



Whartons Primary School Phase - Full Opening of School Covid 19

Date of Policy: Updated February 2021

**Member(s) of staff
Responsible:** **Julia Dickson**

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Introduction

The Whartons Primary School will be reopening school from March 8th 2021 to all year groups. The reopening of The Whartons Primary School for all other children will be undertaken with due regard to the latest scientific and Government advice available to us at the time. This advice and circumstances may change as the process of re-opening schools progresses eg local lock downs, and subject to this, the policy will be amended in light of such changes as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so.

This document outlines phase 3 of the strategy.

The Government and its scientific advisers have determined that it will be safe to reopen schools again for all year groups **from March 2021**:

Maintaining the safety of our pupils and staff will be paramount at all times and the organisation, restrictions and procedures will be subject to regularly reviewed risk assessment.

Our re-opening plan is bespoke to The Whartons Primary School in response to our staffing levels, space and resources.

Unlike during the summer term of 2019-20, it will be compulsory for all children, who show no COVID symptoms or are not required to self-isolate, to attend school. Non-attendance will be scrutiny to usual procedures and investigations. Please contact school with any unique situations.

Phase 4

From March 8th, the following protocols will be adopted at The Whartons:

Health and Safety Check

Comprehensive health and safety checks of the building have been carried out regularly in line with our Risk Assessment. All staff will be briefed on any changes to procedures in the event of an emergency and those required to manage risk on re-opening. Briefings and reviews of protocols will be undertaken on an ongoing basis as required. It is expected that parents will share the policy and expectations with the children before returning to school and teachers will revisit all systems and procedures. New rules and routines will be proactively taught once in school. A fire drill will be practised within the initial weeks as new cohorts return to the school. Staff and children will congregate on the two playgrounds in designated group spaces.

Start and Finish Times

Unless parents can be confident that their child is able to socially distance successfully, children should be supervised coming to and from school.

- To minimise footfall onto the school site, only 1 parent/carer in a family should bring their child/ren to school and collect them from school. It can be a different parent at the beginning of the day to the end of the day but, parents should not come to the school site together.
- All parents should maintain at least 2m separation between themselves and everyone else, apart from their own children, whilst on the school site or queuing to get onto site.
- No parent will be allowed to enter the school building at drop off or collection time.
- In order to reduce the flow of people through entrances three different gates on to the school playgrounds will be used- the back gate through the carpark, the lower front playground gate and the upper front playground gate. Each of the gates will be identified for each class group with a sign. The routes to the classroom doors will be identified. Parents and children should queue 2m apart at the classroom doors to wait to drop your child off. Children should be picked up at the end of the day via the same route to their classroom outside entrances.
- The parent should then keep a flow of people moving on site by exiting via the gate they have entered, being mindful of social distancing and waiting for others to pass through any 'pinch points'
- Parents should avoid remaining on the grounds.

- The same process will be employed at collection times and children will be handed to the parent via the classroom door in turn. Again, the parent and child/children should avoid any time on the school site.
- Travel by foot is encouraged where possible.
- The timings of the school day will be staggered to reduce the numbers of adults and children coming through the grounds. Learning time will not be cut short for example, an earlier start time of 8.45am would finish at 3.05pm and 9.10am – 3.20pm.
- All parents should depart the school site as quickly as possible having dropped off / collected.
- **Before and after school care will be open** for all children who require it, as usual practice. To ensure groupings/bubbles do not mix children will be kept in consistent bubbles which mirror the bubbles they belong to in school. Reception, Y1 and Y2 children will be situated in areas of their own classroom spaces. Y3&Y4 children will be situated in separated bubbles in the middle classroom and Y5&6 will be situated in separated bubbles using the study area and library. Staff will retain social distancing, but children can mix within their own bubble. Equipment and resources will be allocated to bubbles with no mixing of equipment between bubbles before thorough cleaning or 48-72 hours storage. Activities will be rotated daily so that children access a range over the week. Outdoor play will be accessed as often as possible. Simple snacks such as toast, crackers and fruit will be served to each bubble by a designated member of staff.

Infection control

The school will take all reasonable, preventative measures in order to minimise the spread of infection. As per the advice from the government, the following actions for infection control remain in place.

