

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - RETURNING TO SCHOOL ON MARCH 8th 2021

Which year groups are returning to school?

The Government has asked all schools in England to welcome back ALL primary school children into school full time from Monday March 8th. As before, all children will be a part of class groups, which will operate as Class Bubbles of no more than 30. Many of our classes have less than 25 children and we are lucky to have lots of space in most of our classrooms as well as extensive outdoor grounds.

Why are the government now asking all children to return?

Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. 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 all schools have to ensure that all pupils can return to school at a time the government feels it is safe to do so.

Does my child have to attend?

Yes. All children must attend school unless they are self-isolating with Covid-19 symptoms, have tested positive, or are unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice. School will need evidence of this. The government have decided that parents will once again be fined for non-attendance. Attendance below 96% is cause for concern and needs improvement. Children with attendance below 90% are regarded as Persistent Absentees and will be referred immediately to the Education Welfare Team. This could lead to a fine being issued. Our Attendance panel will work with you to support your child's return to school if you are having difficulties.

Remember that our Risk Assessments mean that school is a safe place for children to be and our latest TRUST health & safety check gave us the highest level of assurance.

How will you guarantee that social distancing between children takes place?

Government guidance states that schools must introduce "consistent groups to reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of children and staff in contact with each other to only those within the group". The government also recognises "that children, especially young children, cannot socially distance from staff or from each other and this provides an additional protective measure. Maintaining distinct groups or 'bubbles' that do not mix makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate, and keep that number as small as possible."

We will of course do our very best to support social distancing, but in line with government guidance, parents must understand that in returning to school there is a very real likelihood that some children may touch adults and one another and may come into close contact. The age of some of our children is such that this may be unavoidable, and we cannot be expected to respond to complaints around this when it inevitably happens. We cannot alleviate every risk and parents must understand what we are able to do but should be confident that hygiene measures are robust and children will not mix with other bubbles.

How can I explain social distancing to my child?

Be open and honest, using language they will understand. Explain that they are helping others by their actions. Use drawings if needed and use a positive tone. Try to make them feel safe. Children in school during the autumn term managed distancing very well indeed.

What hygiene measures will be in place to keep my child safe?

We will:

- follow the 'COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings' guidance.
- ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available including hand sanitiser and tissues in classrooms and other learning environments.
- clean surfaces that staff, children and young people are touching, such as large toys, books, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters, more regularly than usual with antiviral disinfectant.

We will enable and support all adults and children to:

- frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.
- clean their hands on arrival at the school, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing, after the toilet or when dirty.
- not touch their mouth, eyes and nose.
- use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use special bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it').

- ensure that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently.
- encourage young children to learn and practice these habits through games, songs and repetition.
- ensure that bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day.

All spaces will be well-ventilated using natural ventilation e.g. opening windows and doors (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding).

Will children be confined to the same classroom environment most of the day?

Government advice on the scientific evidence shows that the outdoor environment is much more manageable in terms of virus transmission. When the weather is suitable, we will be using outdoor learning where possible and will keep children in their Class Bubble within their classroom for most of the day. They will move with only children from their Bubble for intervention.

Will teachers and other adults move between Class Bubbles?

All teachers and other staff will be able to operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable.

How will lunchtime work to ensure children are safe?

Children will eat with their own class Bubble. Other Bubbles may also be in the dining hall but will remain socially distanced from each other. Lunchtimes will continue to be staggered and children will rotate between a hot lunch and a packed lunch for the spring term to avoid any congestion at the serving stations. Cleaning will be frequent throughout each service.

What other sorts of things will you do to make school safe for my child?

In addition to social distancing and hygiene measures mentioned above, we will:

- give children a designated classroom (which we are going to refer to as their Bubble Class) for lessons and play, to minimise the opportunity for mixing.
- ensure regular cleaning of the school and resources will take place.
- ensure regular cleaning of the children's personal work stations.
- give children their own stationery packs as they will not be allowed to bring in their own resources such as pencil cases, crayons, etc.
- use PPE such as gloves, aprons, masks, hand sanitiser and anti-bac wipes as identified in our Risk Assessments.
- confine resources to rooms to minimise sharing and when sharing is essential, clean resources before transference.
- organise Class Bubble playtimes to minimise the opportunity for mixing.
- be vigilant in identifying children with symptoms, isolate them and ask parents to collect them.
- employ a set charter on safety in the classroom shared with all the children and staff at Glapton.
- remove unnecessary items from classrooms.

Will my child be expected to share resources, such as pens and pencils?

Children will be given their own stationery equipment, which they must not share with anyone else. Any resources that are shared (eg. large toys) will be thoroughly cleaned after use. Resources that are shared between Class Bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.

Will everyone arrive at school at the same time causing an increase in risk?

We will continue the staggered drop off and collection times for children and their parents from different gates. We also request that one parent/carer only, drops and collects their children and observe social distance space around each family at the gates. Parents will not be invited to enter the school site but will drop off and collect at their designated gate and time. Parents are asked to wear a face covering when dropping off or collecting children.

Will the school have assembly, sports days or other similar events?

Bubbles will have an opportunity for reflection and collective worship within their daily sessions, but there will be no mass gatherings as a school. Mrs Hurst will visit each Bubble at a social distance each week and virtual assemblies will take place.

