

# Return to School

This document will provide you with all the information you should need about school organisation and planning, in preparation for your child starting back on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. All the measures we have in place follow the most recent government guidance and enable us to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, keeping your child, you and school staff as safe as possible. In the broadest sense, the school will be reverting to operating procedures that were in place during the Autumn term. Any changes or updates are made explicit in the information below using red text and labelled **NEW or UPDATE**. An updated version of the school risk assessment will be available on the school website in the Policy and Documents section. *Please note, the information in this leaflet is subject to change due to the Coronavirus pandemic situation. The government may change or update their guidelines at any point. We will keep you informed of any changes.*

## Organisation and Procedures

### **Children who are unwell: Staying alert**

It is very important that we do not have any child in school who is unwell with COVID-19. Therefore, if **your child, or someone at home**, displays **any** of the COVID-19 symptoms then they must not come to school. **Even if you think that your child has a temperature or a cough because of another illness, they must be kept at home and self-isolated until a COVID-19 test can be carried out.** Here is the link to the NHS website with the relevant information: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>. If any child begins to show symptoms at school, they will be separated from the class bubble and we will ask you to collect them **immediately**. Therefore, it is very important that we have up-to-date contact information in school. If your child becomes unwell, we will be taking their temperature as one of our checks, which is different from our usual first aid practice. The member of staff, looking after your child, may have to wear full PPE, if we suspect COVID-19. After collecting your child, you will need to book a COVID-19 test and keep the school informed of the process and the result, as it will affect children and staff coming into school. The school is supporting an active engagement with NHS Test and Trace system. We will consult with Public Health England (PHE), if there are any COVID-19 cases, and keep parents informed. If your child needs to self-isolate, we will provide them with remote learning on Seesaw.

In the event of a local lockdown, we will disseminate information and further action from the government and local authority.

## Attendance

**UPDATE:** Attendance at school will become compulsory, once again, from 8<sup>th</sup> March. We usually have high levels of attendance as a school and we are expecting the situation to be the same once we return. Due to the length and number of lockdowns that your child has now experienced it is really important that they attend school. If you have any concerns about your child returning, please communicate this early on so that we can support you.

## Getting ready for school

It is important for your child to be prepared for their return to school. We want the first days and weeks to be as positive as we can, with time spent helping them emotionally and mentally, as well as getting your child back in an academic setting and moving forward with their learning. They need to be ready for the change in routine as well as understanding that school will, once again, feel and look different. You can help them prepare for this by reading this leaflet carefully and following the guidance.

Ensure that a routine is set up a few days before your child starts school with regular bedtimes and getting them up, dressed and eating breakfast at a similar time to a school day.

## Face coverings/masks and testing

We are continuing to request that adults wear a face covering or mask when entering the school site for drop-off and pick-up. Due to the age of the children in school, children do not need to wear face coverings or masks in school. If you wish for your child to wear a face covering/mask, these will need to be removed at the school gates and handed to you. Please do not allow your child to bring these into school.

**NEW:** Teachers and adults working in school may be wearing their masks or a face covering more frequently as they move around the building. However, they will not always do this when they are teaching. We recognise that masks can sometimes be detrimental to teacher/child communication and ensuring that the teaching points and facial expressions of support can be missed.

**NEW:** All the adults working at Whitewater, complete LFT (Lateral Flow Tests) twice a week to pick up any asymptomatic COVID cases. This helps support our preventative measures around COVID transmission.

## The first day back

- **Uniform:** Your child will need to wear school uniform.
- **Dinners:** School dinners can be ordered in school as usual or alternatively, you can send your child in with a packed lunch. If your child does have a packed lunch we

recommend that you use a cool/ice pack to keep food fresh – the packed lunch boxes will remain with the children in the classrooms.

- **UPDATE What you child needs to bring in to school:** Children will need a water bottle and their book bag with any reading books to be returned, on the first day. The class teacher will then talk to the children about what they need to bring in on a daily basis, including when to bring PE kits.
- **Limiting adults on site:** Please check your drop-off and pick-up time before getting to school. We would like to limit the number of adults and children gathering before and after school, particularly at the front of the school.