- Encouraging good hygiene by promoting the importance of handwashing for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap in the following circumstances
 - Before leaving home (this is something you and your child must do)
 - On arrival at school
 - After using the toilet
 - Before and after breaks and outdoor activities
 - Before eating any food, including snacks
 - Before leaving school
- For each class/year group there will be handwashing facilities close to their classroom base and these facilities will not be shared with another group. There will be separate toilet facilities for each group.
- Ensuring pupils and staff understand that they must cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue away or in the crook of the elbow.
- Ensure frequently touched objects and surfaces are cleaned and disinfected more regularly than usual. Each area will have anti-viral spays which the staff will use regularly throughout the day
- Resources that cannot be wiped clean will be 'rested' for 48/72 hours between groups.
- Outdoor equipment will rotated between groups with 'rest days' in between or cleaned between groups.
- Opening all doors with a wedge to ensure touch is limited.
- Calling NHS 111 if someone becomes unwell, isolating any unwell people in a separate room, and providing a separate bathroom, where possible.
- Telling staff to stay at home for seven days if they develop symptoms and order a test.
- As per the current NHS guidance and government advice, if your child develops coronavirus symptoms you should keep your child at home and order a test. There will be an isolation period away from school for a period of at least 10 days if they test positive for the virus. Symptoms

include a high temperature, a persistent cough, loss of taste or smell. Please read and follow the link to government advice. [Government Advice](#)

- If someone in your child's household has symptoms, your child must self-isolate for 10 days from the day the other person's symptoms started. This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear. A test needs to be secured for the household member. Please contact school and keep school up to date with developments and results of testing. More information can be found on the NHS website <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>
- On finding symptoms, staff and children are able to source a Covid 19 test to confirm a diagnosis.
- School will actively engage with NHS Test and Trace.
- Consider alerting people who you do not live with and have had close contact within the last 48 hours to let them know you have symptoms of coronavirus COVID-19.
- Children should provide their own personalised resources where possible to avoid cross-contamination which will remain in school. However, school will provide individual exercise books and a basic pencil ruler pack where needed.
- Parents should continue to encourage good infections control measures, such as thorough hand washing at home and keep your child informed about how to stop the spread of infection.

[Wearing Face Coverings](#)

The guidance received from the Department for Education does not mandate the wearing of face coverings by pupils but recommends the wearing of facemasks by staff in communal areas. It may be that the wearing of face coverings by very young children will be difficult as these pupils could be too young to be relied upon to wear the covering properly, not to touch the covering while wearing it and not to remove it unnecessarily. However, it will remain a parental and pupil choice to wear or not to wear a face covering while at school. **Should parents want their child to wear a face covering then the following will apply:**

- Pupils must bring at least one of their own, closely fitting, fabric face coverings to school
- These coverings must be taken home each night and washed in hot water with detergent
- Should staff observe incorrect use of a face covering or otherwise become concerned that the wearing of a face covering is increasing the risk to a pupil then parents will be advised accordingly. If parents are going to send their children into school wearing a face covering, we would advise trialling this out at home first to ensure your child is aware of the correct procedures for wearing one and is happy to do so for the length of the school day. All face coverings must be named. Staff will be given the choice as to whether to wear a visor in the classroom but will wear face masks in communal areas. Personal protective equipment will be provided by school for use as required.

[Class and Group Size](#)

Guidance from the Department for Education has advised where possible to class size bubbles of 30 pupils. However further advice will also be followed in terms of keeping the same children with the same member staff as much as possible to minimise the number of contacts both staff and pupils have in any one day. DFE guidance states:

- Consistent groups reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other to only those within the group.
- However, the use of small groups restricts the normal operation of schools and presents both educational and logistical challenges, including the cleaning and use of shared spaces, such as playgrounds, boarding houses, dining halls, and toilets, and the provision of specialist teaching.
- Maintaining consistent groups remains important, but given the decrease in the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the resumption of the full range of curriculum subjects, schools may need to change the emphasis on bubbles within their system of controls and increase the size of these groups.

