



General Welfare Requirement: Suitable premises, environment and equipment

Returning to pre-school during the Coronavirus (Covid 19) pandemic

Policy statement

Blackmore community pre-school believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Although it is recognised that young children will not always understand, or follow, the social distancing 2-meter rule, there is a lot that can be put in place to limit the risk of transmission.

The needs, and best interest, of the pre-school children is at the heart of every decision we make.

This policy runs along side our coronavirus (covid 19) risk assessment

Risk assessment means:

Taking note of aspects of your workplace and activities that could cause harm, either to yourself or to others, and deciding what needs to be done to prevent that harm, making sure this is adhered to.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe		3.3 The learning environment 3.4 The wider context	

Safe working

To try and minimise the risk of transmission we will limit children attending each session. Children will be encouraged to play in smaller groups, and whole group times will be avoided. Whenever possible children will be divided between each of the 3 areas of the pre-school reducing opportunities of prolonged close contact. Children and staff are expected to arrive in clean clothes each session.

To reduce the risk of transmitting an infection we will also:

Minimise contact with unwell individuals

Minimising contact with unwell individuals and ensure anyone who has coronavirus symptoms themselves or who lives with someone displaying symptoms, does not attend our provision.

- Children to have their temperature taken by parents directly before bringing into pre-school.
- If a child develops coronavirus symptoms while at pre-school, a disposable surgical face mask, apron and gloves will be worn by the supervising adult
- If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, loss of, or change in, normal taste or smell at pre-school, they will be sent home, and advice from government guidance will be followed. The child must self-isolate for 10 days, while all members of their household self-isolate for 14 days. If a child who is teething and displaying some of the same symptoms (fever), just to be on the safe side, they will be sent home for 10 days. If the symptoms do not develop further by the end of this period, and they do not have a high temperature, they can come back to pre-school. Further guidelines can be found at - [Stay at Home: Guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19.](#)
- To access testing visit [NHS.UK](#) to arrange or contact [NHS 119](#) via telephone if you do not have access to the internet
- If a child falls ill, they will be moved to the foyer where they can be isolated with appropriate adult supervision while awaiting collection. PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).
- If a member of staff has helped an unwell child, the guidance states that they should wash their hands thoroughly, with soap, for 20 seconds afterwards, but that they are not required to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or the child subsequently tests positive for coronavirus. If the member of staff does develop symptoms, they are able to access a free coronavirus test.
- The affected area will be thoroughly disinfected to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- If a child or staff member is seriously ill, 999 will be called.
- For confirmed cases of Coronavirus, the setting will contact our local Health Protection Team (HPT) as soon as possible for further guidance.

East of England HPT - 0300 303 8537 (option 1)

Phe.EoEHPT@nhs.net EastofEnglandHPT@phe.gov.uk

East of England, 2nd Floor, Goodman house, Station Approach, Harlow, CM20 2ET

The managers will inform the chair and retain a confidential record. Pre-school will act on advice from the local HPT the pre-school – it is likely that the pre-school will close for a set period.

- Guidance on testing – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>
- If coronavirus is confirmed, staff must inform Ofsted within 14 days
- A deep clean is undertaken at the soonest opportunity. Hand hygiene messages are reinforced, and staff are vigilant to any signs of infection
- The managers continue to liaise with the HPT and keeps a full record of children affected, how long they are away from the setting and the date on which they return
- The guidance adds that: “if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England’s local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take”.

Regular and thorough hand washing

- Children and staff will wash hands thoroughly and frequently for 20 seconds with soap and water. (or alcohol hand rub or hand sanitiser where soap is not available). Hands dried using individual, single use, paper towel.
- Staff will model ‘good’ hand washing, encouraging children to wash their palms, fingers, thumbs, backs of hands and wrists
- Children and staff will wash hands on entrance and exit of the pre-school building.
- We will actively encourage children (and staff) to cough and sneeze in a tissue and put in the tissue in a bin straight away. Followed by hand washing as above.
- Children notoriously touch their faces, clothing, mouths, noses etc. Staff will be vigilant with children in their group and support thorough handwashing after such incidences.
- Staff to regularly reinforce hygiene rules/routines with children – in particular hand washing, blowing noses, and touching faces.

