



Trottiscliffe

CE Primary School

Covid – 19 FAQs
(updated March 2021)

The current guidance from the government means the way we operate in school is significantly different to how our school normally is. We have put together some answers to frequently asked questions to help you and your children be prepared for returning to school.

As a school, we place the safety of our staff, pupils and their families as our highest priority. When dealing with an invisible virus, there can be no guarantees however we are taking all recommended precautions. We ask that whatever your personal thoughts regarding the Covid-19 virus and its transmission, that you correctly observe and follow the latest government guidance regarding social distancing. If you choose not to, you are not only potentially putting your family at risk, but also the other children in school and our staff members and their families.

Will the bubbles still exist?

Yes. Children will be taught in their classrooms and will form a class bubble with their class teacher.

In order to minimise the risk of spreading the virus, the children will remain solely within their 'bubble'. They will learn, play and eat only with their class and mixing with children beyond that group will not be possible at this time. This is a significant change for the children in our school who are used to mixing across the age groups and one which makes the need to be aware of wellbeing of paramount importance.

If a case of COVID-19 is confirmed within a bubble, organising the school in this way (based on government recommendations) goes some way to prevent it spreading more widely. In the instance of a confirmed case, all parents will be informed and children and staff within that 'bubble' would be asked to isolate for 10 days and be tested should symptoms develop.

How will social distancing be managed?

We shall continue to follow the latest guidance from the government regarding social distancing in primary schools and minimising the risk to our school community. Children in Years 1-6 will now be seated in rows facing the front of the room, by not facing others this will minimise risk of transmission from child to child. Younger children do find social distancing harder so by keeping bubble sizes to less than 30, this helps to further minimise the risk. We do not expect our youngest children to work sat at desks in this way and instead in Kenya Class, we will be regularly cleaning surfaces and resources, encouraging children to play outdoors as much as possible and ensuring children are regularly washing hands. Staff will be expected to maintain a 2m distance wherever possible from each other and from the children, and Key Stage 2 pupils will also be expected to maintain distancing from each other wherever possible when moving around their area. Children will have their own personal equipment allocated but will be able to share class resources within their bubble. These will be cleaned regularly and will remain within their bubble.

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Break times will be taken in different zones and at different times for each bubble across the school and children will be reminded to maintain distancing wherever possible while they play.

Please ensure that you promote social distancing with your children out of school. If you allow children to all play together outside of school and in the park, as well as confusing your child, it undermines all of the safety measures we are putting in place in school and compromises the safety of the whole school community. The risk of infection is still present and it is essential that we all do all we can to keep that risk as low as possible for everyone in our school especially as we head towards winter. Government guidance restricting mixing of households remains in place despite children mixing in schools.

What about school lunches?

We shall resume our lunch arrangements from Term 2. School dinners will be provided free of charge by Caterlink for Years R, 1 and 2, and for families in Key Stage 2 who are in receipt of Free School Meals, all other families will be able to order a school dinner if they wish and pay for it via the Caterlink website as normal. Dinners will be served in staggered sittings with each bubble eating separately to reduce transmission.

Will children wear school uniform?

Yes we would ask children to wear their normal school uniform including correct black shoes each day. Children in Years 1-6 should bring in their PE kit on Monday 8th March to be kept in school until Easter, children need to have trainers or plimsolls in school each day for daily physical activities.

Kenya Class will wear their PE kit to school each Thursday and stay in their kit throughout the day.

What else do children need to bring?

- Trottscliffe book bag (no other bag)
- PE kit in drawstring bag (**no rucksacks** or other bags please)
- Reading book
- Water bottle (essential)
- Yr3-6 may bring a fruit or vegetable snack for break (this is provided by the school for EYFS and KS1)
- Packed lunch (if not having a school dinner)
- Year 5 and 6 only may bring in their own pencil case but must not share contents with other pupils.
- Coat
- Home learning books, especially Maths
- **NO HAND SANITISER OR FACE MASKS**

For some children, you may be concerned your child may require a change of clothes during the day, please send these in, in a named plastic bag to be kept in school until needed.

If your child requires asthma medication and you are sending them to school, you must ensure you return the two inhalers to school (one for school and one for your child to keep with them). All medication should be handed in by an **adult** to a member of staff at the gate, this must not be sent in with your child.

