

A big welcome to Orritor Nursery Unit. We are very glad that you can finally join us on our induction days. We are so happy to finally meet you all.

To comply with Government guidelines our Nursery class this year will be seen as a bubble. That will mean the children and adults in the class will be kept together as one consistent group. The government guidance states that ‘*children, particularly very young children, cannot be reasonably expected to remain apart from each other during the day, and this is not conductive to play based learning and development …. Children within these groups* (the class bubbles) *will not be required to socially distance*.’ Resultant of these guidelines the children within our class will not be required to be kept apart throughout the day and will be allowed to mix as normal. As far as possible adults in the room will be required to social distance but as I am sure you can appreciate this is not always possible within the Nursery class.

This year is going to start in a bit of a different way. We wanted to create this document so you could see some of the changes we have had to make to ensure that everyone is kept safe.

We have changed our usual settling in patterns from settling small groups of 6/7 each week for the month of September. All Nurseries have a settling in period of around a month in September, part time to start with, and then gradually building up to full time. Therefore in Nursery no child would be attending full time at the beginning. We wanted to let you know our thinking behind keeping the class in two ‘mini bubbles’ to begin with.

* All children will attend school from the first week. This is important as if we had to enter lockdown again it means that every child has attended school for the same amount of time. In a worst-case scenario of lockdown in October it would mean that some children that were due to start Nursery at the end of September may only have been in the setting for a week.
* Children have all had different experiences over lockdown. Some may not have been out of your care or in another environment. They will also have seen a very limited amount of people. We feel that by keeping the small bubbles children will have an opportunity to have more adult interactions and get to know us and each other better. It also gives us as adults more time to spend with children who will find the settling in process a little harder.
* It gives us the best opportunity to work through the new normal and keep your child(ren) safe. This year will be different and by having lower numbers each day in September we can introduce children to new routines. We can also work through appropriate hand washing and cleaning routines to ensure everyone is as safe.

Over the next few paragraphs, we will outline some of the changes that we have had to make in Nursery. I want to apologise if any of the following sounds a little cold, but we must follow all Government guidelines. Our main aim is to keep our little Orritor Nursery Unit family as safe, happy and secure as possible.

The school building and housekeeping.

* Unfortunately, at present, due to Government guidance, we are not allowed adults into the Nursery building unless they have made an appointment. This can be done in person at pick up or drop off, by email (sthompson925@c2kni.net), seesaw app (send a note through your child’s journal) or phone (02886751412 and ask for Nursery). I can also be contacted in any of these ways at any time, although for a longer phone conversation please call after the children have gone home as they will always be our priority.
* Any adult who comes into the Nursery setting must wear a mask if they are able to do so.
* When school dinners start (week beginning 14th September) could all dinner money (at present £2.50 per day) please be placed in an envelope with your child’s name on it with the correct amount included, this will mean no change has to be sent home and will limit the need for the handling of money. If possible please pay by cheque made payable to The Education Authority.
* Snack / fund money. This is the money used in the day to day running of the Nursery. It is used to provide fruit and bread at snack times, pay towards visitors like zoo lab and rugby tots, some small toys, resources to make dough, moon sand, gloop and other sensory items, junk art resources like paper and collage materials, tissues, wipes, soap and other resources we use in Nursery. All this money goes directly to the children each year. In previous years we had a snack fund which was roughly 50p per day which worked out to be £10 per month. Usually this was paid weekly but due to current circumstances we would politely ask if this £10 could be paid at the beginning of each month to cut down on the need to handle money. Again, if this could be placed in a named envelope it would be much appreciated. Many thanks.
* Uniform – while coronavirus can land on fabrics and remain for some time, schools are not deemed a high risk environment and while all children should be encouraged to wear clean uniform or fresh clothes daily this is not essential.
* Any medication (E.g. asthma inhalers) must be kept in school and not taken home. If these are needed a medical form must be filled in. Please ask staff for more details.