My child is feeling anxious about coming back to school once more, how can I prepare him/her?

We ask that you help support your child by talking about what school was like before lockdown and what it will be like now. It will be a little bit different but lots will be the same as the autumn term.

Will children go straight back into normal lessons following the national curriculum?

The initial focus, for as long as we feel necessary, will be on supporting personal, social, health and emotional aspects of learning to support children's wellbeing. We will also ensure that skills in English and maths and other subjects are 'caught up' through our Catch-Up curriculum. We will be prioritising identifying gaps and re-establishing good progress in phonics and reading, increasing vocabulary, writing and mathematics, identifying opportunities across the curriculum so children read widely, and developing their knowledge and vocabulary. The curriculum will remain broad, so that the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects including sciences, humanities, the arts, PE/sport, RE and RHE through their Topics. Knowledge Organisers have been shared with you on Class Dojo showing all the things your child will learn and the vocabulary they will learn. Our Year 5 cohort will have additional time in school to support their transition into Y6. If the Road Map continues as laid out by the government all children will experience transition over the summer term.

How will you know what my child needs to catch up on?

Our curriculum planning will be informed by an assessment of pupils' starting points and addressing the gaps in their knowledge and skills using strategies such as quizzes, spelling tests, hearing them read, scrutinising writing and a check on phonics.

Will my child be tested this year?

No. The following tests are cancelled and at present, they are planned to take place in the summer of 2022.

- Phonics screening check for Y1
- Key Stage 1 tests and teacher assessment for Y2
- Y4 multiplication tables check
- Key Stage 2 tests and teacher assessment for Y6

How will you support my child's emotional wellbeing?

In addition to that mentioned above, our SENDCO Mrs Pye and our Senior TA Miss Cosway will be working to ensure that all children's needs are met. There will be plenty of opportunities for children to discuss their feelings, play, rebuild friendships and have 'Time for Talk' for times when they may feel overwhelmed, plus systems are already in place for sharing worries within each Class Bubble. Our SMILE nurture club and ELSA provision will resume.

Will staff wear masks or PPE?

The Government guidelines state, 'The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

- children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way.
- if a child or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home, a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.'
- If any child or adult feels unwell, staff supporting that person will wear PPE to reduce potential exposure to COVID-19.
- If adults are unable to maintain a social distance within a classroom and in all other parts of the school.

Can my child wear a mask to school?

If you choose for your child to wear a mask to school this will be removed once your child has entered the safety of the school site. Your child will be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it. They will wash their hands immediately on arrival (as is the case for all pupils), dispose of the temporary face covering in a special bin or place a reusable face covering in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom.

Will my child need to wear a school uniform?

Yes because this will ease their transition back into school and help them feel that things are back to normal. Uniform can play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone. Uniform is easily machine-washed and dried overnight if needed but although clothes do not need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.

Will the breakfast club and after school clubs be open?

Not straight away while we settle the children and assess how we can best safely use spaces to provide these services. We will provide breakfast if a child arrives to school hungry. Other activity clubs will phase in over the first half term.

Will we allow visitors and volunteers into school?

Only essential visitors or volunteers will be permitted, to minimise additional adults coming in and out of school. We will ensure our site guidance on physical distancing and hygiene is explained to visitors on or before arrival. Where visits can happen outside of school hours, they will. A record is kept of all visitors.

Will the school office be open?

Yes - Office hours are 8.15am to 4.15pm (4pm on a Friday). Phone lines operate from 8.15am to 4.15pm (4pm on a Friday) only.

The start of the term is a very busy time so your queries will be answered as soon as we are able. We will not be allowing parents to come onto the school site or in to the school building unless this has previously been agreed and only in exceptional circumstances.

Parents are therefore requested to e-mail or telephone the school as opposed to presenting in person. We will communicate with parents electronically via the School Gateway app, e-mail, and via the website and partnership book and Class DOJO.

Will you continue to provide online home learning activities for children who do not return to school?

No. However where a class, group or small number of pupils needs to self-isolate, or there is a local lockdown requiring pupils to remain at home, we are expected to continue to offer immediate remote education. This will continue to be in the form of Class DOJO.

What will happen if a child in the class shows symptoms or if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in school?

We will follow the Government guidelines set out in the DfE guidance issued to schools, which can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963541/Schools_coronavirus_operational_guidance.pdf

Will there be any swimming lessons or trips once school opens on 8th March?

There are no plans to take the children swimming at the moment. Class Bubbles will be able to take their Class Bubble on a local trip if their risk assessment shows it is safe to do so.

How can I speak to the class teacher if we are socially distancing?

You can see your child's class teacher briefly each morning or arrange a telephone call by e-mailing the school office, who will then pass the message on. Your teacher can then e-mail a response, or give you a call if appropriate.

What should my child bring to school each day?

Your child can bring their water bottle, lunch box (Year 2,3,4,5 and 6), mobile phone (Y6), coat, sunhat, school book bag and school PE bag. Please do not bring rucksacks or pencil cases.

Are staff looking forward to seeing us again?

Yes! We can't wait to see you all again and get things back to normal where we can.

Where can I find more information?

Please see the government guidance for parents, which can be found here: <https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2021/02/22/all-students-to-return-to-school-and-college-from-8-march-and-what-you-need-to-know/>