The overarching principle we will apply is reducing the number of contacts between children and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (in 'bubbles') and through maintaining distance between individuals. These are not alternative options and both measures will help, but the balance between them will change depending on:

- children's ability to distance
- the lay out of the school
- the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum

A 'designated 'bubble' will be identified containing a class/year group. In the case of the Reception and Y1 group some outdoor mixing will be employed to support the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, although smaller bubbles within a bubble will also be employed. There will be consistent members of staff – including the class teacher, teaching assistants and one allocated midday supervisor for that bubble. In some cases, staffing may consist of two teaching assistants where staffing issues (i.e. shielding/illness/showing symptoms) restrict the number of teachers available. This will remain the only contact for this group for the duration of the day. Staff breaks will be managed between the two or three members of staff, although the space available to adults for such breaks will be limited and breaks staggered to avoid cross contamination.

The government guidance allows for the movement of staff between bubbles to facilitate learning eg PPA cover staff. To reduce the risks of possible cross contamination and facilitate a quicker and easier process (in the event of a positive case) to identify those who may need to self-isolate, and keep that number as small as possible, adults will adhere to social distancing and cross bubble movement will be limited to two bubbles.

Teaching and Learning

In the event of localised lockdowns or self-isolation, teachers will continue to facilitate remote learning through Google classrooms.

For the children who cannot attend, school will use and upload daily lessons which may utilise the Government funded 'Oak National Academy' learning platform materials alongside White Rose Maths Hub resources. Teachers will adapt lessons to align with their own planning. The lessons cover all aspects of the curriculum with recorded teacher led sessions. The lessons will reflect what teachers are covering in school with the rest of the class, to reduce the possibility of children who are self-isolating from falling behind.

For the first few weeks a 'recovery curriculum' has been planned. Teachers will use a range of planned activities and focused questioning in school which are '**low stakes and non-testing**', to assess key essential skills in English and maths from the previous year; identifying individual gaps in learning. These gaps will be addressed through re-teaching of topics to the whole class or interventions for small groups of children.

Also planned in the 'recovery curriculum', especially in the early weeks, will be daily time for a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). Teachers will use 'Jigsaw recovery curriculum plans' and Mind Mate lessons to address children's concerns, any mental health issues and build resilience.

Outdoor learning of other subjects will be used as often as possible.

Movement around the school site and room use

It makes the practice of social distancing harder to enforce when pupils and staff are moving between classes. For that reason, we will suspend our usual practice of movement around the school site as much as possible during Phase 4. Therefore:

- Most cloakrooms will not be in use, or used with reduced capacity, and children should bring their coat, water bottle and lunch which will be stored in their identified space, no large bags.
- An individual set of basic equipment will be provided by school for use in the classroom. Classes will be based in a single teaching room as much as possible.
- Government guidance allows for specialist teaching such as music/PE. Any visiting teachers will adhere to strict school protocols and social distancing.
- There will be no large gatherings of pupils for assemblies or whole school lunches for the present time. Lunches will therefore be eaten in classrooms in hot boxes provided from the school kitchen or packed lunches from home. The use of the dining hall will be slowly reintroduced beginning with one sitting of younger children in the first instance. This may be progressed to two sittings following changing guidance and the relaxation of restrictions. Lunchtimes will be staggered and limited to two bubbles outside at a time to enable distancing measures on the playground.
- Teaching will be at a safe distance with continued reduced close collaborative work or activities, limiting moving around the classroom.
- Inside the classroom, tables will be separated as far as reasonably practicable and desks will face forwards to minimise transmission of airborne particles. Distancing between children will be less than 2m, in order to facilitate whole class groups in a room.
- Outside space will be used as much as possible
- Exit from the classroom for the children to go outdoors will be via the fire exit.

Staff members moving around the school site should keep themselves at least 2 metres apart at all times.

Entry to the staff room is restricted and breaks will be staggered so that only 2/3 people will use the staff room at any one time. Chairs and spacing will be constructed to observe 2m distancing rules.

On corridors we will operate a one-way system where possible. Otherwise, the person to see another individual first should wait in a space where it is safe to pass at a distance.

Staff toilets should only be used by one person at any one time and this should be signalled by a sign on the door. Cleaning equipment will be provided which should be used before and after using the facilities.

