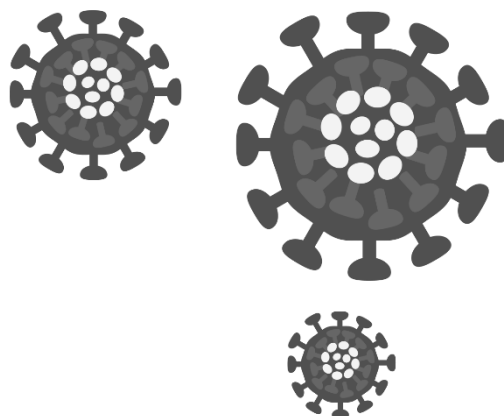




# **Covid-19 Handbook**

**This document provides parents with important information about the full re-opening of the nursery from September 2020. It covers the adaptations that have been made in respect of the pandemic and the new procedures and expectations currently in place which supersede any previous systems.**

**There is also a separate Covid-19 home school agreement addendum.**



# Introduction

The prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased over the past months, the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running, and the government are clear about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments within schools. The government have issued guidance that explains the steps schools need to take to reduce risks still further. As a result, we can plan for all children to return to school and make an important move back towards 'normal' life for many children and families.

Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Long periods of time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of learning and children's future ability to learn, and therefore we need to ensure all pupils can return to school sooner rather than later.

Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).

While coronavirus (COVID-19) remains in the community, schools can use the government guidance to make judgments at a school level about how to balance and minimise any risks from coronavirus (COVID-19) with providing a full educational experience for children and young people.

The key points from the guidance are listed below:

- 1) minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
- 2) clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
- 3) ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

4) introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach

5) minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible

6) where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

*Numbers 1 to 4 must be in place in all schools, all the time.*

*Number 5 must be properly considered and schools must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances.*

*Number 6 applies in specific circumstances.*

This handbook has been produced by Slough Centre Nursery School to help parents understand how we will do this.

# Symptoms of Coronavirus

## What are the symptoms?

- New continuous cough
- High temperature
- A loss or change to sense of smell or taste

## When must my child stay at home?

- Child shows any symptoms of Coronavirus
- If a member of the household displays symptoms of Coronavirus

### The government guidance states:

Ensuring that pupils, staff and other adults do not come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or have tested positive in the last 7 days, and ensuring anyone developing those symptoms during the school day is sent home, are essential actions to reduce the risk in schools and further drive down transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

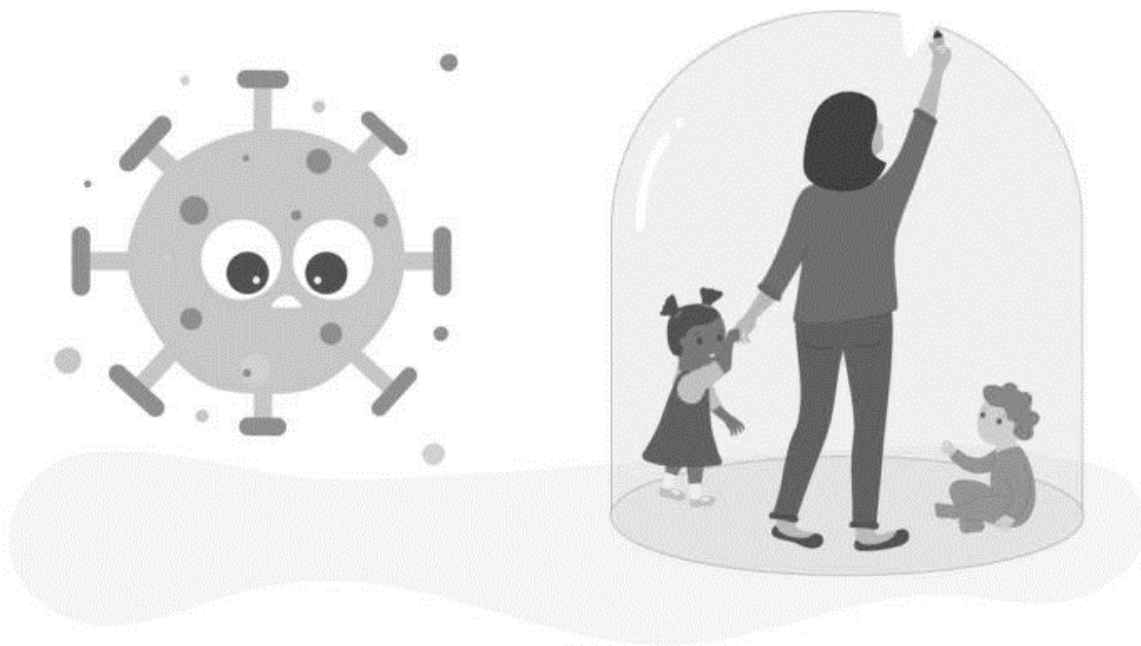
If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection,' which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age and needs of the child, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

PPE must 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).

