

Full Return to School January 2022 Frequently Asked Questions

As to be expected, we are receiving a number of questions regarding the full return to school on the 5th January 2022 and we thought it would be helpful to prepare a list of FAQs which will be updated on a regular basis.

The Q&A's below are based on the UK Government's latest guidance, and we will update as and when the guidance is changed.

For any further queries please refer to the contact list at the end of this document

1. **Full re-opening** – The current guidance is that the schools in England will fully reopen this January and this includes independent boarding schools. As a school, we are planning to fully reopen but as per our most recent communication to parents, we are following the government's latest guidelines. The school is required to complete a risk assessment, which has been completed and will be published on the school's website. It will be regularly updated based upon the government's latest guidance.
2. **Is social distancing still required** – social distancing measures have now been ended within school settings.
3. **New restrictions applied for lock-downs** - In the event of new lock-down restrictions applying, the school already has in place a robust and comprehensive virtual learning programme which, should the need arise, we can switch on immediately.
4. **How will pupil illnesses be managed** – Pupils are able to return to school but we are asking parents to make us aware of any underlying / new health conditions, so that we can consider this and consult with the relevant health professionals. Where a pupil has a normal non-covid-19 related illness, pupils will be cared for in the normal way by the school's excellent Medical Centre along with the Pastoral team. In the event of a suspected covid-19 case, the school will be required to follow the guidelines as set out in the government's latest guidance.
5. **Will the school be testing** – all schools are required to test all pupils once on their return to school.

As per last time, the school will be using the Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFD)s will support the return to face-to-face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.

After the school has completed the first test, all pupils and staff are then required to self-test twice weekly. Testing remains voluntary but strongly encouraged.

If the test results are negative the pupil will be able to re-engage with their studies. In the event of a positive test the school will be required to follow the government's latest guidance on-self isolating and booking a PCR test.

6. **Travel arrangements overseas (quarantine)** – All children and staff travelling to England must adhere to government travel advice in travel to England from another country during coronavirus (COVID-19). Parents travelling abroad should bear in mind the impact on their child's education which may result from any requirement to quarantine or isolate upon return. Where pupils travel from abroad to attend a boarding school, you will need to explain the rules to pupils and their parents before they travel to the UK.
7. **Transport** – The school will continue to run its minibus service to and from Tring railway station in accordance with the latest government guidance, with specific regard to hygiene. For those pupils who use public transport, the latest government guidance states, "Pupils should keep the use of public transport to a minimum. Where possible pupils should avoid using it and where this is not possible please make sure your son or daughter follows the guidance for travelling on public transport which can be found here": <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>
8. **What steps are the school taking to ensure Hygiene standards are met?** – In accordance with the latest government guidance, the school is continuing with appropriate cleaning across the school day, evenings and weekends.
9. **Will the school be restricting the number of visitors?** - In the short term, as we get back to some level of normality, visitors will be restricted to essential people visiting the school only. Regrettably in the short-term we must ask that parents only visit the school when absolutely necessary; if you need to, please make an appointment in advance.
10. **Will teaching resume as usual?** - We are aiming to operate as close to a normal timetable as possible.
11. **Will there be an online programme for those pupils unable to return to school due to travel restrictions?** – As a school, we do now have an established virtual learning programme, both academic and vocational. However, our plan is based on all pupils returning to school at the start of term. If there are individual and exceptional circumstances in which a pupil is unable to return, then the school will discuss online virtual learning arrangements.
12. **What will classrooms and studios look like?** – School will resume as normal.
13. **What will happen to music lessons?** - Music lessons will now resume as normal but in accordance with the government's latest guidelines.
14. **Will parent teacher consultations take place?** – Last year we (and parents) found that the virtual parent / teacher consultations worked well and our plan is to continue with these.
15. **Examinations** – In accordance with the latest government guidance the January mock exams will continue as normal
16. **How will the cleaning of pupils' bedrooms be arranged? (Boarding)** - To mitigate risk of infection, pupils will be expected to continue to take greater responsibility for the

cleaning of their rooms. This will include making their bed daily and keeping their rooms clean and tidy, which will enable the housekeeping staff to undertake enhanced cleaning. Pupils should only bring a minimum amount of personal belongings to assist this.

17. How will laundry be managed? – We will be resuming a normal laundry service. Pupils will be expected to wear the appropriate uniform during the school day and they will organise their laundry as usual. For this system to work we need your support in sewing in clear labels with your child's name – on every item.

18. What will happen if a student or member of staff becomes ill or has symptoms? – Pupils, staff and other adults should follow public health advice on when to self-isolate and what to do. They should not come into school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, they are required to quarantine). If anyone at school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, they will be sent home and they should follow public health advice.

If a pupil in a boarding school shows symptoms, they should usually self-isolate in their residential setting so that their usual support can continue, others may then benefit from self-isolating in their family home.

For everyone with symptoms, they should avoid using public transport and, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household.

19. Will pupils be able to go out at weekends? – Towards the end of the Autumn term we did allow pupils to go out again. We will continue with this but keep it monitored and we may have to limit pupils going out if cases in the local area start to increase.

20. Will pupils be able to rehearse in the studios in the evenings? – Yes normal rehearsals at evenings and weekends will resume.

21. Will there be any performances in the Spring term? – We are pleased to advise that the normal calendar of shows and performances will take place in the spring term.

22. The use of Face Masks: - Face coverings help protect the wearer and others against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of COVID-19. Where pupils in year 7 (which would be children who were aged 11 on 31 August 2021) and above are educated, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by pupils, staff and adult visitors when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas. This is a temporary measure. From January 4th, we also recommend that in those schools where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn in classrooms. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons. This will also be a temporary measure. Pupils in these schools must also wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and should wear it on dedicated transport to and from school. We would not ordinarily expect teachers to wear a face covering in the classroom if they are at the front of the class, to support education delivery, although

settings should be sensitive to the needs of individual teachers.

CONTACTS

Should you have further queries then please contact the following:-

Pastoral

Please contact the relevant Senior Housemistress/master or the Pastoral Manager, at

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Vocational & Academic

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Latest Government Guidance

Department for Education – Guidance for the full opening of schools: -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance>