

Cheeky Cherubs Early Years Schools

Road map to reopening

Cheeky Cherubs closed on the 12th of March, a closure we thought would be required short term to help flatten the curve of the COVID 19 pandemic. Little did we know that we would remain closed for three and a half months. We sincerely hope that everyone's experience of the lockdown has had more positive moments than not.

During the closure we faced many struggles and challenges but overall, we faced it with positivity and optimism. The leadership and educator teams used the time to upskill in areas familiar and unfamiliar to them. We participated in many professional development trainings, including infection control, which while always important is extremely so in our current reality. We carried out some maintenance and enhancements in both Ballincollig and Bishopstown, which I'm sure everyone will appreciate as soon as we return. We are in the process of enhancing our outdoors yet again, to be ready for reopening during the week beginning the 29th of June.

We have decided to create this document to share what our roadmap to reopening looks like with the current information available to us. It is comprehensive but cannot cover every eventuality and is liable to change as pandemic procedures develop.

As per the announcement on Friday the 29th of May, childcare services can open on the week of the 29th of June. Cheeky Cherubs will be opening, all going well.

Wednesday the 1st of July.

Who can return on this date? (Extracted from Minister Zaponne's press release)

- *Children of health and social care workers, other frontline workers, childcare practitioners and parents who need access to childcare in order to return to work.*
- *Vulnerable children sponsored under the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) (for example, children who are homeless and Tusla referrals) and children funded through legacy childcare schemes who are experiencing poverty, disadvantage or child welfare issues.*
- *Children with disabilities who previously attended part or full-time early learning and care, including those preparing to start school in September.*
- *Children previously registered in childcare services on March 12, whose parents continue to need childcare for employment or training purposes and who were assured that they would retain their place through conditions attached to the Department's Temporary Wage Subsidy Childcare Scheme (TWSCS). If capacity issues emerge, priority should be given to the children of essential or frontline workers.*

This is very positive development as it is not restricted to essential workers families.

Infection Control Procedures

What will our 'PODS' look like?

- The good news is with the information available to us right now, it is as if we have been preparing for this for years. As we have mixed age groups the children's groups can remain the same. The same children can attend in their familiar rooms. For example, in the Infant and Wobbler rooms the children will continue to interact with each other as we always have within their pods.
- The Mixed Aged group rooms will see the biggest change as they will no longer be able to move freely through each room daily. We are working on a plan which may enable each pod to visit different space on alternate days at a later stage.
- All pods will access the outdoor areas throughout the day as always. Toys and materials will be divided out, so each pod has their own, which is cleaned daily, or as and when required. All other materials and equipment will be sanitised throughout the day.

What precautions are Cheeky Cherubs implementing in addition to pre-pandemic practices?

- We have carried out detailed risk assessments.
- We are currently finalising new policies and procedures to limit the spread of COVID-19.
- All our rooms, materials and equipment will be sanitised prior to opening and daily once open.
- We have sourced additional cleaning/sanitising products which will be incorporated into our hygiene procedures. Materials that are not easily cleaned, such as books will be quarantined for the specified time before and after use.
- There will be relevant signs and markings displayed on our return. We have commissioned fun entranceways for the child on their arrival.
- There will be restricted access into the centre for adults. This is to reduce cross contamination and to aid social distancing for the educators and leadership team.
- Any communication between families and Cheeky Cherubs will be facilitated using Child Paths, emails, phone calls and at arrival and collection times.
- Families are required to drop off and collect their child at the door that is assigned to their child's pod. It is important that only one person attends with the child. There will be staggered arrival and collection times for each pod.
- Families are asked to wash their hands before leaving home. Before the child enters the setting, we ask that their hands are sanitised at the entrance. Other than at this time hand sanitiser will not be used by the children, they will use warm water and soap.
- Children will not be required to wear masks. Their key educators will not be required to wear masks when with the children. They will be encouraged to wear masks when interacting with other adults.
- Children and adults will have to wear freshly cleaned clothes every day. Children's spare clothes are to be sent in in a clear labelled zip lock bag.
- Families will be assigned times for arrival and collection. Information for each pod to follow.

- We will have a designated senior member of the team charged with ensuring COVID-19 infection control measures are strictly adhered to.
- We are redesigning spaces both indoor and outdoor to enhance the children's experience, while supporting social distancing. We have commissioned a variety of structures and additions outdoors which we are very excited about.
- We are very fortunate as we have sinks accessible to the children within the rooms that enable them to wash throughout the day, as well as sinks in the bathrooms and outdoors.

Are there going to be opening hours and routine changes?

- Yes, initially there may be some changes to our opening hours, when we know more, we will let you know. We may need to close earlier until we familiarise ourselves with the additional cleaning procedures in the first week or two.
- Families will have specific drop off times and entrances depending on what pod their children is in. We will be using the main front door, the hall/side door and the side gate as entry and exit points. This is to help social distancing. To achieve this families are required to arrive a certain time, which will be confirmed later.
- Unfortunately, we will no longer be able to welcome parents or any other adults beyond the door. We plan to create visuals for you to become familiar with the new environments that the children will be experiencing. Hopefully, this is only a temporary measure to reduce contact and support contact tracing.
- Cleaning and disinfecting common use areas will be done on regular intervals throughout the day. The same will be carried out in the children's playrooms, sleep rooms, bathrooms, and nappy changing rooms.
- Children in the mixed aged group will have the biggest change, as it will be more complicated for them to spend time in other spaces during the day. We are exploring ways that we may be able to do this in the future, but in the short term we may reduce each pod to stay in their own room and the outdoors.
- Our team of educators will also have some changes to their routines. There will be staggered breaks and lunches, with new spaces for educators to take their breaks. Educators will not interact with children from other pods.
- Teacher research time will also be addressed, to support social distancing.

Food and Hygiene practices?

- We will be supporting the children to develop good personal hygiene practices, such as handwashing and sanitising, and respiratory hygiene.
- People in the service, both adults and children will have to wash their hands-on arrival, before and after eating, after sneezing and coughing, after toileting, after rest times, before and after wearing gloves and after touching potentially contaminated surfaces.
- Food; snacks and hot meals will be served to the children on their own plates, we will no longer be able to support the children to develop their self-help skills by serving themselves from communal serving dishes.

- Everyone entering the building will be required to wear freshly cleaned clothes every day. Educators may not be wearing their uniforms every day as a result.
- The centre and equipment will be cleaned twice a day. Door handle, phones, intercoms and common areas will be cleaned more frequently.
- Our chef prepares meals in our main HACCP kitchen. There will be limited access to the kitchen and strict guidelines will be adhered to. We have always operated strict hygiene in this area and will continue to do so with added layers of HACCP procedures in relation to sanitizing all areas.
- All staff have been trained in food safety and handling. This is a procedure that all the team are familiar with. Fortunately, childcare has very good practices in place so please be assured we are extremely vigilant in this area. All food is disposed of within 30 minutes.
- Our suppliers have been informed of our new procedures in relation to deliveries and are aware that there will be no access into the building. All suppliers must call in advance of deliveries.

Illness Policies and Practices

- The most important measure to safeguard families and Cheeky Cherubs employees is to stay at home if you, or any anyone in your family shows any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If you do experience any signs or symptoms, please inform us as soon as possible.
- If you are showing no signs and symptoms but have been informed that you have come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 please let us know if you are to be tested.
- All adults will be required to complete paperwork before returning to the service. Educators will complete the return to work form, parents will also complete returning to the setting forms for both themselves and their children.
- Anyone intending to travel abroad during the current restrictions will have to self-isolate for 14 days after their return. This applies to both Cheeky Cherubs employees and families who attend.
- We are developing an emergency illness policy, which will detail procedure if someone becomes ill while in the service.
- If there are any concerns about a child or an educator their temperature will be taken. They will then be required to isolated in a room away from the general population. This may be the time children will see their educator wearing PPE, such as masks and gloves.
- If a child's temperature reaches 37.5 degrees or above, you will be asked to collect your child immediately. Calpol will not be administered during this pandemic as it may mask symptoms of COVID-19
- Parents and guardians will be required to be available to collect their child immediately once contacted with concerns about their child's health. All contact details of families need to be up to date, please contact the office if there any changes to you details.
- If there is a case of COVID-19 within Cheeky Cherubs we will be informed by HPSC (Health Prevention Surveillance Centre) and will then follow all their guidelines and instructions.

While we are endeavouring to limit the spread of the infection, it is important to know that there is always a risk when mixing with people. We will as always continue to provide an enjoyable child centred experience for all the children so that impact of COVID-19 is minimised.

This road map is being used as a starting point to support us when we reopen. It has been developed without final guidelines from the Government. As a result, all the above maybe subject to change, but these will be the minimum standards of Cheeky Cherubs. We hope that this document will help you understand some of the developments and practices that we will be following to try to ensure the health and well being of children and educators who attend Cheeky Cherubs.