## Do I need to let the nursery know if my child is ill or isolating?

Yes, it is important we know why your child is not attending nursery. You can simply call the school and leave a message on our answer phone. We will be then automatically be alerted via an email.



# Starting Nursery

## How and when will my child start?

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent school closures from March, it resulted in lots of unexpected changes for everyone. These changes can be unsettling, cause anxiety and create feelings of loss. It has been a very difficult period of time for everyone and we are all having to make adjustments and find ways to cope with what has happened and to manage it going forward.

While we all want the full re-opening of schools as soon as possible, we must approach this in a steady and measured way, as we all adjust to our 'new normal.' As a school we have carefully considered how to do this in a safe way that best supports the well-being of our children.

*We will not be starting everyone at the same time but instead offer a staggered start over several weeks to gradually increase the number of children attending.* Spending time to get this right at the start of the year will enable children to be ready to learn quicker when they do start because it will be a calmer and happier start to their time in nursery; it will help to secure better learning outcomes in the longer term.

When your child does start you will need to stay with them until they are settled and comfortable with you leaving. Your key person will discuss the process further with you at the time, as the settling time taken is unique to every child. They will also work with you to decide how much of the session your child can manage; it is often a bit much for children to cope with a full session immediately.



# Groupings

## What groups are there?

*The government advice is that very small separate 'bubbles' of children are no longer required and that children can mix as a whole year group.*

There are two homebase groups in the main nursery (yellow and blue). Each child is allocated a homebase group when they start. Each homebase is led by a class teacher and supported by two early years practitioners. The two homebase areas are linked with bi-folding doors that can be opened up to create one large open plan space.

There is also an additional adjoined classroom space (green room) which is mainly used as a resource base for children with additional needs. This room can be kept partitioned from the other main groups or opened up as required to give additional space.

There is also a two year old homebase group (red). The red homebase is a classroom space separate from where the 3 and 4 yr olds are and is accessed via the side garden.

We also have a large outdoor classroom space which offers opportunities for learning across the curriculum in all seven areas. This space is used throughout the day.

## How will the space be used?

*The government advice acknowledges that very young children cannot socially distance. Therefore we are operating a system to give the maximum space to children to allow them to move around, disperse and play in different spaces, rather than all being together as a class in one enclosed classroom. The government*

*advice is also to make use of outdoors as much as possible, so we have taken this into consideration too.*

Each homebase group will start and finish their sessions separately. Some weeks the yellow group will start the session in the garden and the blue group will be inside. Other weeks it will be the blue group starting in the garden with the yellow group inside. This will be rotated on a fortnightly basis. Staff will advise you where your child will be.

The homebase group starting outside will have the whole garden to access for themselves giving plenty of room. The homebase group starting inside will have the yellow and blue rooms opened up to make one large open plan space to allow them lots of scope too.

From 9.30am and 1.30pm the spaces will be opened up to allow 'free flow.' At this time the children from the yellow and blue homebase groups will mix. During this time we will have an additional classroom space open giving the children the option to be in any of the three large classroom spaces or outside with the whole of the nursery garden open. This means that children have lots of space to disperse and can also access all areas of learning inside and outside, moving freely between all the areas.

At the group times (towards the end of each session) the children will return to their homebase groups; yellow in the yellow homebase room and blue in the blue homebase room (each homebase is distinguished by the colour of the walls, carpet, flooring and chairs). However, to ensure children are still well spaced and not always in large class size groups, we utilise other spaces such as our 'cabin' and 'rainbow' room at these times to allow the children to be split off into smaller groups.

The 2 yr old group (red homebase) will initially stay separate with access to their own designated outdoor area.





# Equipment and Resources

## What toys and resources will be available?

*The government recognises the importance of high quality education and care for children in their early years and that an enabling environment, quality resourcing and support enables them to make great levels of progress when they are so young. Therefore, it is important to offer the best possible opportunities and a full curriculum as soon as possible. This is especially important when so many children have already missed out on several months of education in the last academic year.*

We know that young children are motivated by their own fascinations and interests and supporting children to follow these is the best way to encourage them to become really curious, explore and to discover; leading to learning and skill development. Therefore, we have ensured toys and resources to cover all seven areas of learning in a variety of ways to appeal to children's interests and allow them to investigate in different ways with a variety of opportunity. However, children also need to learn what there is and how to use it without being overwhelmed or overstimulated. So, we have kept a small range of carefully chosen toys available in each play area all the time to offer core learning experiences. These will be gradually built up over time as the children are ready and as is safe to do so. We also have a wealth of other toys and resources we can use for enhancements and enrichment opportunities which can be rotated and swapped to meet the needs of the children and maintain interest and challenge.