### Drop-off and pick-up

- We ask that there is just **one adult** who will come onto the school site at drop-off and pick-up time. If you have no alternative but to bring a younger, pre-school child with you, this child **must be kept with you at all times**. You will need to stand behind your allocated number on the playground. The teacher will then call your child for lining up at drop-off or they will hand them over one at a time at pick-up. We ask that you leave the school site immediately after drop-off and pick-up. The play equipment and field cannot be used by anyone as it will be either cordoned off or zoned for bubbles.  
**NEW:** If you have forgotten your number, please contact the school office this week.
- We will continue to operate a one-way system when coming onto the playground. The entrance will be the large green gates at the front of the school and the exit will be along the path, beside the field, to the wooden gate.
- There will be hand sanitiser available at the entrance.
- We will not be operating the usual message book at the gate. We ask that you use an alternative method of communication before getting to school, such as email or a telephone call. The bucket will be available for written messages or reply slips.
- If you need to speak to Mrs Fox in the office, we will be operating a system, which limits contact or entry to school. Mrs Fox will be able to assist you from the front door. Please buzz as usual and wait for Mrs Fox to come to the door. If there are a number of adults waiting to speak to the school office, please keep to a socially distanced queue.
- Unfortunately, the teachers will be limited on their face-to-face contact with you at the beginning and end of the day. If you need to speak to a class teacher in more detail, please email or telephone the school. They will be happy to reply as soon as they are able.
- We will be limiting parents coming into the school building. This will be agreed by prior arrangement and kept to only strictly necessary meetings.
- Supply teachers, peripatetic teachers and other specialist providers will be able to come into school by prior arrangement. They will follow the school risk assessment

and adhere to all our procedures and organisation. We will be keeping a record and contact information for any visitor to our school.

### The school day

- There will be staggered drop-off and pick-up times for different class bubbles. The timings are very tight so that we do not waste any part of the school day. However, to make this work, we will need your assistance with being punctual and keeping to your bubble time. Siblings will be the same time as the oldest child. For example, if you have a child in Hedgehog and Red Kite Class, both your children need to be dropped off at 8:40am and collected at 3:30pm.
- **NEW:** After reviewing the Autumn term drop-off and pick-up arrangements, it is now possible to slightly adjust Rabbit Class times. Please see the table below. If this does not work safely and fluidly, then we will need to revert to the original times. Please take particular care when arriving at the front of the school.

Class Bubble	Drop-off (am)	Pick-up (pm)
<b>Rabbit NEW</b>	<b>8:55 following Otter</b>	<b>3:15 Just before Otter</b>
<b>Otter</b>	<b>8:55</b>	<b>3:15</b>
<b>Hedgehog</b>	<b>8:50</b>	<b>3:20</b>
<b>Fox</b>	<b>8:45</b>	<b>3:25</b>
<b>Red Kite</b>	<b>8:40</b>	<b>3:30</b>

- Your child will have different break times and lunch times to the other bubbles.
- Each bubble has a set of outdoor play equipment that aids social distanced activities and can be easily cleaned.
- Your child's bubble will have lunch at the same time each day. The children in Rabbit and Otter Class will eat their lunch in the hall, at different times. Children in Hedgehog, Fox and Red Kite will eat their lunch in the classroom. The hall and the classrooms will be cleaned after the children finish eating.
- The children will be encouraged to maintain social distancing at all times when in the classroom and whilst moving around the school, particularly with distance from adults. However, we understand that with children, particularly with the youngest, this will not be expected at all times.
- Your child will be expected to keep to good hygiene rules with regular handwashing, coughing or sneezing into the crook of their elbow and 'catch it, bin it, kill it' when using tissues.

### Classroom organisation

- Each classroom will be organised so that children are facing forwards (towards the main teaching location). The children will have half a desk as their Learning Base,

with Reception children using an allocated 'space' in the classroom for some of their activities.

- Your child will have their own stationery kit with everything they need for activities and learning throughout the day.
- All soft furnishings and soft toys have been removed from the classrooms.
- The classrooms will be well ventilated with doors and windows open.

