



BARNARD CASTLE
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Safe Return to Prep School

Guidance for Parents
and Children

Phased Re-opening
June 2020

29th May 2020

Dear Parents

We are very keen to see the children back at school again, and we look forward to regaining some semblance of normality as soon as possible.

The safety of your children, together with the safety of our staff, is of paramount importance to us. We also recognise that some parents are unsure about their children returning to school. I hope this guidance document provides you with the information and assurances required to enable you to make an informed decision.

Whilst initially this guidance concerns only parents of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children, if the Government realises its ambition to get all primary children back to school within a few weeks it may apply to children and parents in all year groups and I therefore urge all parents to read the information provided carefully.

The daily routine will be very different when we return and in order for parents and pupils to visualise how it will work, we have prepared a **Safety Video** guide which will be emailed to relevant parents prior to the children's induction days. We ask that you watch this with your child to prepare them for the different school routines that will be implemented for their safe return.

As previously communicated, the 25% discount on day fees will remain in place for the duration of the Trinity Term regardless of whether your child physically attends school or is completing the Learning@Home programme.

Our Prep School, like other schools across the globe, is going to look and be different to the one you left last term. We must remain positive, knowing that these changes are essential as we aim for our community to safely return to Barney as soon as possible. Whilst learning and our classrooms may seem very different, the strength of our community and Barney family continues to grow and the relationships we have formed are now stronger than ever. Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any further questions.

We look forward to seeing the children back in school very soon.

Laura Turner

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Return to Prep School

Following government guidance, the first year groups to return to Prep School will be Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. As you are aware, teaching staff return from furlough leave after the extended May break and it is therefore important that we give them sufficient time to learn and adapt to the new health and safety procedures that will be in place to ensure the pupils' safe return.

Prior to the full return of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, we feel it is appropriate to have dedicated induction days, in order that pupils and staff can familiarise themselves with the new daily routine.

The induction days are:

Reception and Year 1 on Thursday 4th June

Year 6 on Friday 5th June

This induction day will help the children understand the changes that have happened in school, providing an opportunity to explain what a day at school will look like for the time being, whilst familiarising them with the necessary hygiene routines that we will be following.

We will then look forward to welcoming these three year groups back to Prep School on a daily basis from **Monday 8th June**.

Children of Key Workers

We will continue to welcome children of key workers into school. Information is provided later in the document regarding specified new drop off and collection times for children of key workers and must be closely adhered to, due to the numbers of children accessing the school site.

Should you need Prep School to support you further with this, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we will be happy to try and accommodate additional requests.

All requests from parents who are key workers, should be directed to Mrs Morse at prep@barneyschool.org.uk.

Keeping Your Child Safe In School

The safety and welfare of your children when at school is our prime concern. Since the announcement regarding the phased re-opening of schools, we have considered our approach to ensure compliance with government guidance. Significant planning and assessments have been undertaken in recent weeks to ensure Prep School operates safely when we re-open.

We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff, and the government guidance recognises this challenge.

However, it is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, and we will achieve this by ensuring children, young people and staff only mix in a small, fixed, consistent group, known as a **'bubble'**; these small allocated bubbles will be exclusive and will stay away from other bubbles in the school.

Public Health England (PHE) is clear that if early years settings, schools and colleges do this, and crucially if they also apply regular hand washing, hygiene and enhanced cleaning measures, then the risk of transmission will be lowered.

Government guidance is that bubbles should consist of up to 15 children. As such, when your child returns to school, they will be placed in a bubble with other children in their year group along with allocated members of staff.

Bubbles will not mix and will not change once maximum allocations per bubble are defined.

These bubbles of children and staff will remain the same until the end of the term. All activities will be carried out in these bubbles, including playtimes and mealtimes. Each bubble will have:

- an allocated classroom that only they will be taught in
- designated toilets
- designated entrance and exit points into the building
- designated play spaces

Although desks and seating within classrooms will be separated, it is important to point out at this stage that we cannot guarantee that children within a bubble will be 2 metres apart at all times. This is particularly the case for the younger year groups. Guidance states that children in Reception and Year 1 do not need to be spaced 2 metres apart.

All children from Year 2 upwards, will have desks socially distanced 2 metres apart.