Thorough cleaning processes

When pre-school is not in operation it is possible that the village hall will be used by other groups. Staff are extra vigilant on arrival of morning sessions – especially after a weekend.

- A thorough clean before pre-school opens and on its closure. This includes: the toilet area, tables, chairs, floors, radiators, handles, corners, resources, toys etc.
- A thorough clean of activities and resources between am/pm sessions.
- Activities to be appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it so that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously. Children to wash hands in-between activities.
- Bins to be emptied frequently by gloved member of staff into a sealed bag, then into the kitchen bin.
- Portable handwashes to be cleaned with anti bac wipes at the end of each session.
- Toilet and kitchen bins to be emptied at the end of each day

Monitor activities on offer

- Activities will be limited to ensure monitoring of toys eg to allow for immediate washing if placed in children's mouths, and to allow enough time to thoroughly clean them.
- We will ensure activities are suitable to deliver – activities that can be cleaned easily/thoroughly or that are disposable eg plastic toys / individual trays of sand or shaving foam (NO dough or large sand to be used). We will minimise soft toys and furnishings. NO choosing trolley or library trolley. Toys NOT to be brought in from home.
- We aim to continue to cover all 7 areas of the EYFS through activities offered

Distancing children

- Children may be encouraged to play in another area of the preschool to maintain equal numbers in all 3 areas – minimising risk of prolonged contact
- Cones and individual carpet tiles to be used to help encourage children to maintain distance from each other during play.
- Distance between table and floor activities – to encourage natural separation although, due to pre-schoolers limited understanding, a 2-meter distance between children cannot be guaranteed at all times

Physical contact between staff and children

- Government guidelines suggest that short periods of close contact in confined spaces are not thought to be cause risk. However....
- In situations where a child is needing prolonged physical contact eg for comfort, for physical support or as restraint to keep themselves and/or others safe, it will be necessary for parents to be contacted and the child collected from pre-school.
- Discussions will later be held, between manager and parent, via phone or email to discuss any possible steps that can be put in place to limit the situation reoccurring.

Staggering drop-off and collection times

- Due to reducing number of children attending each session, and having 6 hand washing stations, staggering drop-off and collection times will not be needed initially when returning to pre-school September – this will be constantly reviewed
- We ask that during this time children be dropped off and collected promptly, at the front door, by 1 parent/named collector at a time
- Unfortunately, during this period, parents will not be allowed into the building at any time - even to settle an unhappy child. Where a child cannot be persuaded to enter the pre-school alone, a member of staff may come out of the building to support the child to enter in the short term. We may suggest a telephone convocation to discuss the best way forward for the child's wellbeing.
- Where parents wish to discuss a matter with a staff member, they are asked to ring the pre-school where possible

- Parents are required to continue observing the 2-meter distancing rule at all times – please observe the floor markings outside of the pre-school to help maintain the correct distance. Where a 2m distance can not be maintained parents are asked to keep 1meter apart.
- Parents/children are to **enter** the pre-school by the ramp and **exit** via the step
- Staff at the front door will wear disposable apron and gloves during this time (and may wear a face covering if deemed necessary). PPE to be disposed of securely in a sealed bag and fresh ones put on for the next group.

Children attending other settings

- To minimise contact between groups of children and staff, children we would prefer our children attend just one setting

Reduced session lengths

- Session times will not be reduced but we ask that parents arrive promptly to collect their child(ren) to allow staff time to complete a thorough clean

First aid/accident/incident book/existing injury

- Staff to wear gloves and apron when close to children and dealing with an accident or incident. Face coverings will only be worn where it is deemed necessary.
- Manager to phone, or text, parent to inform of any accident or incident during the session.
- Manager to sign accident/incident form on behalf of parent – noting who they spoke to, or messaged, and the date/time of conversation
- Photocopy of accident or incident to taken and put in child's bag along with any other relevant forms eg bang to head form
- Existing injury form to be completed as usual – manager to sign on parent's behalf where appropriate. If further discussion with parent is needed manager will ring the parent and make note of details as above

Snacks/lunches

- No lunch club will be offered initially on a Wednesday or Friday – this will be reviewed regularly
- Lunch boxes (On a Monday, Tuesday, Thursday) will be placed in cool bags by the front door. Extra care will be taken that children do not touch contents of each others lunch boxes. Children will sit maximum of 4 around a lunch table. Children will wash hands before and after lunch.
- At snack time children will be offered a choice of milk or water in disposable cups and a selection of fruit on individual disposable plates – this will be reviewed regularly
- Staff will eat their lunch at staggered times where required

Toileting/nappy changing

- Nappy changing will only take place if the child is soiled, or extremely wet, or attends the whole day.
- Where a child needs the toilet, or a nappy change, the additional member of staff will take them. Staff will wear apron, gloves and may wear a face covering.

