



## **Whitsers Covid-19 Policy**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Whitsers has been required to make some key changes to their procedures and policies in line with the current government guidelines in order to minimise the risks of transmission in the setting. Whitsers will continually review guidance from the government and adjust our operational plan as required. Any changes to 'Whitsers Operational Plan' will be communicated to parents via email.

Whitsers will make every effort to offer children all sessions that have been requested, however it may be necessary to limit the number of children attending each session should government guidance require this and also taking into account the availability of staff (which may change due to illness, self-isolating or shielding). It may be necessary for each child to be restricted to only the funded hours they are eligible for i.e. 15 or 30 hr p/wk. If the demand for any specific session exceeds the available places Whitsers is able to offer, the following criteria will be used to assign priority:

- Vulnerable children
- Critical workers (as defined by the government)
- Pre-school children
- Funded 2's
- Children with working parents
- Children of parents requiring childcare in order to return to work
- Any other children

If children are not offered a place, parents/carers can appeal the decision by emailing Whitsers Chair – [whitserscommitteechair@gmail.com](mailto:whitserscommitteechair@gmail.com)

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Wherever possible Whitsers would encourage children to only attend one setting to reduce the risk of contracting/spreading the Covid virus. The exception to this is for critical workers if they cannot secure a place for their child elsewhere.

Any sessions that have been allocated which are not covered by Funded Hours will be invoiced at our usual rate (currently £5.00 per hour). If 'Whitsers' is required to close in line with Government advice then a refund or credit of unused sessions that have been paid for will be offered wherever possible, at the discretion of the Committee, as long as it is financially viable for 'Whitsers' to do so. If Whitsers is able to remain open during a National Lockdown, then any parent choosing not to send their child to Whitsers will be asked to pay half fees that would be due. This only covers time during a National Lockdown implemented by the Government and is at the discretion of the Committee. If a parent chooses not to send their child after the Lockdown period has ended, then full fees will be payable.

The daily running of the setting will remain unchanged and we will still follow the EYFS framework to continue to allow the children to learn and grow. There will be a few changes to ensure that all children, their families and the staff are kept safe throughout the session. The following changes will be made to ensure social distancing is maintained.

- Staff will try to physically distance themselves from one another as much as possible.
- Parents/carers are unable to enter the building so therefore will be required to queue outside making sure they adhere to the social distancing marks on the pavement.
- During drop off and pick up time the parents/carers also need to be aware of maintaining the social distancing with other parents/carers by sticking to the two-meter rule.
- Parents/carers are also asked to try to park away from the doors and other cars in order to provide more space for distancing.

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- All parents and carers are asked to wear a face covering (unless exempt) when dropping off and collecting children from Whitsers.
- During the session we will encourage the children to socially distance at snack and lunchtime.
- We are aware that some children may be unsettled so if a child needs comfort from a member of staff during the session, please rest assured the staff will comfort them in the same way as we have done prior to Covid-19.
- All non-essential visitors and contractors will only be permitted into the building outside of Whitsers opening hours or by prior notice ensuring face masks are worn and social distancing maintained.
- There will be no face to face meetings with staff, parents or committee – these will be held via phone calls or video conferencing (e.g. Zoom)
- If parents would like to speak with staff members confidentially, they will be able to do so by arranging a phone call meeting or by email.
- The layout of the preschool room may be altered to ensure activities will be adequately spaced apart. Furniture and equipment will be placed so that free movement is possible.
- All paperwork will be handed over electronically in order to maintain social distancing.

To help new children settle into Whitsers the staff have recorded a video that talks them through how staff will greet them and take them from their parents at the door. Parents have been asked to speak to their child prior to their start about the procedures that will be in place and how it will affect them.

Settling-in sessions are not currently possible for new starters at Whitsers. Once a parent has accepted a place for their child at Whitsers they will be offered the chance to visit Whitsers with their child on a Monday or Friday afternoon when no other children are at the setting. This will give the parent and child a chance to meet staff and look

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around the setting. During these visits staff and parents will maintain social distancing and parents are asked to bring and wear a face covering for the duration of the visit. The parent and child should not attend the visit if they, or anyone in their household, is displaying symptoms of Covid-19.