The core play experiences available continuously are: reading, mark making, puzzles and games, construction, small world, role play, malleable, sand, water, creative, music, and physical play.

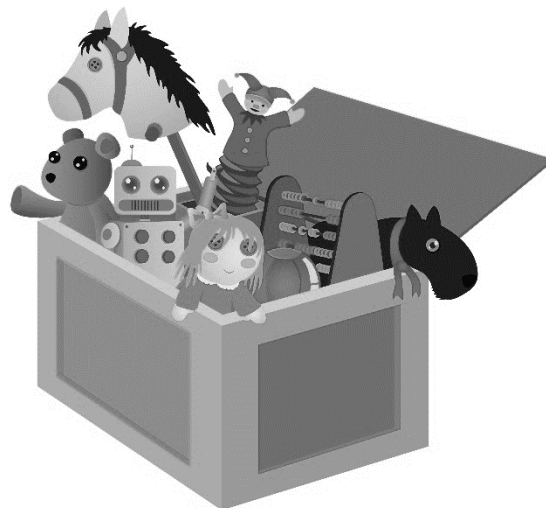
## How will risk of transmission be minimised with so many children using and sharing toys?

We have organised the nursery to have many different play 'zones' with different types of toys and equipment. These are spread out over the three large classroom spaces and the garden. This works to ensure that only a few children can play in each zone at any one time so it is not overcrowded.

Small amounts of carefully selected toys and resources are available daily for 'core' experiences, with enhancement and enrichment opportunities rotated and swapped as appropriate. This means the amount of resourcing is manageable to keep it clean while still offering a broad and balanced range of opportunities.

Limited mixing of resources between different groups of children (i.e. morning and afternoon children). This may include separate batches of playdough that is regularly changed or separated sets of other toys (e.g. bricks, cars, animals, bikes), rotated use of the sand and mud mixing area, water changed after each session, several boxes of books and other difficult to clean items rotated for use on different days to allow 'decontamination' after each box is used.

Enhanced cleaning regime for high touch surfaces and frequently used toys, to sanitise them so they are ready for use by other children either the next session or the subsequent days (e.g. disinfected or steam cleaning).



# Hygiene

## What measures are in place to encourage good hygiene practices with the children?

*The government advises we practice good hygiene and this includes hand washing and sanitising alongside using the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' routine.*

These measures need to be completed in such a way as to not cause undue anxiety or worry amongst the children, while also supporting them to begin to learn to manage their personal hygiene effectively. As such we have hand sanitising on all entry and exit points around the nursery. Staff will be encouraging children to wash hands at set times of the day with soap and water and to use the sanitiser in between when moving between areas.

Each classroom space is well stocked with several boxes of tissues and 1-2 bins. Staff will be vigilant and encouraging children to use the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' routine.

Staff have access to appropriate cleaning materials (safely stored out of reach of children) to enable them to spot clean any soiled areas and surfaces. Any toys or resources that become obviously soiled during the session will either be disposed of and replaced or cleaned and returned.

Healthy snack items and drinks are available for children. To ensure good hygiene practices we have the food in see-through securely closed lidded boxes and the drinks in clear lidded containers on a shelf in sight and out of immediate reach. This allows staff to control the use and monitor hand washing prior and after to ensure safe use.

We have installed a trough sink outside for use when children are in the garden. The blue room also has additional sinks and there are three bathroom areas where child sinks can also be accessed throughout the session.

As appropriate, staff will use group times to teach children about looking after yourself, staying safe and to develop self-help skills in fun, engaging and age appropriate ways.

When you bring your child to nursery you will need to ensure that you sanitise your child's hands when you reach the front of the queue before they enter the nursery. Once they get down to the classroom they can also wash their hands with soap and water.



# Cleaning

## How will cleaning be enhanced to help reduce the risk of transmission?

*The government has advised that schools should undertake enhanced cleaning to help reduce the risk of the virus spreading. They have also advised that the school day should not be reduced to allow for this and that the cleaning completed needs to be managed from the resources normally available to schools.*