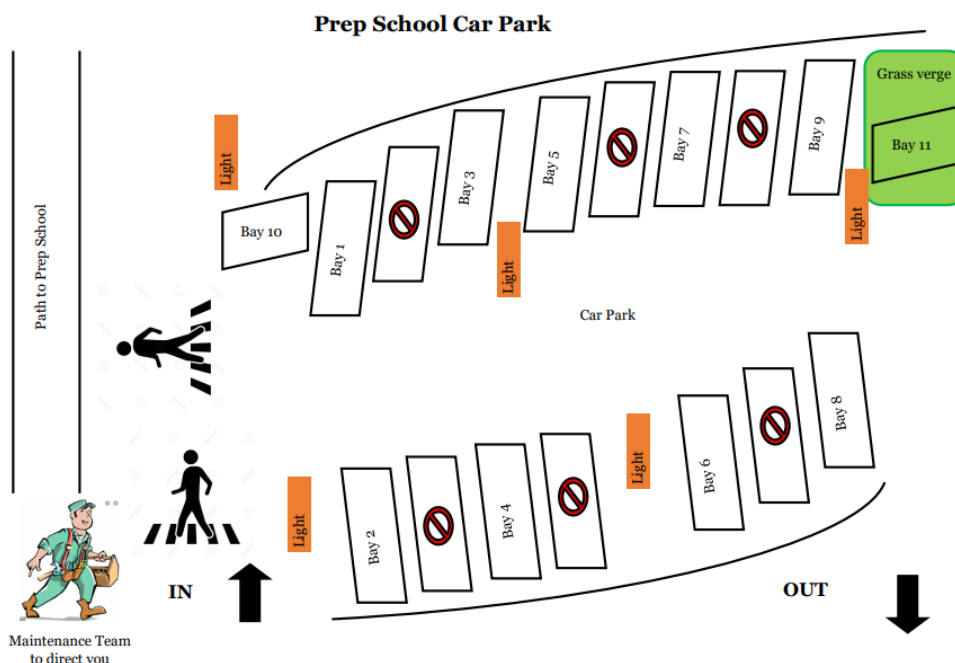
In order to ensure safety at all times, it is with regret, that our morning and after-school provision will not be available for children coming into school throughout the term as we are unable to mix the allocated bubbles.

Arrival and Departure of Children in Prep School

The school day will start and end at different times as we limit the number of people entering and exiting the school site at any one time, as follows:

Year Group	Arrival Time	Pick Up Time	Drop Off/ Pick Up Point
Reception	8.45am-9.15am	3.15pm	Prep School Drive
Year 1	8.15am-8.45am	3.30pm	Prep School Drive
Year 6	8.15am-8.45am	3.30pm	Senior School Drive
Key Workers	9.00am	4.00pm-5.00pm	Prep School Drive

Upon arrival at school you will be asked to park in an allocated bay by a member of staff.



We kindly ask that you remain in your vehicle. A member of staff will approach your vehicle and you will be asked the following questions:

1. Is any member of your household unwell or displaying symptoms of COVID-19?
2. Has your son/daughter been unwell or had a temperature in the last 12 hours?
3. Has your son/daughter taken any non-prescription medicine in the last 12 hours?
4. Your child's temperature will be checked before allowing your child to enter the school site.

If your child's temperature is over 37.8°C you will be asked to take your child home. We kindly ask that you err on the side of caution each morning with your child's health. Any absences must still be reported as normal to Mrs Morse each morning.

Your child will then join a member of staff and be taken to Prep School.

We ask that parents are patient with the arrival process and once your child has left the vehicle and it is safe to do so, you promptly depart the car park to prevent traffic congestion in the car park and on Westwick Road.

Unfortunately, parents will **NOT** be allowed onto the school site at any time to limit adult to adult contact. We respectfully request that parents do not socialise outside their vehicles in the car park.

At the end of the day, we will follow the same procedure as the morning drop off. As you enter the school drive, you will be registered as arriving into school and allocated a bay to wait in whilst a member of staff will radio for your child to safely be brought down to your car to be taken home. We ask that parents are patient as we safely bring children back to parents' cars and once your child is with you, we ask that you promptly depart to prevent traffic congestion in the car park and on Westwick Road. Children who arrive at school on foot or by bike must also enter the designated drop off and pick up car parks, this will be utilising the footpath on Westwick Road and the footpath to the Senior School car park.