#### **Extra-curricular clubs and activities**

- **UPDATE:** In order for our class bubbles to be effective in reducing COVID-19 transmission, we will not be operating extra-curricular clubs for the remainder of the Spring term. This will eliminate mixing of the class bubbles. We will keep this decision under constant review in response to government guidelines.
- If your child accesses different wrap-around providers outside school or different activities and clubs, you are advised to limit this number, to reduce transmission risk. We also advise you to seek assurance that the providers are carefully considering their own protective measures.

## Teaching and Learning

**NEW:** We are very aware of the impact that this third lockdown, (second lockdown for schools) has had on your child, socially, mentally and academically. We are absolutely committed to working on all these aspects of education. In the first week, this will be to help your child settle, move forward with their learning and to re-establish social relationships with their friends and classmates. However, our plans also look to longer term aims in the time before Easter and beyond. Our plans include the following measures:

- **Teacher assessment and testing of children's learning** using a range of methods and techniques, including questioning, responding to a child's comments and feedback. This is one of the core aspects of a teacher's job and they are highly skilled in this area. What they observe and find out will inform what happens next for your child's learning journey.
- **Embedding learning** that has taken place during lockdown, so that your child can access knowledge and skills independently in the future.
- **Supporting your child's emotional well-being**, enabling them to be, 'ready to learn'. Mental health is an important aspect to your child's engagement in their learning journey. This will mainly be in the class with their teacher or Teaching Assistant using a range of resources, such as, ELSA resources, Growth Mindset and Heartsmart. A small number of children will need more support and this may be done in small

groups or through individual ELSA sessions. Mrs Miles will notify you of individual ELSA sessions.

- **Developing stamina and independence** in your child's learning. For families who have been at home, this will build on the hard work you have done during January and February.
- **Moving your child's learning forward.** The teachers and staff have already started the process of adjusting and focusing the National Curriculum to the essential skills and knowledge your child needs for the remainder of this academic year and into the next. This will be concentrated on English (reading and writing) and maths but not to the exclusion of the other areas of the curriculum. We are not expecting your child to cover every aspect left for this year into the final summer term and few weeks before Easter. Instead, we are guiding the teaching and learning so that your child understands, builds and secures their learning over time. The government has given schools some additional money to support, 'Catch-up learning'. We will be using a range of techniques to support your child's learning, including using this money in a number of ways. Support for your child may be emotional, social or academic in nature. They will include:
  - i. quality teaching, learning and support in the classroom, as a class, in groups or individually by the class teacher
  - ii. small group support in a particular subject or on a specific learning point, usually in the classroom but may take place elsewhere in the school
  - iii. individual support by an adult, in either the classroom or sometimes elsewhere in the school.

If your child requires specific individual support, the class teacher or school will contact you to explain the support in more detail.

- **Effective Transition.** This is particularly important for Year 6 children but does still apply to all the children at Whitewater who will be transitioning to the next year group in September. The local headteachers of the primary and main feeder secondary school have already started meeting and planning for transition so that the move for Year 6 children is as smooth as possible in these difficult circumstances.

As was the case in the autumn term, the adults in school will be using the following guidelines to keep themselves and the children safe and ready to learn on our return:

- The teacher and support staff will maintain social distancing as far as reasonably practical.
- Teaching and learning will be adapted so the teacher can facilitate learning from a distance. They are experts at this and will be creative in their approach. This will mean that feedback for children will be mainly verbal, as the teachers will be minimising their contact with children's books.
- **Behaviour:** Our children consistently demonstrate good behaviour with positive attitudes towards their learning. This will be particularly important and we will be

expecting high levels of behaviour on our return to school. This will enable your child as well as others to focus and move forward with their learning.

- We will be using the outside environment frequently for activities, at different times of the day.
- Larger equipment or resources, used to support specific areas of the curriculum, such as numicon for maths, will be cleaned after every use.
- The children's well-being and emotional needs will be a high priority and the adults in the bubble will support children.

*We look forward to seeing you all on 8<sup>th</sup> March!*