Covid19

* Following government guidelines, it is extremely important that any child with symptoms of Covid19 should not attend school. If your child does have symptoms (or cannot attend school for any reason) please phone the school on 86751412 and let us know. Symptoms include

– a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature.

- a 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).

- anosmia – the loss or a change in your normal smell or taste.

* If a child does develop symptoms in school they will be isolated with adults in a well-ventilated room and an adult asked to come and collect them straight away. We ask that all adult contact details are up to date and you have a contact that is available close to school.
* If any of your household or close contacts have symptoms or confirmed cases of Covid19 it is important that you let us know straight away. If this is the case you must follow Public Health Guidelines and isolate for 14 days.
* Children should not be given medicine in the morning like Calpol or Ibuprofen to allow them to attend school as this can mask symptoms.

These rules regarding Covid-19 will be vigorously enforced by the school. It is important to keep everyone safe so if your child has any of the above symptoms do not send them to school.

The Nursery Day

Drop off

* Children can be dropped off from 9am to 9.20am to ease congestion around the door. When children have been dropped off please do not linger and return straight away to your car. One adult per child should attend drop off please.
* We ask that parents wait in their cars until Nursery doors are opened. At this point there are social distancing markers on the ground to ensure safe distances are maintained. A member of staff will be at the door to welcome children into the setting. They will then be helped to hang their coats on the peg and asked to wash their hands. Unfortunately, we cannot allow adults into the setting even if your child is upset. If your child is a little upset at the door, we suggest taking them for a little walk around the grounds and bringing them back in a few minutes when the congestion at the door has cleared. This will allow an adult from Nursery to focus on settling this child.
* In previous years children were able to bring a toy, blanket or item from home. We are no longer able to have children bring items to school every day. We do feel however that this is an important link with home and have been trying to find a way round this, as some children do need the comfort of a blanket or similar. If you think children will need a comfort item (no dummies please) from home they can bring something with them on their first days, unfortunately this will have to stay in school in their cubbie hole. So if you have a photo of your family, spare soft toy or blanket (whatever you feel your child may need) this can be sent in on the condition that it stays in their cubbie hole in school and is not brought home at the end of each day.
* One of our favourite things at drop off is seeing something important to a child, something they have found, or hearing some exciting news in the child’s life. Unfortunately due to circumstances children can no longer bring items into school and adults can no longer spend time at the school doors as we have to get all the children into the setting. To get round this we would encourage parents to send photographs or videos of your child with the item through see saw and we can discuss it during the day. The same with exciting events in your child’s life, if something exciting has happened please send us a quick message so we can celebrate it with your child. Anything at all, we would love to hear about it.

Resources

* At present due to Government guidelines we have had to limit some of the resources in Nursery – specifically toys that are very hard to clean, indoor sand, soft toys, soft furnishings and dressing up clothes however apart from that Nursery will be resourced as normal with cleaning of resources taking place each day.

Paintings and Artwork

* To reduce the amount of contact between Nursery and Home we will keep all artwork done by children in Nursery until the end of the week. Each Friday this artwork will be placed in individual children’s cubbie holes ready for the child(ren) to take home on Monday (or their first day back that week). This will mean all artwork will have been in ‘quarantine’ for at least 72 hours.

Getting Ready to Learn Nursery library and Nursery homework packs

* At Orritor Nursery we are taking part in the Getting Ready to Learn Scheme. Usually this involves the children taking several packs (books, physical development and homework packs) home throughout the year. Unfortunately, at the minute, in line with Government guidelines, we can no longer lend out our Nursery library books or homework packs. We are currently working with the Getting Ready to Learn scheme to come up with ways that we can still send items home that will support children as they get ready to learn, hopefully we will know more about this in the coming weeks and months. However, when all children are in full time, we hopefully plan to get our book packs up and running. These are packs with 5 books in them that the children take home for a week, one book for each school night. We have enough books to lend each child one pack a week and then ‘quarantine’ them for two weeks when they are returned to school. More information to follow.

