To all of our Heritage Family,

We are busy preparing for the re-settling of children and getting back into the Heritage routine from the 25th of October and would like to offer a bit of information to our families. The Early Childhood Education and Care Assurance (CECA) has been inundated with questions by the Early Childhood Sector to gain better clarification on some of these questions, so we are doing the best we can with the information given to us at present. This means it’s important for families to regularly check the updates we are sending as they come our way.

In this email we have some of the questions you are probably wondering about with re-opening.

**What do I need to let Heritage know in regard to my child’s attendance from the 25th?**

We would like your help with returning to Heritage. Heritage has suffered a financial loss over the lock down period and wish to ensure we have adequate staff ratios to support children. If your family can let us know roughly your child’s arrival and pick up times ASAP.

**What will happen with billing?**

From the 25th normal attendance and billing will resume; this means the gap that was waivered for families during lock down will begin to be charged as normal from this date.

**Are all the Heritage educators vaccinated?**

Many educators were ineligible for vaccines until the government prioritised Early Childhood Educators in September. Our percentage of first vaccinations are high, but we are still waiting on a few to have their second dose.

**Are vaccines for people working with children mandatory in the ACT?**

Currently it is not mandatory in the ACT for early childhood educators to have a covid 19 vaccination. However, in other states this law has been introduced with a deadline for first and second vaccinations.

**When we return, how do I drop off and pick up?**

Unfortunately, parents will not be able to enter premises, so children will be dropped at the front door or into the nursery garden area. Adults will be required to check in on arrival and pick up using the CBR check in app. Educators will be in and out to meet families on arrival/pick up, please text us when you have arrived using the Heritage mobile 0434435101. Hand sanitiser and a computer will be at the front entrance ready for parents to sign in and out.

**What happens if there is a case of covid 19 in the centre?**

Heritage will have to follow the government’s health advice as well as CECA. Procedures would be followed based on close or casual contact protocol.

**How will Heritage keep children as safe as possible over this time?**

As mentioned, parents will drop off outside the centre which will reduce the amount of people coming into the building. Heritage will be extending their outdoor program even further, limiting indoor time as much as possible and only having small groups indoors. When indoors, educators will ensure doors and windows are open where possible for good ventilation. Heritage already maintains a very clean environment for children and will continue to be vigilant with the cleaning of resources and environments. In regard to children’s meals, our preschoolers currently have lunches that do not require heating. Where possible we would like children to bring bento box style lunches across all age groups to enable us to have more picnic style lunches outdoors.

**What are the requirements for wearing masks?**

All adults coming to Heritage will be required to wear masks. Heritage educators will also continue to wear masks until further notice.

**Are children required to wear masks?**

Currently children over 12 are required to wear masks in the ACT. However, we are happy for older children to bring their own mask to wear during the day. This will be a choice for children in this age group and will not be something we will be policing. Please ensure: All masks need to be clearly labelled with the child’s name, fabric masks need to be washed regularly, disposable masks are single use and disposed of after using once and all masks should fit snugly (the less gaps the better).

**My child might need some resettling before doing a full day. How will Heritage approach this if we are unable to come on premises?**

The rooms will be introducing their Belonging Programs which focus on children’s settling and reconnecting to our social and physical environments. For children returning to Heritage, we would like parents to try a predictable drop off routine using the front entrance and short days if necessary. Parents will be kept informed of how their child is coping during the first couple of weeks and short days/early pick up might be required. From there, we will assess how children are going individually and discuss next steps with parents if the need arises.

It’s important to be aware that although our ratios are adequate, there are many children that will require lots of emotional support as they get back into their Heritage routine. We hope that families will work with us during this time. Our goal will be child focused to support their emotional wellbeing as we move forward.

**My child might be moving rooms in 2022, when will I find out about their transition?**

Some of our children will be moving rooms next year. Once children are feeling a bit more comfortable, educators will be offering experiences in their new room in preparation for next year’s transition. This will include routine, play and getting to know their new educators with the support of a familiar teacher. We will be sending out the invitation for transitioning rooms by the end of this week as your child will be part of these transition groups. We will also be sending out the January and February placement early next week.

Please get back to us ASAP regarding your estimated time of arrival and pick up and we look forward to seeing you as we return to “semi normal”.

Thank you so much to our wonderful community. We can’t wait to welcome you back to Heritage!