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Hi All,

 We hope you are all keeping safe and well during these strange times, we can’t believe that it has already been almost five weeks of lockdown with an unknown number of weeks still to go. We hope that you are all enjoying the extra time spent with your little ones and we are loving seeing the pictures and receiving updates of what they have all been up to.

 We know that this has been a difficult time for everyone, both emotionally and financially, and there have definitely been more than a few tears shed here as we’re sure there have been for you. Now that we are in a more informed position about what help is being made available by the Government for both the self-employed and employed/furloughed workers we are asking once more for you all to consider making a voluntary contribution towards your childcare fees; there are many overheads related to the service that we provide that we are still having to keep up with every month. As pleased as we are that the Government will be paying a grant of 80% to replace lost income this will only be based on our taxable income (which will barely cover our normal household bills) and will be at least another six weeks before it is implemented. We are extremely grateful to those of you who have contributed over the last five weeks whether that be through the Universal/Tax Credit systems (which allow claimants to continue to receive their payments so long as they are passing the amount received on to their childcare provider as a retainer fee) or through their own generosity and foresight that they will still need our services when the restrictions are lifted. We know of many childminders/settings that are continuing to charge families their normal fees but we decided against doing that when this all started because we felt that we could not charge for a service that we were unable to provide; we are now only asking that those of you that are able to help out make some level of contribution to enable us to cover our overheads so we are in a position to re-open when this lockdown is relaxed.

 We would also like everyone to think ahead as to what their childcare needs are moving forward from September. We appreciate how difficult it is to think so far ahead in these uncertain times but if you know what days/hours you will be needing (if any!) then please do let us know. Some of the children will be eligible for Early Years Funding by September and if you were thinking of increasing their days to take advantage of this then we need to be making these arrangements now as we have had a number of enquiries come in and we need to make sure that we hit the ground running when social restrictions are lifted so we can bring our service back up to the level that we and yourselves expect from us.

 Those of you that follow our FB page will have seen that we are spending a lot of our time creating exciting new spaces and resources for the children and having a major overhaul of our existing toys and resources.

 Thank you all for taking the time to read through this newsletter

 Kind regards

 **Carol & Nik.**