Outdoors

* We plan to spend a lot of time outdoors. We would ask that a set of wellies is provided for each child. These will be kept in school to facilitate outdoor play. We also ask that you send a warm, waterproof coat (with your child’s name on it) with your child each day. If you like this coat can remain in school on your child’s peg although this is not a requirement. Just a quick reminder Nursery outdoors can get a little messy and muddy so please don’t send expensive coats! We aim to provide waterproof dungarees for each child so they will be dressed appropriately to play outdoors.
* If good weather is forecast, please also send a sunhat for your child with their name on it. On sunny days each child should also have sun cream on before they come to school as due to social distancing measures, we can no longer apply this.

Changing a child

* If a child has to be changed two adults will be present following Child Protection protocols. The adult who is changing, or helping the child to get changed, will be wearing PPE (mask, visor, apron and gloves) as they will be in close proximity to the child. We will show the children us wearing PPE in their first days so if this does arise children will be less wary.

Lunch

* Due to Covid restrictions we ask that no lunch boxes or water bottles be brought onto the premises. At Orritor Nursery we encourage all children to avail of the hot lunches provided. It is amazing what even fussy eaters will eat when they sit and eat with their peers. If your child does not eat their lunch we will inform you at pick up. Lunch will commence on the week beginning 14th September.

Pick up

* Pick up may take slightly longer than normal and we apologise in advance. As with drop off we ask that you either wait in your car or use the social distancing markers to wait for your child(ren). An adult will come to the door and call each child to leave the setting when their adult is at the door. As usual if anyone different is collecting your child please give us a call, send a note on seesaw or let us know in the morning.
* We have an electronic video door entry system and the doors are kept locked throughout the day. If you need access to Nursery between drop off and pick up times, please press the top silver button below the keypad and stand so the camera can see your face. Someone will then come to the door to allow access or you will hear a short beep and click which means the door has been electronically unlocked by an adult in the room, push the door after this beep to gain access. We would please ask than if you leave the building please ensure the door is shut tight behind you to keep us all safe.
* When all children are in school full time pick up will be between 1.10 and 1.30 pm to ease congestion. Again please move swiftly off the school premises.

Blended learning and communicating with home

* If the circumstances arise that we have to return to home schooling or blending learning (part time at home, part time at school) we will use seesaw to send tasks home and communicate with children / parents. This was the online learning portal that you got the code for in the welcome packs. Many of you have already used it with great success. We will also use this portal to send home some pictures of your child each week as you can no longer come into the setting and see your child at work. We would please ask that in the next few days you check can you access either the seesaw class app or seesaw webpage with the password we provided. We can also provide more passwords if you have lost or misplaced the ones from the pack! If you have any problems just let us know and we will try our best to help.
* General communication will take place on the school website [www.orritorps.co.uk](http://www.orritorps.co.uk). We will also use this webpage to post pictures of class activities so you can see some of the exciting things we get up to in Nursery. We may also have to place things that would previously have gone home as paper copies, like newsletters and dinner menus, on the website. If you have any issues accessing the internet let us know and we will try to make sure you get paper copies.

As you can see things will be a little different this year, but our aim is making Nursery the safe, fun, enjoyable learning environment it has always been.

I just want to reassure you we are here to work with you. We will do everything in our power to keep Nursery safe and as ‘normal’ as possible. The children are, and always will be, our main priority, we will look after them. I appreciate that some of you may be slightly worried, but you can be assured that everything will be done to make the transition for everyone as smooth as possible. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or email me at [sthompson925@c2kni.net](mailto:sthompson925@c2kni.net).

We hope you enjoyed your induction; we cannot wait for this year to start and look forward to all the fun we will have in Nursery.

Kind regards,

Sarah Thompson and Deborah Ferry.