



Information for Parents on Pre-school Opening

– Updated February 2021

This information sheet sets out the changes required safely to reopen the Pre-School in January 2021. It is informed by the following Government guidance including but not limited to:

Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-early-years-and-childcare-settings-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-early-years-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

[Making a childcare bubble with another household - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-childcare-bubble-with-another-household/making-a-childcare-bubble-with-another-household)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19)

The Government guidance sets out five areas of control which, taken together, will create a “safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced”. These controls are:

1. Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell with coronavirus symptoms
2. More frequent hand washing
3. Good respiratory hygiene ('catch it, kill it, bin it')
4. Cleaning frequently touched surfaces
5. Minimising contact and mixing

The information below sets out the steps Pre-School will take within these areas of control:

1. Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell with Covid-19 symptoms

- If your child is unwell, with symptoms of the virus, please keep them at home. These are:
 - high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
 - new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Government guidance suggests that young children often have less severe symptoms, or symptoms that can be difficult to spot. If you think your child is unwell, or ‘under the weather’, and it is possible they may have coronavirus, you must keep them at home.

- Children in early years settings are entitled to testing.
- Anyone displaying Coronavirus symptoms should arrange a test as soon as possible and must remain at home for ten days from the day after symptoms started or, for those with no symptoms, the day after they received a positive test result; until they have had a negative test; or until they are better even if this is more than ten days – see [Self-isolation and treating coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/self-isolation-and-treating-coronavirus-covid-19-symptoms)
- Currently there is asymptomatic Covid-19 testing available in Waltham Forest and the advice is, that if you are regularly leaving your home for work, it's really important to get tested regularly, as 1 in 3 people with coronavirus are not experiencing symptoms but will still be spreading the virus. We are encouraging our staff to get tested weekly, see [Testing centres | Waltham Forest Council](#).
- In line with our existing policies, we may not admit your child to Pre-School if we think they are unwell on arrival.
- If you think you, or another member of your household, is unwell with Coronavirus symptoms or you have been contacted by the Government Track and Trace system to say that you, or someone in your family, has been in contact with a person who has tested positive, please do not come to Pre-School. Your family must self-isolate for at least ten days from the day after they were in contact with the infected person – see [Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection who do not live with the person - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-tracing-people-with-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person) ; <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- If a child begins to show symptoms, or what we believe may be symptoms, at Pre-School they will be looked after by a member of staff and you will be asked to come and **collect them within half-an-hour**. A practitioner will take your child away from other children until you arrive and will look after him/her whilst wearing personal protective equipment. We will ask you to arrange a test as soon as possible by ringing 119.
- If a member of your household has been abroad and is required to quarantine for 10 days from the day after leaving the country to which they travelled, your child should not be brought to Pre-school – see [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk) .
- In line with government guidance, staff will not be taking your child’s temperature on arrival.
- Staff will not be wearing facemasks in the setting (except to care for a child displaying symptoms and for nappy changing). Children are not expected to wear face masks at Pre-School. If your child wears a face mask to the setting, please remove it on arrival and take it home with you.
- Staff exhibiting symptoms will not be attending the Pre-School for the recommended time and will be eligible for testing.
- Parents/carers will be required to complete a health questionnaire before their child starts/returns to Pre-school and parents will be questioned on health matters on arrival daily.

2 Hand washing

- We will support the children to wash their hands more frequently as they move between areas of the Pre-School; on arrival; before and after snacks; coming in from the garden; after sneezing, coughing or using the toilets and before going home.
- We will encourage thorough washing of hands with soap and running water for 20 seconds and thorough drying.
- Children will be encouraged not to touch their faces.
- Staff will be obeying the same rules and will also be frequently using hand sanitiser.

3 Respiratory hygiene

- Children's tissues and used paper towels will be disposed of in bins and hygienically removed.
- Children will be encouraged to cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing.

4 Cleaning frequently touched surfaces

- Hard surfaces will be cleaned regularly with detergents and bleach, prior to opening and during the session. This includes outdoor equipment.
- Soft furnishings and other toys and resources, which are hard to clean, will not be available.
- Staff supervising the group will help minimise sharing of resources between children, whilst continuing to support cooperative play.
- Toys that have been in a child's mouth or potentially contaminated in any way will immediately be removed and sanitised.
- Resources will also be rotated on a 72-hour basis.
- Dressing-up clothes will be steamed after every session and washed weekly.
- Toilet areas, sinks, doors and door handles, tables and other surfaces will be regularly cleaned throughout the session and at the end of the day.
- Children's water bottles and lids will be sterilised daily.