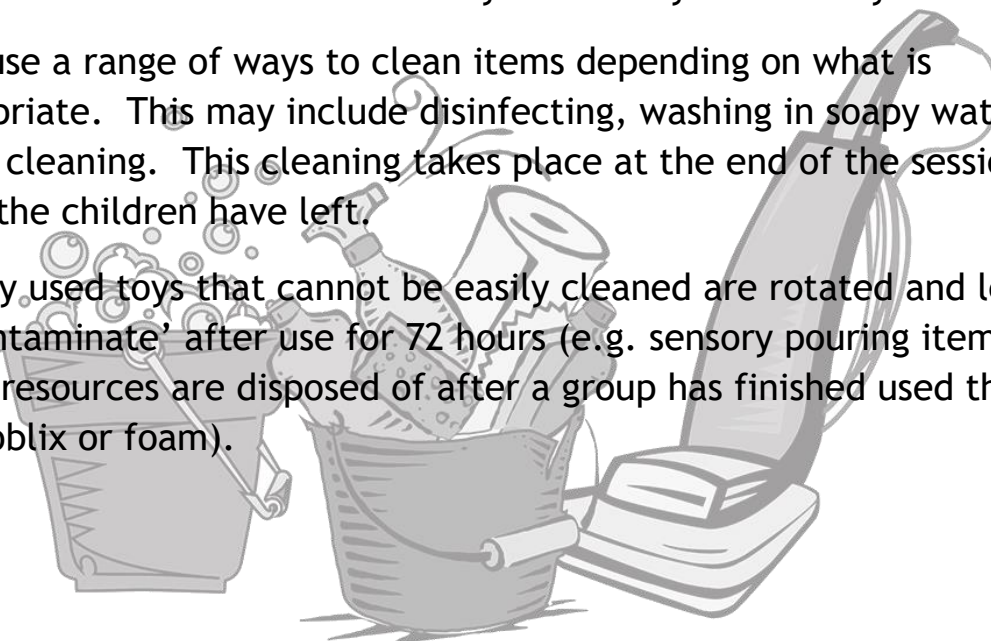
As such, we need to find an appropriate balance between completing suitable enhanced cleaning and ensuring it is manageable for staff within the current school day and at the same time does not detract from the quality education and care we give for our children.

We have professional cleaners in twice daily to conduct cleaning. They also complete deep cleaning for us at regular intervals.

In addition, staff undertake regular cleaning of toys and resources as well as frequently used surfaces and high touch areas within the nursery. If an area becomes obviously soiled, unsafe or unusable then staff will always immediately address this. There is also a tidy up and general clean down at the end of each nursery session. In addition, staff also clean and rotate some toys on a daily and weekly basis.

Staff use a range of ways to clean items depending on what is appropriate. This may include disinfecting, washing in soapy water, or steam cleaning. This cleaning takes place at the end of the session when the children have left.

Heavily used toys that cannot be easily cleaned are rotated and left to 'decontaminate' after use for 72 hours (e.g. sensory pouring items). Other resources are disposed of after a group has finished used them (e.g. oblix or foam).



# Social Distancing

## How will crowds be prevented at drop off and pick up times?

*The government still advocates social distancing where possible and for adults much of the time this is realistic if everyone follows the measures put in place at nursery.*

We ask that only one adult comes with the child to nursery, thus reducing the number of people on site at any one time.

There is a single point of entry and exit to the school. There is a one way system in place for drop off and pick up. Parents will need to enter from the front of the nursery and leave via the same point. You must come in through the front gate and walk up the driveway keeping to the right hand side (following the markings). You must queue along the verandah and down the ramp keeping within separate marked bays to respect social distancing.

Parents will need to wait outside in the queue with their child until the nursery start time. Once the nursery doors open, parents will bring their child down the main corridor keeping to the right hand side to drop them off in their respective groups. All parents and children must enter the classroom spaces via the blue room door. If your child is starting the session in the garden you must reach the garden via the blue room door also. Once you have dropped off your child you must exit through the yellow room door and then back up the corridor. At all times, parents must respect social distancing and keep to the marked spots when queuing. Parents may help to settle their child and say goodbye and are then expected to leave the site promptly to prevent overcrowding. Everybody adhering to this enables this one way system to work making entry and exit as smooth as possible while reducing risk.

The system will work in a similar way for pick up at the end of the session too. Parents will queue in the same socially distancing manner

outside until the doors open. Once the doors open parents will keep to the marked spots in the corridor while they wait to be called to their child. Yellow group will keep to the left hand side of the corridor and blue group will keep to the right hand side of the corridor. Once parents have received their child they will leave via the centre of the corridor.

It is important that you leave immediately once you have picked up your child. This is to reduce the time people are together in the corridor and also to keep the flow of people moving picking up their children. This means we will be able to get each child to their parent quickly and easily.

No pushchairs will be allowed to be taken into the nursery building. These must be parked in the designated area at the front driveway and parents will need to collect them when they come outside.

There will be a longer 'soft' start and finish to ease congestion so not everyone is arriving together at one given point in time. These are as follows:

Morning: 8.30am - 9.00am and then 11.10am - 11.30am

Afternoon: 12.30pm - 1.00pm and then 3.10pm - 3.30pm

30 hours: 9.30am - 9.50am and then 3.10 - 3.30pm

If you need to talk to your child's teacher we will need to make arrangements with you to do so safely. The opportunity to talk at the door will be very limited and it would not be appropriate to stop and have discussions there when others are waiting in the queue. It also prolongs the time people are in an enclosed space.