Timings

Please remember that only one adult should accompany a child into the gates and, where possible, the children should enter the gates on their own. Equally only one adult should enter the gate to collect at the end of the day. Please ensure you adhere to these times in order to make this process

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smooth for all concerned however we do appreciate that everyone gets delayed sometimes especially with the narrow lanes surrounding the school.

	Drop off	Pick up Mon-Thu
Reception	9:00am	3:05pm
Years 1 & 2	8:55am	3:15pm
Years 3 & 4	8:50am	3:20pm
Years 5 & 6	8:45am	3:10pm

Drop offs and pick ups

The staggered start and end of the day still needs to remain in place to minimise large groups congregating outside school at the same time. The system has worked well and has made parking easier in the village hall car park, which has been an added bonus for parents. There is a one-way system in operation on the school site, which all parents must adhere to for the system to work. This means if you enter the schools site by the main entrance, you must proceed across the school playground to exit by the pencil gate rather than double back while others are trying to enter.

- Drop-off and pick up times are staggered to minimise the number of families on site, we ask that only one adult accompanies each child wherever possible. At their given time, children in Years 3 and above should be making their way to the front gate independently and we ask that you either wait in your car, or say your goodbyes at a distance from the gate to avoid causing a bottleneck. Parents must not congregate outside the school in order to maintain the safety of our community.
- You will be expected to bring your child at the specific time stated above and you **MUST** be there at that time. You and your child should wait in your car until it is their allotted time to enter the gate. Each bubble is allocated 5 minutes for drop off and if you arrive after your child's allocated time, they may need to wait until 9am to enter. We would ask that you do not join the queue until your designated time, this will avoid crossover between different bubbles and reduce congestion on the pavement. If you have more than one child attending school we would ask that where possible children in Years 3-6 join the queue for their given time alone and you wait in your car rather than outside on the pavement with your younger children for their given time.
- When arriving in school for the start and end of the day, it is important all parents park in the car park and avoid parking in Church Lane. At the front gate there are distancing lines to help you wait observing social distancing. Mrs Ballard will be by this gate to sign the children in. This is a very busy time so wherever possible try to avoid attempting to relay messages when children are being signed in. Children then enter the playground observing the green arrow floor markings for distancing. All children will enter the school building via the toilets where they will be supervised washing their hands. In order to aide this process, we ask that parents do no prolong their goodbyes, stay by the arrow markings and allow their children to enter the school independently. The children will be met by their teacher after they have washed their hands and will be escorted to their classroom.
- Any parents entering the school site are expected to wear a face mask out of courtesy to our school staff and to reduce risk of transmission.

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- Parents who have entered the school site will then continue to exit the playground following the arrows to the pencil gates promptly and **MUST NOT** hang around outside school chatting to other parents. Parents must not exit via the front gates as this slows down the entry process for all other parents.

This system has worked effectively throughout the pandemic and if all parents could please stick to this guidance, it will make life easier for staff in school.

For pick up at the end of the day:

- Again the pickup times are staggered by five minutes. We ask that all parents are prompt in collecting their children each day.
- One adult per child will enter by the front gate and follow the arrows to stand on one of the green 'distancing dots' on the netball court. The staff will bring children one at a time to the edge of the playground and they will be released to their parent. You will then need to leave the playground by the pencil gate and go home. Please do not hang around on the playground to chat.
- If you have multiple children in school, they can all be collected at the time for the earliest child to save you needing to wait.
- We would like parents to abide by current distancing guidance and we would ask that you avoid congregating in the park or car park after school to support the school as this would defeat the object of all the safety measures we are putting in place in school for the safety of our community.
- The mixing of households is still not permitted and therefore parents should not be taking their children to the park together after school or organising playdates and sleepovers.
- Children should ideally be collected by a member of their own household. If you have an agreed consistent childcare arrangement, please ensure your child and the school are aware of who is collecting your child each day.
- If your child is in Burundi Class, and you wish them to leave the school site independently, please notify the school. We will release your child at their given time each day unless you notify us of any changes. All other children should be met on the playground.

Can I come in to school?

The contact between home and school is a key element of any primary school and we do not wish to compromise this. However, the way in which we make contact must be managed differently during this pandemic. Any comments or concerns can be emailed or communicated over the phone but **we will not be able to offer any face-to-face meetings at this time.**

Will my child be safe?