In order to keep children safe whilst at Whitsers the following will be implemented

- Any toys that cannot be cleaned easily, such as soft toys, cushions, dolls, dressing up clothes will be quarantined after use.
- Carpets will still be used but are hoovered and cleaned regularly.
- Cups and plates used at snack time will be cleaned after each use with Milton.
- All lunch boxes and drinks bottles are cleaned before being placed in the fridge
- The pre-school staff will prepare the snack, wearing PPE (apron, mask and gloves) and it will be served pre-plated.
- Ensure stringent cleaning processes for all food preparation areas, tables and chairs
- Children will not be allowed to bring book bags into the setting and artwork will be sent home a week after it is created.
- Children will be discouraged from bringing in toys from home.
- Extra hand washing routines will be encouraged throughout the session and incorporated in activities.
- Tissues station are in place around the setting & children are encouraged to catch it and bin it as part of our normal daily routine.
- All bins are emptied regularly and disinfected.
- Doors open where possible to ensure good ventilation.
- Cleaning will be maintained daily by a designated member of the setting staff, paying particular attention to high touch areas:
  - Taps and washing facilities
  - Toilet flush and seat
  - Door handles and push plates
  - All areas used for eating including tables and chairs

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- Bins
- Telephone
- Tablets and telephone
- Printer
- Keyboards

At Whitsers we will implement the following practical measures to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus

- “Authorised staff only” posters displayed on main hall doors
- Staff are testing themselves using Covid-19 rapid lateral flow tests 3 times a week on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.
- Markers on floor on path in carpark, 2 metre reminders
- All staff are aware of symptoms of COVID-19 and know how to respond:
  1. *HIGH TEMPERATURE*
  2. *A NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH*
  3. *LOSS OR CHANGE IN SENSE OF SMELL*
- Adults and children displaying symptoms of Covid 19 are not permitted to enter the building and will need to arrange to have a test and if necessary self-isolate for the required time, currently 10 days. Posters will be displayed at entrance to hall.
- If we have concerns that a child looks unwell we will take their temperature. If the child has any symptoms, they will be sent away to self-isolate and book a test.
- If a child displays symptoms whilst in the setting, they will be taken by a member of staff to an isolation area whilst waiting for collection. These children will then have to be off preschool for 10 days and arrange to have a test.
- Staff to wear PPE if they can't adhere to 2 metre rule when dealing with an ill child
- Clean isolation area thoroughly, wearing PPE
- Staff, children and their household to have a COVID -19 test if needed

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- If a staff member or child tests positive for COVID-19, the rest of the bubble/group will be sent home to self-isolate for the appropriate amount of time (currently 10 days) and 'Whitsers' may have to close temporarily
- If there is a suspected case, a deep clean is necessary &/or the playroom will be secured for 72 hours
- Staff to maintain social distancing rules where possible
- Extra hand washing routines will be encouraged throughout the session and incorporated in activities
- A deep clean is carried out at the preschool and the memorial hall each half term, all equipment was cleaned with Milton and disinfectant spray.
- A plentiful supply of disinfectant spray & cleaning materials is permanently available throughout the setting & any additional cleaning on an ad hoc basis is encouraged
- Only disposable paper towels will be used, as there are no on-site laundry facilities.
- Additional cleaning to all surfaces will be carried out before the children arrive & when they have all left the setting.
- Cleaning tick list to be completed before and after session
- COSHH cleaning list and risk assessment updated
- Parents will be encouraged not to bring in toys or other items from home. This will be communicated as part of their return email and reminded when their child arrives.
- Staff to wear preschool uniform and remove when they get home and wash, ready for next session

At Whitsers we will use PPE in the setting in line with government guidance and the local authority will be supplying PPE for use if a child develops symptoms. Staff will be trained in the safe way of removing PPE. During nappy changing or cleaning up bodily fluids, staff will wear an apron and gloves. Whitsers will ensure they have a good supply of aprons, disposable gloves and masks. At all other times the recommended handwashing and hygiene regime will be used.

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