

# Skool Is Out COVID-19 Guidelines and Procedures for Parents/Carers (August 2021)



All guidelines and procedures are as outlined in the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance for School Age Childcare Services](#) document.

## Coronavirus Protection Alert Levels

We have now moved beyond level 0 of the Coronavirus Protection/Alert Level system, meaning that some of the mitigations previously in place are no longer necessary. We will, however, continue to deploy numerous risk mitigation protocols across our childcare services to further enhance our infection prevention and control measures, as per the relevant government guidelines.

## Collection Procedures

Footfall will continue to be minimised across the premises and parents/carers will be expected to continue to wait outside when collecting children. Parents/carers should maintain a minimum of 1 meter physical distance from others, use hand gels provided before pressing buzzers, and ensure face coverings are worn at all times.

## Group Bubbles/Cohorts

There are now no restrictions placed on group sizes when cohorting children and, thus, children will no longer be required to bubble in class-specific cohort groups when attending the after school clubs – this means our James Gillespie's and Bruntsfield Primary children will be able to freely mix with other groups at our respective club venues (P1-3 and P4-7). All JGPS primary 4 children will move up to our P4-7 club, along with all BPS P4-7 children, from 18<sup>th</sup> August onwards.

Should the Coronavirus Protection Level change we may re-introduce group bubbles/cohorts with immediate effect, based on the most up-to-date guidance.

## Outdoor Play

We will continue to maximise outdoor play opportunities for children in line with best-practice guidelines. Please ensure children have appropriate outdoor clothing.

## Infection Prevention and Control

Enhanced protocols will remain in place, including physical distancing between adults, wearing of face coverings for staff while based indoors, twice daily cleaning of touch surfaces and resources, vigilance to COVID-19 symptoms and adherence to the relevant isolation protocols, increased signage and implementation of one way systems.

## Self-Isolation

From 9th August, close contacts for those aged over 5 but under 18 will be released from the requirement to self-isolate subject to a negative PCR test. This would mean that close contacts (as identified by NHS Test and Protect) over the age of 5 but under 18 will be advised to book a PCR test as soon as possible, and only end self-isolation and return to the childcare setting if they receive a negative PCR test result. This decision reflects the relative risks of COVID-19 infection, transmission, and harms amongst the under 18s, and the significant and sustained educational harms that result from current self-isolation policy.

**Ventilation**

Enhanced ventilation will be in place and windows and doors may be open during the session, where possible. Our venues have large halls with high ceilings and we will be undertaking outdoor play wherever possible.

**Staffing**

There will be no restrictions on the use of agency or peripatetic staffing, however, we will continue to ensure consistency of staffing between venues to minimise risk as much as possible. Staff will continue to take twice-weekly Lateral Flow Tests.

**School Collections**

We will continue to collect children from defined collection points on-site at James Gillespie's and Bruntsfield Primaries, and our staff will adhere to all necessary protocols when on-site at either school. We will send across a register of all children attending the after school club to both schools on a weekly basis.

**Ad Hoc Sessions**

We hope to reintroduce ad-hoc sessions from August 2021, subject to staffing and availability. We require 24 hours' notice of any requests for one-off sessions and payment should be arranged in advance of childcare.

**Outings, Workshops and Clubs Collections**

We hope to recommence outings and workshops from September 2021 onwards and will ensure all parents/carers receive further information in due course.

In previous years we arranged collections from clubs based on-site at James Gillespie's Primary. There are currently restrictions on clubs operating from the school, but we intend to recommence collections once clubs are up and running again, subject to demand and staffing availability.

**Children's Personal Effects**

At Protection Level 0 and beyond children can now bring in items from home, but we will still discourage this to minimise the risk of cross contamination. Any items from home are also brought into the club at children's own risk. Please note, we do not permit items such as mobile telephones or hand-held games consoles at the clubs.

**Communication and Visits**

The majority of our communications will continue to take place via email or over the phone, as opposed to in person. If you have any questions or concerns, or you wish to discuss please contact us via email, or contact the club directly at 07815798808 (P1-3 families) or 07713999069 (P4-7). We will send across regular newsletters and consultations via email to keep you abreast of what is happening at the after school clubs.

Visits from parents/carers are only permitted to the club if it is essential as part of children's transition or wellbeing. Any visits should be arranged in advance and in consultation with the Childcare Manager.

### **Absence Notification**

Please ensure we are notified in advance if your child/ren will be absent from the club for any reason. This is particularly important to minimise time spent on-site at school premises and reduce unnecessary stress and inconvenience for our staff team and other children.

### **Snacks**

In order to minimise the risk of cross contamination snacks will continue to be served to children by our staff team until further notice. Snacks will be offered to all children upon arrival at the club and food items will be removed once all children have been offered a snack. All plates and crockery used will be cleaned in a dishwasher using a two-stage cleaning process, while all staff preparing and serving snack will have the appropriate food hygiene certificates and PPE.

We request that parents/carers do not supply personal snacks to children until further notice. If your child/ren has any specific dietary requirements please notify us in advance and we will ensure snack provision is amended accordingly for your child. Please note that Skool Is Out do not supply any snacks containing nuts.

### **Further Restrictions**

Restrictions on the use of soft furnishings, malleable play equipment, 72 hours quarantining of resources from outside the club environment and resource sharing have now all been lifted. Likewise, children are now permitted to undertake singing as part of structured, planned play activities.

### **Wellbeing and Support**

We are conscious that the return to school and after school care in the current circumstances may be challenging and we understand there may be a period of adjustment and transition for both children and adults at the clubs.

Our staff are being provided with workplace support and training and will ensure they continue to offer your children the same high levels of support and understanding during this challenging time. Staff will be available to offer guidance, reassurance, and comfort to children as and when this is required, and we trust all children will be reassured by the measures implemented at our clubs to maximise their health and safety.

Please also feel free to access [Coronavirus: A Book for Children](#), illustrated by Axel Scheffler, which offers guidance and reassurance for primary-aged children.

[How to Stay Calm in a Global Pandemic](#) by Dr. Emma Hepburn is also available for any adults suffering from stress or anxiety relating to the current situation.