Unfortunately, I cannot offer you a guarantee and the risk of catching Covid 19 will still be there. You will see that we are making every effort to minimise the risk but unfortunately this is an invisible virus and the risk cannot be completely eliminated.

What about my child's mental and physical health?

At Trottiscliffe your child's health is a priority, even before this outbreak mental health and well-being was a real priority and this has not changed. We will continue to support all parents with their

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concerns and worries and we will of course support the children as they return to school. There will be increased physical activities throughout the day which all children will be encouraged to participate in.

Signs of illness

If your child is unwell, they cannot come to school. We appreciate this may be inconvenient, especially for parents that are working, however for the safety of all in the school, if your child is presenting any of the following symptoms, they must be kept at home.

- **A temperature**
- **cough**
- **a loss of taste or smell**
- sore throat
- rapid breathing
- chills
- muscle pain
- headache
- stomach pain
- vomiting
- diarrhoea
- a rash
- red eyes
- swelling of the hands or feet
- joint pain
- dizziness
- vision problems
- loss of appetite

Whilst we know these can be indicators of many things and will probably not be Covid-19 related, these are all symptoms that children have presented with who have later been identified as having the virus. Children often do not present with any symptoms at all however we ask that if your child complains of any of the above, please do keep them at home to monitor just in case.

If you give your child Calpol, paracetamol or other medication in the morning, you should not send them into school as it could disguise other symptoms such as a temperature. If your child demonstrates any of these symptoms at school, you will be contacted to collect them.

Please remember to notify the office on the first day of any absence, Mrs Ballard will contact parents by 10am if a child is absent and no reason has been provided. If your child or a member of your household has a new persistent cough, a temperature or a loss of taste, smell or appetite, you will need to register for a Covid-19 test and should isolate until the results are received.

What is the guidance around PPE in schools?

The latest government guidance is to wear face coverings in public and where there is a risk of close social contact with people.

Staff will be wearing facemasks in communal areas and will be given the option to wear a face mask if they wish in class. However children will not be able, in most cases, to put them on and take them off by themselves safely and will in fact pose greater risk if they are fiddled with so we would ask that children do not wear them to school.

Will you change the way the school will be cleaned?

All contact points in the school will be cleaned at break time, lunchtime and after school. The cleaning during the day will be a more limited clean but all door handles, desks and chairs will be cleaned while

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the children are out to play. Staff will also be cleaning the resources and equipment used by children regularly.

What if I do not want my child to return?

I completely understand that a few parents may have concerns and anxieties around returning their children to school however the government has stated that all children will be expected to return to school. If your child does not return in September, we will have to follow the guidance from the local authority which may result in a penalty fine being issued. To prevent this happening, please ensure you stay in communication with the school so that we can support you in ensuring your child is able to attend school.

Will Breakfast Club and after school clubs be running?

No, breakfast club won't be running as we won't be able to separate the bubbles. We are looking at how we can reintroduce some of our after school clubs and are working with Jimmy's Tennis as well to restart this activity but further details will be issued after Easter once the logistics are worked out.

What if there is a further increase in cases?

As a school, we will continue to follow the guidance from the government and local authority. No one can predict exactly how the year will pan out however if the risk to our pupils, staff and families increases, the school will take whatever action is recommended in order to minimise this wherever possible.

Behaviour Rules

Finally I enclose the Bubble Rules that the teachers will be talking through with the children in September to help them to stay safe in the new school routines. Please take the time to explain these to your child.

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Our Bubble Rules

- ❖ I will keep my distance from others whenever possible
- ❖ I will regularly wash my hands with soap and water
- ❖ I will tell an adult if I feel unwell
- ❖ I will not bring things into school from home that are not on the list
- ❖ I will not take things home from school unless told to do so
- ❖ I will only use equipment that is in my bubble
- ❖ I will not mix with children in a different bubble
- ❖ I will go to the toilet at break times and ask an adult if I need to use the toilet at other times
- ❖ I will use the catch it, bin it and kill it rule when coughing and sneezing
- ❖ I will use my elbow to catch a sneeze or cough if I don't have a tissue
- ❖ I will follow the rules at all times for my own safety and the safety of others.