



Cotton Tails Nurseries Ltd

Proprietor: Nicola Cotton / Area Manager: Lynda Noon
office@cottontailsdaynursery.co.uk

Happy Days Nursery: 407 Hagley Road West,
Quinton, B32 2AD
Manager: Rachel Jarrett
Tel: 0121 422 4240
Email: happydays@cottontailsdaynursery.co.uk



Cotton Tails Too: 14 Leach Green Lane,
Rubery B45-9BL
Manager: Lisa Daniels
Tel: 0121 453 3000
Email: rubery@cottontailsdaynursery.co.uk

Cotton Tails: 1110 Bristol Road South, Northfield,
Birmingham B31-2RE
Manager: Michelle Young
Tel: 0121 4111616
Email: northfield@cottontailsdaynursery.co.uk

Cotton Tails at Hagley: 69-71 Kidderminster
Road, Hagley DY9-0QN
Manager: Beth Hemmings
Tel: 01562 228349
Email: hagley@cottontailsdaynursery.co.uk

26.03.20

Coronavirus (COVID -19)

Dear Parents,

It is with the deepest regret and great sadness at this time of uncertainty that we have decided two of our nurseries must close on Friday 27th March. We have not made this decision lightly; we were determined to stay open as long as possible to offer a service to critical key workers. The sites that will close are Happy Days (Quinton) and Cotton Tails Too (Rubery). Sites remaining open are therefore Cotton Tails (Northfield B31 2RE) and Cotton Tails (Hagley DY9 0QN). We are however saying that if you want to access these sites as a Key Worker because your child does attend one of the closed settings, this is fine, but we will need to have confirmed numbers as soon as possible.

We have naturally seen our own staff team diminish. We have staff in the vulnerable group (pregnant or with underlying issues such as asthma) then staff who are now at home because their own children are off school. We also have some staff in isolation, not because they are symptomatic, but this is what they have chosen for their own health or that of family members.

Even in this crisis we have a legal obligation to maintain standards as outlined in the EYFS, whereby we need to have certain staff available, a senior team, SENCO, Safeguarding Leads etc. This is becoming harder and harder to implement. It has been so hard and stressful over the last few weeks, but the staff have been wonderful trying to maintain their responsibilities, whilst cleaning and multi-tasking more than ever. We have a duty to also ensure they can stay safe and keep their own families isolated and minimised from the risk.

We are going to be devastated to close the doors of those two settings on Friday evening, not knowing when we can return and see the children again. But we know that this is the right thing to do in order to maintain the health and well-being of our own staff team.

We know you will have lots of questions regarding your fees and invoices, please be reassured that the Managers and Area Manager are trying to work through these as soon as is physically possible. Even after the two nurseries close, they will be working remotely to get back to you via email or phone call to explain the position of your account. This is going to take us some time to get organised, we are working as quickly as we can.

Fees

If your child is attending one of the sites remaining open because you are a Key Worker, then fees will continue as normal.

If your child is at one of the closed settings OR you can't access the open sites because you are not classed as a Key Worker, then we are confirming that:

- If your child is in receipt of 2yr 3yr or 4yr old funding then this will cover the cost of some of your fees in the interim and secure your place should we be able to open again before the end of the academic year (17.07.20). No additional charges made, or payment expected.
- If you are funded via the student loan scheme, at the moment this has been suspended and we are waiting to hear on their intentions. Your child's place will still be available if needed after this partial closure, however we will need to have that system back up and running before they can return.
- If you have no funding in place and you pay standard fees then we would ask that if you are terminating your child's place with no intention to return when we are able to open again please send your payment as normal at the end of March to cover your notice period as per terms and conditions.
- If you pay standard fees, then you will not be charged for the duration of our partial closure. If your payment for the end of March goes through this will really support the cash flow for the staff's final wages due on 01.04.20. We are then hoping to get clarity on the scheme's offered by the government to support some of the staff salary in their absence. If you have already or are about to pay for April fees, then this will be taken into account on your return. When responding back to you about fees all balances up to the 31.03.20 will be considered and this will secure your place to return and, in some instances, provide you with a starting credit balance. When we reopen, we will be required to operate on the same system of fees paid in advance. If you are intending to return to us, please make this clear to your individual setting so we can keep your fee records up to date.

To conclude, we wish you the best of health during this time, and we can't wait to greet you all back across the four settings when this is over. We will keep any updates regarding a re-open on our social media pages and website and of course will be in contact individually when the time is right.

Yours Sincerely,

Nicola Cotton

Government Guidelines detailed below.

As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

That is why the government has given clear guidance on [self-isolation](#), [household isolation](#) and [social distancing](#).

And the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

It is important to underline that schools, all childcare settings (including early years settings, childminders and providers of childcare for school-age children), colleges and other educational establishments, remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Schools, and all childcare providers, are therefore being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with [education, health and care \(EHC\) plans](#).

We know that schools will also want to support other children facing social difficulties, and we will support head teachers to do so.

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

Please, therefore, follow these key principles:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.

2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.
5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision:

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

This includes childcare, support and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response, or delivering essential public services, such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

If workers think they fall within the critical categories above, they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

If your school is closed, then please [contact your local authority](#), who will seek to redirect you to a local school in your area that your child, or children, can attend.

We are grateful for the work of teachers and workers in educational settings for continuing to provide for the children of the other critical workers of our country. It is an essential part of our national effort to combat this disease.