sizes and additional hygiene and infection control measures.

The government is now encouraging all children to attend their childcare settings and it is no longer necessary for parents of children to keep them at home if they can. If you have not done so already, please do contact us as a matter of urgency if you would like your child to resume their place. Please note the number of childcare places we can offer may be capped if demand for places is higher than our setting's capacity when measures to allow physical distancing between groups are in place.

For the vast majority of children and young people, coronavirus is a mild illness. Some categories of children with specific serious health conditions should not attend their early years setting. If you are unsure whether your child should attend the setting due to a health condition that they or someone they live with has, please contact us so we can discuss the details with you.

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Protective measures we are taking in light of coronavirus (COVID-19)

First and foremost, it goes without saying that the safety of your child and of our staff is our top priority. We are working hard, following the latest government guidance, to develop and implement a number of new ways of operating. This will allow us to open as safely as possible, focusing on measures that will help limit the risk of coronavirus transmitting within our setting.

Some of the steps we are taking in readiness for reopening to all children include:

- Training all staff to recognise the main symptoms of coronavirus and what measures to follow if symptoms are present.
- Asking that anyone who is displaying coronavirus symptoms, or who lives with someone who does, not to attend the setting. That includes children and staff who work here.
- Displaying notices throughout the setting reminding staff, parents and carers and other visitors to wash hands and respect social distancing rules.
- Keeping our children in small groups with as much consistent staffing as possible, and minimising contact with other groups around the setting.
- Cleaning our hands more often than usual. We have developed routines to ensure children understand when and how to wash their hands, making sure they wash them thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensuring our children understand good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and ensuring a good supply of tissues and bins throughout the setting.
- Implementing an enhanced cleaning schedule, ensuring surfaces touched by children and staff are cleaned regularly and throughout the day, including table tops, door handles and play equipment. Removing soft and difficult to clean toys from rooms. Cleaning shared play equipment each time before a new group uses the equipment.
- Asking parents and carers to drop off and collect their children directly to/from their child's room via the room's fire exit. This will help parents and carers respect social distancing rules. Note: babies will still access their room via the main entrance as normal. Parents and carers will be asked to limit drop off and collection to one parent or carer per household.
- Asking parents and carers who use more than one childcare setting to minimise as far as possible the number of childcare settings their child attends.



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- Asking parents and carers not to allow their children to bring toys or other items from home to the setting, unless this is essential to their child's health and wellbeing.
- Limiting external visitors to the setting and ensuring they only come into the building when strictly necessary, for example if providing an essential service or support for a child's health and wellbeing.

What can parents and carers do to help?

There are a number of things parents and carers can do to help us make these arrangements effective, in addition to the points listed above concerning arrival and departure and not bringing toys to the setting.

1. If your child, or someone in your household has coronavirus symptoms, your child must not come to the setting. You should follow government advice for households with suspected coronavirus infection. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:
 - A high temperature
 - A new, continuous cough
 - A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/
www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance

2. If your child is displaying symptoms of the coronavirus, we will ask you to immediately arrange the collection of your child. Children displaying symptoms of coronavirus will be removed from their group and isolated with a protected member of staff away from all other children and staff until they can be collected. It is important that parents and carers make arrangements to collect their child as quickly as possible.



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Testing

All children who are attending a childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario. The aim is to enable children to get back to childcare, and their parents or carers not to need to self-isolate any longer than is necessary, if the test proves to be negative. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect other children and staff in their setting.

We ask all parents and carers to ensure they organise a test for their child, in the event that they develop coronavirus symptoms, and notify us immediately of a positive test. Further guidance is available at www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested

Conclusion

I hope that this letter has given you the information you need to understand what arrangements we have made to enable children to return to us from 1st June. We are looking forward to welcoming your child[ren] back and I hope that you are assured that we have taken all possible steps to ensure safety for all in our setting. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let us know.

Yours faithfully

Karen Thomas
Manager
Akhter Early Learning Centre Nursery and Preschool



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