

6th July 2020

Dear Parents and carers,

My goodness! It has been a very different June to the preceding April and May! We now have almost all our nursery families back with us and although we are still running at 2/3 capacity it has been lovely to feel as though Blue Door is ‘back to (nearly) normal’. Thank you so much for your understanding whilst we work through our new systems and for your patience at drop offs and pick ups. We have received some lovely comments from parents which have boosted morale considerably. This newsletter is to give you some updates on plans and changes going forward.

Changes to ‘Bubble’ system following [Government announcement](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures)

From 20th July the Government has given more flexibility to nurseries in terms of how they can be organised. As a team we have thought seriously about this and have discussed together if any changes are necessary to our working practices. We do not intend to make significant changes to how we are currently working as we are happy and feel everyone is safe. However, we will make changes to allow us to staff early mornings and late afternoons more effectively. We will also make a change to allow children to be grouped with their peers.

We want to be sure that everything we do is for the benefit of the children and an adjustment to our ‘Bubble’ system will enable all children to get the best out of their time at nursery. From Monday 20th July we will be reverting back to our ‘Kittens’, ‘Cubs’ and ‘Lions’ groupings (which are essentially ‘Bubbles’ anyway!) To remind you, 0-2 yrs are Kittens, 2-3 yrs are Cubs and 3+ yrs are Lions. We are also going to move the children now to the groups they are going to be in from the Autumn term. We are moving the children now to avoid an additional move in September. You will receive a note this week, on Tapestry, confirming which group your child will be in from 20th July. If you are in Kittens, you will use the far patio door (currently Bubble 1). If you are in Cubs, you will use the middle doors (currently Bubble 2). Lions children will be using the nearest patio doors (currently Bubble 3). Hand washing arrangements and social distancing on the patio will remain essential.

During the day, we will continue to work as now. Children will be in smaller groups (fewer than 15 children in each) and will not mix with children in other bubbles. There will be minimal mixing between groups. None of our other practices will change as we are confident that they are working well to keep children and staff safe and healthy.

Notifications if a member of our Blue Door family has coronavirus symptoms

We are required by East Sussex County Council to inform parents and carers if any person (adult or child) who has been in close contact with your child has any symptoms of Coronavirus. We will email you and tell you that a person has symptoms and consequently has to have a test for Covid-19. At this point, your child does not need to take a test, nor do they need to self-isolate. If the person with the symptoms tests negative you will be told – and no further action is required. If the person tests positive, your child will need to self-isolate for 14 days – if you are a key worker you can request that they are tested, you may also be able to get a test if you are not a key worker (the guidance seems to change weekly!), if your child shows symptoms you will certainly get a test. If your child tests negative, they can return to nursery. If they test positive, we start the system of notifications again. If your child misses nursery due to self-isolation we will endeavour to get you those sessions back, we cannot afford to refund the money.

In other news…

Roof repairs

As some of you will know we had a few problems with our roof last winter and prior to the ‘lockdown’ period we had planned to have the west side roof renewed (the Belgrave Road side). We are lucky that one of our Kittens’ parents has a roofing company and quoted for the work. We have decided to go ahead with the planned works even in these uncertain times as we don’t want to face another ‘leaky’ winter! The work is scheduled to take place during August and will not affect the operation of the nursery in any way. Work men will not be coming into nursery, they are working on the other side from the children and will not be able to interact with them at all. Our ‘parent’ will also be part of the works team and will be overseeing the job fully. There will be no mobile phones permitted on site and all facilities will be separate to the nursery and on the ‘service side’ of the building. If you have any questions, please speak to either Rebecca or Laurence (our caretaker)

Tapestry documents

Some parents have asked if they need to complete the enrolment forms that have been put on Tapestry. The answer is no. Due to the current situation regarding additional adults on site we are not conducting any ‘Show rounds’ at nursery. We have created a fake child profile with photos of the nursery (no children can be identified) so that prospective parents can have a look and see what we get up to. We have added enrolment documents to Tapestry so that they can be downloaded, completed and emailed to us without having unnecessary contact.

Fees for September

We have decided to leave the care and education fees as they are until April 2021, when we will review them again. We have seen a small price rise in the lunch supplied by Zebedees and to reflect this we need to increase the cost of lunch (or any session that has lunch in it) by 15p. We will wait to hear what happens to the National Minimum Wage in October (which will come into effect in April 2021). Any price increase next year will be as a direct result of this. We will also be stopping the issue of holiday vouchers from September as the ‘cash flow’ issue they were solving is no longer so problematic. We will continue not to charge for Bank Holidays, and we will continue to offer term time only attendance in all age groups, which is unique locally.

Tea

The staff have reported that children are thoroughly enjoying bringing their own tea and so this is something we intend to continue going forward. We know that some parents don’t have time to prepare tea for their child in the morning and so we will be using the Zebedees service to provide tea as well. Each tea will cost £1.50, a sample menu can be seen below.



We are also going to move the time of tea to after 5pm, rather than after 4pm and provide snack at 3 in the afternoon rather than 2.30 (as we have found the children are not hungry after their Zebedees lunch). If Kittens’ children would like to have their hot lunch in the afternoon and their packed tea at lunchtime this is something we can still offer, we know that some of our babies are too tired to eat properly when they get home.

Leavers

None of us could possibly have predicted the end to the nursery year in this way and it is a shame that we will not be able to do a proper goodbye. However, we are going to plan a leavers event for the Autumn term – this will be afterschool and will be at nursery. We would still like to invite Zoolab to do their session with the children as this is very much enjoyed. We would also like our nursery photographer to come and take photos of children in their friendship groups. Once we have a better idea of how things are looking in the Autumn term, we will get in touch with everyone. Once all the children’s Tapestry journals are completed by staff with all the transition documents done you will get your child’s journal on a special Blue Door USB stick which you can then keep forever.

If you have any questions, please drop us an email and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Best wishes

Rebecca, Ruth and Lisa