Use of any shared equipment i.e. photocopier, hot water tap, fridge door, microwave is subject to wiping with anti-viral spray immediately afterwards. Such use should be minimal and avoided where possible.

Food and Drink

School meals will be provided in the form of a 'hot/warm box' which will be collected from a trolley in the dining hall by one member of staff from each group and delivered to the classroom. Where your child doesn't have a school lunch then a packed lunch should be provided and containers taken home daily.

Water bottles **must** be provided and named and should be taken home and washed thoroughly each day and returned full in the morning.

Social Distancing

Following the reduction in infection rates and cases The Department for Education has recognised that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring all children back to early years and schools, they have taken this into account. The Whartons will be adhering to their further guidance which includes the following hierarchy of measures to be implemented in Early Years and Primary School settings:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices – this will be monitored by an adult
- using the open plan reception area sectioned in to provision areas and outdoor areas for Reception and Y1 classes, the 'bubble group' will be spread out and sectioned into smaller groups for provision areas.
- Doors and windows will be open to ensure air flow. These measures will minimise the number of children in close contact at any one time and dilute airborne particles; there will be regular cleaning of settings and resources.
- We will do everything we can to maintain a safe social distance of 2m between pupils and staff where practical.

Staff will however always comfort children who are hurt or upset.

As recommended by the Department for Education, desks will be positioned to face forwards and will be named for use. Children should ensure that they sit at the same place on the same table and leave their equipment there. Only personal equipment should be used and pupils should not touch that of others.

Due to the change in advice children and staff will be allowed to take books off the premises, although efforts to minimise cross contamination should still be observed.

Classrooms will be well ventilated and outdoor education will be utilised as much as possible as will our outdoor space for staggered break and lunch times.

Toilets will be labelled for specific groups of children to avoid cross contamination. Only two children will be permitted to use the toilets at any one time, only accessing the designated sinks and toilets.

We are fortunate to have two playgrounds and an EYFS designated outdoor area and each outdoor space will be zoned for use by specific year groups.

Movement around the school site will be minimised and always carried out at a 2m separation between individuals.

During outdoor playtime, which will be staggered so only two groups are using the playground at a time, shared equipment will be limited and when used cleaned between groups or 'out of use' for 48/72 hours dependent on the material.

Hygiene

Enhanced cleaning of the whole of the school site takes place regularly. All areas of school will be cleaned regularly through the course of the school day and again at the end of the school day.

Toys / surfaces that are regularly being touched will also be cleaned regularly throughout the day. Anti-viral spray will be available in each classroom to ensure that this can take place.

Pupils will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly throughout the school day. Time and support will be dedicated to this important process. Pupils will be encouraged to follow healthy respiratory practices when sneezing or coughing i.e. using a tissue ('catch it, bin it, kill it') or an elbow crook to cough or sneeze.

Health Checks

Parents are encouraged to check their child's temperature is in the normal range before leaving the house to come to school. Where there is a concern about a child's temperature throughout the course of the day, or should a pupil exhibit signs of Covid 19, parents will be asked to take them home and they will be kept isolated until their collection. Staff use of PPE in this instance is essential. Should a pupil become ill during the course of the day, they will be taken to the meeting room which has been turned into an isolation area for the foreseeable future. Parents will be contacted and told the nature of the illness. Parents will be expected to make arrangements to collect their child from school immediately or as soon as practicably possible. Routine first aid will be administered as required and PPE will be worn by the member of staff. The rest of the group will be moved to an alternative room for 72 hours (after which a thorough clean will be carried out) and until the results of a test are known.

Testing for COVID-19

Any pupil or staff member attending school who begins to exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19 is eligible for a diagnostic test and details of how to obtain this test can be found [here](#). Should a pupil require a test, this must be arranged as soon as possible and the pupil should remain isolated at home along with the other members of their household until the result of the test is known. That result must be communicated to school as soon as it is known. If the test is returned as negative, the pupil may return to school and the family can end their self-isolation. If the test is returned as positive, then the whole household should continue to self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and the pupil should not return to school until completely recovered or 10 days, whichever is the longer period. Should a pupil return a positive test, then the remainder of their year group will be advised and required to remain at home in self-isolation for a period of 10 days. The online learning platform for that year group will recommence for the 10 day period. Members of their family do not need to self-isolate unless the pupil in their household begins to show symptoms. If this happens then that pupil will require a test and the above procedure repeated in that household. Where staff are affected by illness it may mean that it is not possible to keep certain year groups open. This will form part of our regular risk assessment to ensure that pupils can be safely supervised.