5 Minimising Contact and Mixing

- In line with Government guidance, please try to avoid using public transport to come to and from Pre-School, especially during peak times. You should walk, cycle or travel by car wherever possible. If public transport is the only option, you and your child should wear a face covering, use hand sanitiser and as far as possible maintain social distancing rules – see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>
- We all know it is difficult to 'socially distance' very young children. In line with the guidance, we aim to minimise mixing by ensuring that activities within the Pre-school are well spaced out and that good use is made of the outdoor space. Children will be allocated to a morning or afternoon group, which will not mix, and the pre-school will be cleaned in between the sessions.
- We will be asking children not to hug their friends or the staff, so that we can adhere to social distancing as far as this is possible. Parents can help us by explaining this to their child before they return.

- We will continue to provide snacks and drinks for children. Small groups will be able to have a snack at staggered times throughout the session. This will be managed by a member of staff to maintain spacing and hygiene standards.
- We will not be allowing other people to enter the Pre-school whilst the children are there.
- Staff will maintain social distancing amongst themselves as far as possible.
- We will keep our rooms well ventilated, with windows and doors open.
- To enable social distancing, we are introducing different arrangements for drop-off and pick-up and within session times.

Drop-off and Pick-Up

- We will be using the entrance gate directly into our garden.
- All adults must wear face coverings over their nose and mouth during drop-off and pick-up.
- Whilst lining up to drop off and collect your child please remain two meters apart from other families and queue along the fence line.
- One parent/adult only to bring/collect your child
- In the morning, we will greet your child at the gate and take them inside. Please do not bring your child's bag or other belongings. If the weather is warm it would also be helpful if you could send your child in without a coat. Staff will take your child to wash their hands before joining the other children.
- At home time, please wait for your child outside the garden gate, observing social distancing. We will bring your child to you.
- Please move away from the area as quickly as possible once you have dropped off or collected your child.
- Staff are unable to have long conversations at the door – if you need a quick word, that is fine, but longer discussions will need to take place over the phone in the garden by appointment.

Minimising Home/Pre-School contact

- You should no longer send your child in with a bag. We will provide a bag for you to put your child's spare clothes, nappies, and wipes in should they require them. This bag will be made available to you on your child's first day at Pre-school. If your child is in nappies, please bring in enough for a week.
- We will send home soiled clothing, sealed in plastic bags, for washing. We will provide Pre-School spare clothing if needed. If your child comes home wearing Pre-School clothing please wash it and return it. We will not re-use this clothing for at least 72 hours after it has been returned.
- Please be sure to send your child in each day in fresh clean clothes, preferably with short sleeves if the weather allows. We advise that you put your child's clothes on to wash as soon as they return from Pre-school.
- Children should not come in dressing-up clothes.
- Children may bring in a sun hat if necessary.
- Children should not bring in toys, comforters, or other items from home.
- You should apply sun cream before leaving home as staff will be unable to do this.
- You can be sure that staff will still reassure your child and comfort them if they fall over or are upset but will not be able to have them on their laps.
- Book lending will have to be suspended for the time being.

- All social events and parent/carer workshops that would usually take place this term are cancelled.
- We will be maintaining our use of email and Tapestry to circulate information. Please keep checking your inboxes and let us know if your email address changes or you have any difficulty accessing the information.
- Key persons will be holding “Settling meetings” with parents/carers of new children. These may be socially distanced meetings in the garden, in the pre-school office with face coverings, or remote meetings by video conferencing.
- Parents/carers should sign up to receive the London Borough of Waltham Forest’s newsletter which will provide information on Covid-19 levels in the area, guidance on the current tier level and precautions that should be taken, and information on local testing that may at times be available including for those without symptoms – see [Stay connected: sign up to our e-newsletters | Waltham Forest Council](#)

We will keep this Information Sheet updated in the light of practice and Government advice. Parents will be informed of any updates.

Updated 4 February 2021