- Once the child has returned to play the toilet/nappy changing area will be cleaned and staff's PPE disposed of safely in a tided bag and then into the kitchen bin

Visitors

- Visitors will only be permitted to enter the building if no children are in the vicinity and they have an appointment and additional measures are in place.
- Face to face meetings/viewing of records, and stay and play sessions, will not be undertaken until further notice. These will be reviewed regularly and alternative means of discussing child's development sought.
- There will be no animal visits

Outings and visits - Suspended

During the outbreak, trips and outings are suspended. Children will still have access to outdoor play

SEND

Staff will continue to work with individual children on their targets and next steps on their one planning.

We appreciate individual children's needs, and parent's priorities for their children, may have changed significantly during the isolation period.

Parents will be contacted, prior to their child's start date, to discuss their child's current one planning and note any changes to be made. Staff will be informed of any updates.

One planning will continue to be completed/updated via emails and/or phone calls

Children receiving sen premium, or the inclusion grant, will continue to receive additional support as set out in their one planning or EHCP

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

All staff remain alert to any signs that during the current COVID-19 outbreak a child in their care is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. This include signs of neglect that may be caused by extraordinary circumstances due to measures to curb the spread of the virus

Worried about a child?

If you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure, contact the NSPCC helpline to speak to one of their counsellors. Call them on 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Mental health and wellbeing

We recognise that during such unprecedented times parents, children and staff may be experiencing a wide range of emotions – scared, anxious, confused, stressed, alone – to name but a few.

This is an unsettling time for young children. Practitioners are alert to the emotional well-being of children who may be affected by the disruption of their normal routine. Where a child's behaviour gives cause for concern,

practitioners take into consideration the many factors that may be affecting them. This is done in partnership with child's parents/carers.

Shortly before children are due to attend parents will be emailed a form to complete. They will be asked to update personal details (e.g. any change of contact details), information about how their child has spent their time in isolation, their child's current mental health etc. This will provide us with a good understanding of individual children's needs and help us plan and prepare for their arrival and settle them in to their new routine.

Staff may feel unsafe returning to work and working in close proximity to children. PPE will be introduced to help give confidence. Managers will discuss staff's mental health on a 1-1 prior to reopening and offer support as appropriate.

Parents are reminded, via regular emails, of our contact details should they be seeking support or advice during this time. We aim to reply within 48 hours.

Managers have completed courses on children's mental health and wellbeing as well as a yoga for children course to be used as a possible tool in supporting children.

www.mentalhealth.org.uk provides lots of information on looking after your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak

Provider records

During the COVID-19 outbreak there may be the need to keep additional records as part of outbreak management.

A central record of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 that affect any member of staff or service user is held. This record does not contain personal details about the individual (unless for a member of staff). Records are kept of individual cases of children/families who are self-isolating due to symptoms. In all cases the principles of data protection are maintained as set out in our policies. Pre-school will not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.

Staff returning to work

Managers will ensure staff returning to work have completed 'managing infection control' on Educare prior to returning.

Managers will check staff's suitability to work has not changed as we return after a prolonged break

All staff to be aware of, read, and follow, the coronavirus policy and risk assessments

Clinically vulnerable and extremely clinically vulnerable

The Department for Education states that where a child falls into the category of clinically vulnerable they should return to educational settings from September 2020.

Further guidance for parents and carers

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>
- <https://www.escb.co.uk/safeguarding-children-during-coronavirus-covid-19/resources-for-families/>
- <https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/Safeguarding/Pages/Safeguarding.aspx>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Blackmore community pre-school

Held on

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Role of signatory – Committee chair