Staffing and Space Implications

Guidance re shielding members of staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable or vulnerable will be followed to ensure that our staff team remain protected where there are underlying medical issues. This has an impact on the staff team available in different areas of school. Appropriate ratios will be adhered to and this will be subject to risk assessment. Change to this policy may be as a result of other staff becoming unwell and our commitment to health and safety remains. A designated safeguarding lead will be available at all times either on site or via a phone. The majority of staff are paediatric first aid trained and a suitable first aider will be available.

We are excited about re opening school to all pupils again, however in order to keep everyone safe we need the whole community to be vigilant, patient and adhere to the extra protocols and procedures

Attendance

Attendance is statutory for all but the most vulnerable children. For the very few children with serious health concerns medical specialists will carry out risk assessments and inform families in writing of the appropriate action for that child. Please share with school the relevant details and actions needed.

All other children must follow our usual guideline of **daily** notification if your child is ill.

SEND and children with Additional Needs

For pupils with education health and care (EHC) plans, or those with SEN support, it may not be possible to provide the full range of provision set out in the plan, and it may be necessary to make different arrangements if some of the support services or trained staff are not available in their usual form. If this is the case, we will work closely with parents to confirm the best provision and put together comprehensive plans.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing

A key focus of learning as children return to school will be Personal, Social, Emotional and Health Education through our 'Jigsaw' scheme of work and 'Mind Mate' lessons.

It may be that some children exhibit symptoms of stress and anxiety following such a long period of absence from school and due to pandemic in general. It is expected that children will need time and support to understand and manage their emotional response and to share their worries and fears. The coronavirus outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children. It is important to recognise that while 'getting back to

normal' is important and will be reassuring for many, school staff will need to consider how to support:

- individual children who have found this second long period at home hard to manage
- those who have developed anxieties related to the virus
- those about whom there are safeguarding concerns
- those who may make safeguarding disclosures once they are back in schools

Some children may also have experienced bereavements in their immediate family or wider circle of friends or family or had increased/new caring responsibilities. All children will have missed the routine of school, seeing their friends, and being supported by their teachers and other adults in the school. Staff will do everything they can, with the support of Jigsaw lessons and a planned programme of specific materials in conjunction with parents, which may include:

- opportunities for children to talk about their experiences of the past few weeks
- opportunities for one-to-one conversations with trusted adults where this may be supportive
- some refocussed lessons on relevant topics, for example, mental wellbeing or staying safe
- pastoral activity, such as positive opportunities to renew and develop friendships and peer groups

The different experiences all pupils will have had at home will naturally play a large part in how easily they re-adapt to attending school and its routines. We will aim to strike an appropriate balance between reintegrating pupils into a reassuring and familiar work ethic to support their mental wellbeing on the one hand and identifying and taking time to address explicitly individual concerns or problems on the other.

Any safeguarding issues brought to light will be addressed using the school's safeguarding policy. Alongside this, The Whartons will consider the mental health and wellbeing of staff (including school leaders themselves), during this time of change.

Uniform

Children **will be** expected to wear school uniform, from 8th March. A clean set of clothes should be worn each day.

Visitors

No visitors will be allowed on to the site at any time with the exception of deliveries and essential maintenance which will be arranged by pre-appointment. Parents should not enter the school building unless they are collecting a child unexpectedly. The school office will be staffed but contact should be made by phone and email. Only in case of emergency should parents go to the office in person. This approach is one of caution and will be implemented slowly and steadily to ensure that we do our utmost to keep children and staff safe. We believe that it is robust enough to ensure that we can maintain the provision whilst adding further numbers of children into school. It must be remembered that we cannot reasonably ensure that children will be kept 2m apart but that other measures are in place to minimise and reduce the potential spread of infection as per government guidance. This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated as the response to the pandemic changes and according to regular risk assessment of the procedures and protocols in school.