



Covid-19

Frequently Asked Questions



We receive many questions from parents about how we are managing the school in response to the threat from the Covid-19 pandemic. Putting together firm plans in a situation where the rules are changing so often, is difficult. Nevertheless, we do have plans, and these FAQs are designed to answer the questions parents might have about reopening in September and how we are responding to the threat from Covid-19.

These FAQs will be updated regularly and updates will be posted on the Covid-19 page of the School website.

	Question	Answer
1.	<i>What measures are you currently envisaging for the new academic year?</i>	We are planning for different scenarios. Each scenario is being assessed with pupils' educational experience in mind, along with boarding care, pupils' physical and mental wellbeing, and opportunities for involvement in the co-curriculum and activities.
2.	<i>What plans has the School made to protect pupils from coronavirus?</i>	We have developed a range of policies and regularly update a dynamic risk assessment to cover areas relevant to the current crisis. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- a whole school risk assessment and actions- boarding house risks assessment and actions- isolation and infection control policy update for Covid-19
3.	<i>Does the school have a plan for overseas boarders and for boarders in general for a return in September?</i>	We are expecting boarding to be open from September as boarding houses can be classed as a household and there is no government limit on the number of boarders in a residence. We are working in line with the Boarding Schools' Association's (BSA) recommendations on this. We will be taking measures to ensure that boarding is as safe as possible. We have protocols in place if any boarder falls ill or catches the virus, to ensure it does not spread to the wider school community. We have had boarders attend school continuously since the start of April and throughout lockdown, and this has gone very well.

4.	<i>How will the boarding houses be affected by coronavirus and/or social distancing issues?</i>	<p>As already mentioned, a boarding house acts as one household so pupils do not need to be socially distanced at all times, although we will take sensible precautions and educate pupils in being prudent in the way that they spend time with one another in the boarding house.</p> <p>Precautions will include allocating bathrooms to particular groups, ensuring pupils keep a sensible distance from one another in communal spaces including lounges, TV and Games rooms, and the IT rooms. Rooms in the boarding house will also be arranged to allow for social distancing and to ensure that boarders can still socialise and do so safely. Currently we have two boarding houses operating where this is already happening and it is working well. We plan to continue with this.</p>
5.	<i>What measures will you put into place to comply with social distancing rules if class sizes are limited to 15-20 pupils?</i>	<p>We currently have extensive measures in place to cope with current Government guidelines. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Putting children into classes of less than 15 so they can space out within the classroom - A team of staff is allocated to each class and they do not work with any other classes - Flexi Boarding and Boarding pupils are in separate classes - Each class has its own main classroom, toilet facilities and break areas - Pupils are encouraged to practice regular and thorough hand washing - Where a different classroom is used, there is thorough cleaning before another class uses it - Lunch times are staggered with social distancing in place for queuing and seating. Each class has its own seating area which is cleaned before another class use it - Separate drop-off and collection points for each class - Pupils are not wearing blazers, so it is easier to follow the advice from Public Health England to wash clothes each day when the child returns from school <p>We are awaiting Government guidelines on expectations for September. Once these are outlined we will review our protocol above to ensure that we continue to abide by Government instructions and communicate this to parents accordingly.</p>
6.	<i>Will the school quarantine pupils before the start of term?</i>	<p>We have put in place the facility to offer 14 days quarantine for overseas pupils who are unable to make other arrangements for quarantine. At the moment we are assessing demand for this service. The quarantine would start on 17th August and there would be a charge for pupils who are at school for quarantine (amount to be determined). This service is strictly for those pupils who are required to undergo quarantine by as required by the Government.</p>

7.	<i>Will you carry out testing for coronavirus?</i>	We have an arrangement whereby the South East Coast Ambulance service will bring tests to our school if any pupil develops symptoms. This will speed up the process of receiving results.
8.	<i>Will the School be staying open for the October half term?</i>	We are reviewing whether we would need to stay open for half term for overseas pupils. It will depend on Government policy at the time. A decision about this will be made in September.
9.	<i>If there is another outbreak, will the School stay open?</i>	Our response will depend on where the outbreak is i.e. if it is a national outbreak, regional ‘spike’ or if it is within the School. In any event, we aim to remain open throughout, although this is very much dependant on Government guidelines. We have a plan for pupils to stay in School and receive medical and pastoral support. There are extreme circumstances (such as widespread staff illness) where we may have to close but we will do everything in our power to remain open and support pupils at School.
10.	<i>What if the School has to shut due to a second wave of coronavirus?</i>	<p>We would revert to online learning, as we did in March. We regularly review our online offering to ensure pupils receive engaging, productive and meaningful courses. We have been delivering lessons remotely since the start of lock down. Our current online learning protocol is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are expected to work at home as per their timetabled day; • Work is set and communicated to pupils by 8.30am on the day of the lesson at the latest; • Work for the lesson that day is e-mailed to pupils; • Some staff are working with Microsoft Teams in which case an e-mail will go out alerting pupils of work set on Microsoft Teams; • The work set is designed to match the lesson duration – pupils are encouraged to bear this in mind when completing work to avoid rushing or working for unhealthy amounts of time; • Pupils are not set prep in addition. <p>For many reasons, we have not made video lessons our main mode of lesson delivery; however, many staff are delivering lessons via video.</p> <p>If, for any reason, remote learning continues next term, we will be potentially altering our remote learning protocol and it is likely that this may include an increased number of video lessons. At present, we are looking at potential scenarios and then planning for how we will be able to ensure teaching and learning is delivered to the highest possible standard. As soon as we have Government guidance, we will communicate this with stakeholders.</p>

		Our aim is to remain open for Key Worker and Vulnerable pupils if this continues to be Government guidance.
11.	<i>If there is a second wave and the school is affected, will the school be able to continue operating and offering full education with face to face lessons every day, or will boarders have to do online lessons?</i>	<p>This will in part depend upon any Government instructions. We are able to move to online learning if circumstances require this, and all our boarding houses are equipped with fast wi-fi in all rooms to support remote learning.</p> <p>It is more likely, if stringent social distancing continues, that we may be able to offer a mixture of in-school learning for some of the time and remote learning online in the boarding houses for the rest of the time. The balance will depend upon the Government guidelines and what we feel is best for pupils educationally and for their wellbeing.</p>
12.	<i>Where will pupils stay if they fall ill with Covid-19?</i>	We have an onsite Health Centre with 11 beds. Pupils will be isolated in the Health Centre whilst they wait for their parent or Guardian to pick them up. For boarder families where this is not possible we have developed a plan for pupils to be cared for in an isolation area for the required period.
13.	<i>Will pupils remain in 'bubbles' or groups?</i>	This will depend upon Government social distancing guidelines. Currently pupils are in small silos (or bubbles) of a maximum of 15 pupils and do not interact with other pupils. We are hoping that this will not to be necessary in September, so that pupils can learn together in their classes. Sensible seating plans with separation is likely to be adopted.
14.	<i>Will you need 'Covid free' certificates for boarders before they come to school in September?</i>	We will ask parents to sign a declaration that their child does not have symptoms of Covid-19. At present there are no plans for a formal certificate or test prior to returning. If feedback and future guidelines require a different approach, this will be looked into.
15.	<i>If a child quarantines in the UK with family/friends/guardian for 14 days, will you need evidence that they came to the UK before 19th August?</i>	We will ask parents to complete a declaration and give evidence of flight details.
16.	<i>Will pupils be required to wear face masks in School?</i>	<p>The Government guidance on face masks in schools is: <i>'Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended.'</i></p> <p>There is therefore no requirement for pupils to wear face masks, but if a child wants to wear a face covering, this will be permitted. The face covering should be a mask that is specifically</p>

		designed to act as a barrier for the face. Any other form of face covering will not be permitted unless authorised by the School.
17.	<i>Will the boarders eat in the Dining Hall or in their houses?</i>	Boarders will eat in the Dining Hall, as they are doing at the moment. Pupils receive individually wrapped cutlery and the Dining Hall has been arranged to allow for social distancing during meals, with seats appropriately spaced out. It is working well. If current restrictions continue, each boarding house will eat together in a separate section of the Dining Hall, or at particular set times.
18.	<i>If boarders need to go home due to coronavirus, will you continue their schooling with online lessons even if local flexi boarding pupils are physically attending school?</i>	Yes. This is currently what is happening at the moment. Our teachers are setting online learning for many pupils who cannot not physically attend school, whilst supervising and delivering lessons in school to pupils who are already attending, such as pupils whose parents are key workers.
19.	<i>What is your policy on refunding boarding fees if the school closes due to a second wave, or even the school does not open in September?</i>	This summer term, when we have not been open for most boarders but have been supporting pupils with remote learning, we have charged only 50% of the term's fees. We are expecting the School to be open for boarding from September. If a second wave occurs and Government guidelines mean we are required to close, we anticipate that this will be for a short period. A concession of fees will depend on the circumstances, Government guidelines and information at the time. There are a number of factors, many of which we cannot at this point predict, that will be taken into consideration.
20.	<i>Will the School have contact sports e.g. rugby?</i>	<p>Currently, due to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, full-contact rugby is not allowed to be played. The Rugby Football Union (RFU) has a return to play protocol of 6 stages of which we are currently at level 2. We have to be at level 6 before we can return to full rugby. As a result, there will be no fixtures in the first half of next term however it may be possible to start training in the Autumn Term (subject to Government and RFU guidelines).</p> <p>We are planning to have a revised sports programme that focuses on strength and conditioning and sport education for at least the first half of term. Any sport that we put into the programme will be guided by the Government and national governing body guidelines at the time. This could of course change nearer the time.</p>
21.	<i>Will there be a full co-curriculum programme in the Autumn Term?</i>	We hope to have a full co-curricular programme in September however this will be subject to Government guidelines with regards to reopening of schools for September. In previous years, the co-curricular brochure would be issued at the end of the summer term and the sign-up

		process be completed at the end of the summer holiday however this will be slightly delayed as the school awaits further updates from the Government.
22.	<i>Will there be any school trips in the Autumn term?</i>	We very much hope so. We are waiting for further Government advice on school trips – currently they are not allowed to happen.
23.	<i>Will there be an opportunity to try on Akuma sports kit before buying it this summer?</i>	<p>We usually have sessions during the summer where Akuma bring in sports kit to the school so pupils can try it on before an order is placed. Unfortunately, because of social distancing rules, we won't be able to have trying-on sessions this year.</p> <p>Akuma have agreed that items can be exchanged if they are not the right size, however this doesn't apply where the item has been personalised i.e. a child's name put on a hoodie.</p>
24.	<i>The School has adopted the Boarding Schools' Association COVID-SAFE Charter. What does that mean?</i>	The BSA COVID-SAFE Charter is a voluntary code to which schools can adhere, and which aims to give confidence to everyone that the school is following all appropriate measures to ensure that boarding is a safe environment for pupils. We have adopted this Charter as it requires measures we are already carrying out to keep pupils safe. We believe it reinforces best practice amongst boarding schools.