Further explanation, clarification and guidance will be given about drop off and collection times in the safety video you will receive before your child's induction day.

The Classrooms

All classrooms that have been allocated a 'bubble' of children and staff have been rearranged to comply with government guidance.

- From Year 2 upwards, desks within classroom bubbles have been spaced out, utilising the 2 metre social distancing rule
- These desks are allocated by prescribed markings on the carpet to ensure that they are not moved out of this distanced space
- Coat pegs and lockers will be out of use and all belongings will stay in your child's allocated desk space in their classrooms
- Hand sanitiser dispensers have been placed outside all classrooms
- Lidded pedal bins for tissues are in each of the classrooms
- Transparent shield screens have been provided around teachers' desks
- All unnecessary items from classrooms have been stored elsewhere
- All soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts) have been removed from classrooms
- Pupils will have their own personal classroom equipment all provided by the school and this will be regularly sanitised
- Water bottles will be provided for all the children and cleaned daily in the dishwasher
- A strict regular cleaning schedule will be adhered to throughout the day by cleaners allocated to bubble locations

Children will not be allowed to bring items in from home such as bags, items for show and tell or models they have made. We will provide all equipment at school which will be cleaned daily.

There will therefore be no school reading books sent home and any homework tasks will be sent and must be returned electronically.

Uniform

The guidance indicates clothes washed daily reduces the risk of infection transmission.

Children are therefore **not** required to wear their uniform which we feel is less serviceable for frequent washing.

We would like, wherever possible, the children to wear their school tracksuits when they are in school and should the warmer weather continue, they may wear their shorts without tracksuit bottoms into school.

We do of course appreciate that this may not always be possible due to busy family commitments and of course some children may have grown significantly, and items have not and unfortunately cannot be replaced at this moment in time. In such circumstances, we are happy for children to come to school in comfortable non-uniform clothes such as a plain white t-shirt and shorts to help accommodate for the turnaround of washing.

Movement Around School

The school site has been risk assessed to ensure safe movement of children around the school site at all times.

All bubbles have been allocated entrance and exit points around the school to ensure that there are no clashes of bubbles. In addition to this, every member of staff has been allocated radios to ensure consistent communication of each bubble's movement around school.

Externally, the paths and drives have been marked with yellow footprints 2 metres apart as a visual reminder to support children as they move around school.

Internally, floor stickers have been placed throughout corridors to again act as a visual reminder of the importance of distancing should the children need to move around school.

We will, at all times, encourage the children to stay in their bubbles at their desks in their classrooms.

Fire Evacuation

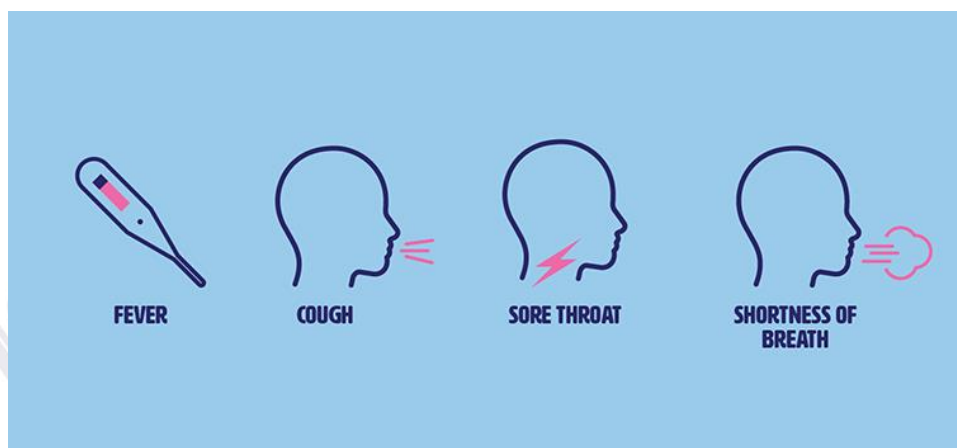
Our Fire Policy has been amended in line with government guidance to ensure that in the event of a fire, all children will be able to exit the building using their nearest exit, again without contaminating bubbles.

Each bubble has been allocated a socially distanced fire meeting point and on the children's induction day, we will run through the evacuation procedure with the children as well as having a fire drill practice.

Pupil Wellbeing

It is normal for children and young people to feel worried or anxious at the moment. We have all experienced sudden changes in our lives and routines, and we are living with lots of uncertainty about the coming weeks. For some children, the coronavirus pandemic may also worsen or trigger anxieties they were already struggling with. Our class teachers will continue to regularly talk to the children and ensure that, should any concerns arise, we work together to support your child at their time of need.

COVID-19 Symptoms and Medical Concerns



If any pupil starts to display COVID-19 symptoms when in school, they will be isolated in the isolation room in school and supervised by staff wearing PPE for medical settings. All Prep School staff are paediatric first aid trained.

You will be contacted and asked to collect your child without delay.

In order for your child to return to Prep School after showing symptoms, we will request that your child be tested. Details of how to book a test can be found on [www.gov.uk](https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test) <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>

Please note should this result be positive, all children and staff within the same 'bubble' will also be required to self-isolate for fourteen days.

We request that parents take an extremely cautious approach to sending children to school with symptoms of coughs, colds and seasonal conditions such as hay fever, however mild, to minimise the potential spread of infection within school and to wider households.

Until the Government track and trace system is widely operational, we will maintain our internal system of symptoms logging and tracing and will communicate any suspected cases to parents without delay.

The Bursar will inform Public Health England of any suspected cases within school and will follow their guidance and parents will be informed.

Protection in Prep School

The guidance does not require any PPE to be worn by staff or children whilst in school.

We have considered our approach in this regard however, and feel that it is important for staff to have access to PPE should they feel it necessary.

Staff may wear face masks and face shields and we will prepare children for seeing staff in PPE in our safety video.

Cleaning staff will also wear PPE to undertake their duties.

Desk shields will be used on teaching staff desks in Year 2 and above, and also in Mrs Morse's office.

Face masks are not recommended for the youngest children in school due to safety concerns. Older children may wear a face mask, but we would suggest only to do so if they are used to wearing a mask currently. Any pupils who wear a mask will be expected to behave sensibly when wearing the mask.

Food and Drink at Prep School

School will provide packed lunches for all pupils. These will be eaten in their bubble, in their allocated area of the school.

Wherever possible we will be eating outdoors.

Water bottles will be provided for all children and these will be clearly marked and washed daily in our dishwasher.

Keeping in Touch

You will receive a phone call from your child's class teacher each week, however if you need to speak to a staff member please phone the school. If we feel that a face-to-face meeting is most appropriate to your circumstances you will be given a time to meet the member of staff outside (if possible) or in a designated area.

Additional Questions

What if I do not want to send my child back to school this term?

As of 8th June, three year groups will be back in school full time. We fully understand that some parents may not want to send their children back to school at this time, especially those who live with elderly members of the family, or who have a vulnerable family member who is shielding to follow government guidance. The current guidance advises the following categories should also be cautious:

- Clinically extremely vulnerable: Should not attend and continue to shield.
- Clinically vulnerable: Very few children in this category. Staff in this category should work from home where possible.
- Child or Staff member living with extremely clinically vulnerable: If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home.
- Child or Staff member living with clinically vulnerable including pregnant: Can attend.

If you have any concerns, please do not worry, the 'Learning@Home' programme will continue to support you throughout this period. However, please do note that year group provisions will be altered once specific cohorts are all back in school as the focus for staff will be teaching the children in school. Children will still be able to access the learning taking place in school along with the live morning and afternoon class time and this will be communicated daily via email. We will liaise again directly with you to explain the programme further.

I have indicated that I am unsure or do not want my child to return to school but I have changed my mind. What should I do?

For those parents who responded with 'unsure' or have not yet replied, Mrs Morse will contact you in due course to confirm whether you plan on sending your child back to school. If you have indicated that they are not returning to school and have changed your mind on this matter, you must give school sufficient notice (at least 72 hours) for us to be able to accommodate this request, as we will need to make adjustments to the allocated 'bubbles' of children in classroom allocations and staffing.

Will my child be mixing with children of key workers?

Due to the May break, we have now had a period of time where children have not mixed at school. Children of Key Workers in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will therefore be kept separate from those in other year groups from 1st June so as not to contaminate the bubble of our children returning to school.

Is school transport running?

There will be no school transport in operation until further notice. Current government guidance does not recommend that children travel to school on coaches as social distancing is unable to be maintained. Parents should adhere to the timings given above when dropping off and collecting from school.