**COVID-19 Pandemic Policy**

**Policy Statement :** COVID-19 is a virus currently transmitting amongst people and is also known as Coronavirus. Viruses are made up of tiny particles that can be spread through the droplets that come out of the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Coughing and sneezing without covering the nose and mouth with a tissue will spread the droplets to others who risk breathing them in.

If a person coughs or sneezes onto their hand then the germs can be spread on to any hard surfaces that are touched and the virus can live on those surfaces for some time. When other people touch these surfaces then touch their faces, the germs can enter their system and they become infected.

In the event of a pandemic affecting Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd, the nursery will endeavour to stay open. However, children are highly efficient ‘spreaders’ of respiratory infections both amongst themselves and to adults. In the event of staff absence due to the virus spreading, the nursery manager will be informed and may have to make the decision to close the nursery. This would be as a last resort however and every effort will be made to prevent any closure through the following procedures. We follow the government guidelines and the guidelines recommended to us by the Local Authority.

**General Procedures following local guidance**

* Contact details of all staff and parents/carers are continually updated.
* Hygiene procedures already taking place in the nursery will continue to be adhered to.
* Children are encouraged to wash their hands thoroughly (for at least 20 seconds).
* Every room (including outside play areas) will have available a clean supply of tissues and a bin for their disposal.
* When noses are wiped by staff or children themselves, tissues are hygienically disposed of immediately.
* Hands are washed with soap and water or anti-bacterial gel (only if hands are not visibly soiled or soap and water is not available)
* The nursery will ensure that toys and equipment continue to be cleaned with antibacterial spray on a daily basis. Frequently touched surfaces such as toys and commonly shared items, or visibly soiled items will be cleaned daily.
* If a child with symptoms or is diagnosed with a confirmed case of coronavirus, is known to have been playing with a particular set of toys or in a particular area, this area and equipment will immediately be cleaned thoroughly with Milton.
* Children will be encouraged at all times to be aware of hygiene procedures when sneezing and coughing, eg covering nose and mouth with a tissue and washing hands.
* Staff and children who are displaying symptoms will be sent home immediately (as they would if unwell). They will be advised to do a LFT, but will be able to attend nursery while waiting for results and are well enough. If the test is positive the child will have to isolate, but if it is negative they can return when well enough to do so.
* If a staff member has been in contact with an individual with a confirmed case they will continue to come to work but doing a lateral flow test every morning for 7 consecutive days with a negative result each time.
* If a child has a confirmed case of Covid 19 within their household we will ask them to have proof of a negative PCR test before returning to nursery or have done their 10 days isolation.

**Procedure in Case of Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd Being Informed of a Child/children Having Covid19**

* All of the above will continue
* Management will be informed immediately
* Parents will be informed via letter and/or phone call that there is a ‘live’ case
* If a child is taken ill whilst in nursery, they will be isolated from others until the parent/carer comes to collect.

**In the Event of Closure of Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd**

* Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd will only close under the direction of the management.
* Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd will only close if there is such a shortage of staff that child: staff ratios are compromised in any way. Otherwise, we will prioritise children care who are vulnerable or Parent’s that work,
* Parent/carers will be given as much notice as possible if closure is imminent. This will probably be telephone. However, all staff are double vaccinated and children under 18 do not have to isolate so we ask Parents to look out for any symptoms in their children and for them to be sensible in the case of covid in the Nursery.
* Parent/carers will not be charged if the nursery has to close.
* Children’s Services, the local Health board or local health protection team will be informed if the nursery closes.
* Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd will re-open as soon as it is safe to do so, and parent/carers will be informed immediately.

**Practical Steps to Prevent the Spread of Pandemic Flu in Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd**

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| **Main Points** | **What we do** |
| 1. Remind children and staff to wash their hands with soap and water or use hand cleansers and make sure supplies are available | * Staff and children must use soap and water to wash soiled hands. Hand cleansers can be used if not visibly soiled. * Staff are strongly encouraged to wash their hands as much as possible between contact with infants and children such as before meals or feedings, after wiping noses and mouths, and after touching objects such as tissues or surfaces soiled with saliva or nasal secretions. * Staff are encouraged to wash the hands of infants and toddlers when their hands become soiled. * Children are encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds when their hands have become soiled. |
| 2. Keep the setting environment clean and make sure supplies are available | * Frequently touched surfaces such as toys and commonly shared items are cleaned daily and when visibly soiled. * Warm water and detergent and/or antibacterial spray is used for cleaning. * All cleaning products continue to be kept out of reach of children. |
| 3. Remind children and staff to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing or coughing | * Children and staff are reminded to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when sneezing and coughing and to dispose of the tissue immediately. * Tissues and bins are available in all rooms. * Staff and children are encouraged to wash their hands or use hand cleanser as soon as possible, if they have sneezed or coughed in their hands. |

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| 4. Observe children for symptoms of fever and respiratory illness, especially when there is increased of coronavirus in the community | * All children and especially those with respiratory illness are observed closely for signs of: * New continuous cough * Loss or change in taste or smell * High temp of 37.8 or higher * Staff/children are sent home immediately and advised to do a LFT. |
| 1. Strongly encourage parents of sick children to keep their children at home   Strongly encourage staff to stay at home if they have symptoms or illness | * Parents of sick children should keep them at home and away from **Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd** until they no longer have symptoms. * Sick staff must also stay at home and only return to work once completely recovered and negative lateral test is shown (if covid19 like symptoms). |
| 1. Procedure to the consistency plan in case of managers off due to covid. | Jodie Rothery has now been appointed as Deputy manager so in the case of manager absences she will step up and run the day to day business of the Nursery. |
| 1. Follow the Cumbria County council guidelines of testing and return to setting. | Staff/Children will have to isolate for 10 days if they test positive to COVID19. They may leave isolation early if they receive negative LFT on day 5 and 6. Staff will be asked to do LFTs if they experience symptoms. |

For further information see Risk Assessment file.

Signed Role: Manager Review Date: