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Risk Management Plan

Risk Action Plan

The risk: spread of COVID-19

Detail of the risk event/scenario: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that was originally identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. Effective 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO), declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a 'pandemic'- a Public Health Emergency of International Concern due to the speed and scale of transmission of the virus in countries around the world, including Australia.

COVID-19 is transmitted from someone who is infected with the virus to others in close contact through contaminated droplets spread by coughing or sneezing or by contact with contaminated hands or surfaces. According to Department of Health, the time of exposure to the virus and when symptoms first occur is anywhere from 2-14 days.

RISK DRIVERS	Key drivers: • Declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic • Need for Service to remain open and operational during pandemic • Need to provide care for children of frontline workers • Inability to successfully practice social distancing within Service due to age of children in care • Presence of high proportion of international families • The congregation of numerous children and staff in enclosed spaces in close proximity
RISK RATING	HIGH
CONTROLS	Current controls in place: ▪ Establish a COVID-19 Service Policy ▪ Implement procedures as suggested in the Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (Fifth Edition) developed by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council as part of our day-to-day operation. ▪ Subscribe to and implement the guidelines set out by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) ▪ Control the internal and external environments ▪ Remove/mitigate the risk of spreading the infection ▪ Establish routines to control the risk and continue to deliver the education and care program ▪ Modify the daily program to incorporate increased outdoor time or the incorporation of an indoor/outdoor program to better facilitate social distancing ▪ Implement social distancing measures where practicable, including number of families entering the premises, maintenance of 1.5m distancing at mealtimes and rest times, etc.

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CONTROLS **(Cont.)**	▪ Encourage all staff to get the flu vaccine and to download the CovidSafe app ▪ Display information relating to hygiene and key procedural changes in strategic, readily visible locations ▪ Encourage staff and families to get tested for COVID-19 if displaying any symptoms ▪ Encourage all staff and families who have been been overseas/interstate or have come into contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case to self-test ▪ Stricter control of access to premises by visitors/tradespeople/delivery personnel ▪ Ensure consistent and informative communications with families and staff, via email updates, communications books, social media, etc. ▪ Implement increased hygiene and cleaning measures at the Service ▪ Educate families and children in hygiene practices and etiquette ▪ Make available and use hand sanitiser at key locations including at entry and exit to the building ▪ Temporarily modify existing Service policies in relation to sick children, Control of infectious diseases, etc. to capture the pandemic circumstances ▪ Strictly enforce the broadened Sick Children's Policy, to ensure all unwell children (even those with mild coldlike symptoms) are kept at/sent home ▪ Keep Service staff informed of the Services' response to the rapidly changing circumstances ▪ Limit face to face meetings where possible and utilise other communication platforms where feasible, such as Zoom, phone conferencing, etc. ▪ Ensure the Director maintains currency with the rapidly changing pandemic developments, through the use of accurate and reliable sources of information such as Australian Government Department of Health, Department of Educatin Skills and Employment, Safe Work Australia Coronavirus, etc. ▪ Prepare to manage the impact on fluctuations in occupancy, continuity of Educators and cash flow ▪ Prepare to facilitate a forced closure if required, including knowledge of procedures, communication and lockdown protocols ▪ Prepare to facilitate a recovery program when/as restrictions are eased ▪ Implementation of stricter vetting processes for new enrolments, including questions around recent travel and potential contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases.
EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROLS:	ADEQUATE
POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL CONTROLS:	▪ Temperature checks at entry to Service – when required ▪ Implement drop-off and pick up at the entry to the premises and totally restrict adult access to the premises – when required ▪ Service closure to mitigate spread of COVID-19 if required

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REASONS WHY ADDITIONAL CONTROLS ARE NOT YET IMPLEMENTED:	▪ Due to the extremely low case numbers of COVID-19 present in the Armidale region and the potential asymptomatic nature of some cases, temperature checks at entry and obtaining written statements from families are currently deemed unnecessary, but will be implemented if the number of cases in the region increase significantly. ▪ Currently trialling restricting access to the premises to 2 families at drop off and pick-up in order to implement social distancing measures. Will escalate to drop-off and pick-up at entry if initial measures are unsuccessful. ▪ Service closure will only be implemented under the advise of Public Health, government or regulatory authority. A premature closure could result in the loss of ECEC, Cash boost and JobKeeper funding and impact the financial viability of the Service.
KEY RESPONSE MEASURES:	• Practice all hygiene and cleaning measures recommended by AHPPC, Public Health, govt and department of education • Implement all practical social distancing measures • Maintain currency with the changing circumstances as it impacts the Service • Maintain clear and reliable communications with families and staff • Adapt and adopt procedural changes as required • Notify Public Health of any identified COVID-19 cases at the Service and follow all instructiions/directions provided. • Notify the regulatory authority within 24 hrs if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified at the Service.
RECOVERY MEASURES:	• Continue to deliver a high quality care and education service through the pandemic • Establish COVID-19 expenses and turnover/income budgets and monitor and adapt as required to maintain financial viability • Identify and implement cost efficiencies to minimise overheads and outlays to ensure service sustainability • Access all available funding to maximise income • Review and vary staffing hours and rosters to maximise wage savings without compromising our level of education and care • Maintain connections with families choosing to keep their children at home, through frequent and reliable communications and through the delivery of online learning avenues • Remain competitive with other Peschools to mitigate loss of enrolments through the offer of free Preschool and long day care • Establish and promote our points of differentiation to increase enrolments, e.g. Montessori program, online offering, multi-cultural environment • Maintain currency with the changing circumstances as it impacts the Service • Actively recruit new enrolments while offering free education and care and retain long term enrolments through delivery of high quality education and care • Explore short term fee reduction measures beyond term 2 to increase and retain enrolments

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ACTION ITEMS	ACTIVITY OWNER	DUE DATE
▪ Monitor and maintain currency with the changing situation. Adapting and adopting measures as required.	Director	Ongoing
▪ All staff mandated to be vaccinated, including booster shots.	Director	Aug21
▪ With the lifting of covid-19 restrictions in Feb22 and mask mandates, the majority of control measures have been lifted. Heightened hygiene and cleaning measures are being continued, as well as limiting access to the Preschool building as numerous cases present in Armidale. Staff are still recommended to wear masks.	Director	Feb22 - Ongoing
▪ With the lifting of isolation requirements, enforcement measures have been lifted. But families are recommended to stay home if testing positive or in close contact with a positive case. Educators still required to isolate if symptomatic or test positive. Heightened hygiene and cleaning measures continue.	Director	Feb23 -Ongoing
▪ Limiting access to the Preschool building has been lifted.	Director	Feb23
▪ Monitor and maintain currency with the changing situation. Adapting and adopting measures as required.	Director	Ongoing