



25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents & Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to update you regarding our plans this half term for **Boarding** and outline our revised protocols in light of the UK Government's decision to open schools commencing Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. As you can imagine we are constantly receiving updates and advice from various bodies connected to boarding schools and the government and we are having to act on the information we have in front of us at the time: not easy when things are constantly evolving.

Please note that we will update the weekly Parent Newsletter as things evolve, and, in addition, all letters and communications regarding the weeks ahead will be placed on the [dedicated website](#) on which we are gathering all such information for parents.

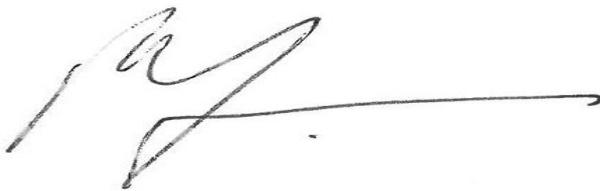
I would also like to mention how impressed we have been with the resilience and adaptability of the Boarders during the first half of this term of online learning, and how much we are looking forward to welcoming them back to their Boarding Houses in just over a week. The following protocols will be in place for their return:

1. As Mr Goodyer has already indicated in his letter to you, Boarders who are able to return to school, and who have completed any Government requirements to quarantine following travel, should return to Bede's on **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March** to allow them to take a Covid-19 test onsite. Full details about the test and booking information will be released early next week. Boarders should travel with a parent or guardian by car to Bede's for their booked appointment, take the test and then wait for their result. Boarders should not carshare unless they have come from the same 'Household Bubble'. If the test is negative the Boarder can then return directly to the Boarding House; if positive they will have to return to their parent or guardian's home and follow the government's isolation guidance for those who have tested positive for Covid-19 (namely take a PCR test and self-isolate for 10 days).
2. All Weekly and Full Boarders must wear masks during the school day whilst in the communal areas of the Boarding House to reduce the risk of infection, but will form a 'Boarding Bubble' during the evenings and weekends where they can remove their face coverings should they choose to do so when in the House.
3. Weekly and Full Boarders will **remain at school until the Easter holiday** - 'weekend leave outs' are cancelled. We do understand that some weekly boarders will have exceptional reasons for not being able to remain in school, but with a greater risk of transmission in the community than when we broke up before Christmas (owing to the new variants of the virus), we want to keep our 'Boarding Bubble' intact as far as possible. Boarding pupils will also not be allowed any "leave outs" mid-week.
4. Our Boarders weekend programme will be amended to reflect the new lockdown rules. Friday evenings will now be based in Houses with some options in school for sporting activities by House. Saturday mornings will also be based in school with sports training and internal competitions being offered for Boarders. Saturday afternoon shopping buses will be cancelled: houses will provide an alternative source of shopping to enable pupils to buy essentials (including allocated slots at the School and Village shops). Saturday evenings will be House-based with entertainment being provided across the Houses including online opportunities to socialise. Sunday Trips will be cancelled - we hope to be able to provide some activities in school on Sunday and the possibility of local walks although this may be impossible with the government lockdown rules about only exercising with one other person currently remaining in force.

5. For our **International Pupils** there will be the added concerns regarding return travel to school and the associated requirement to quarantine. We are offering another **Quarantine Programme** to take place at the Senior School, at the end of the Easter Holidays should you wish to use this as an option, to make the return to Bede's easier and less stressful for our boarding community. In addition, to reduce the length of quarantine we will operate the "test to release" option, where after 5 full days of isolating, pupils will then take a PCR test and upon a negative result will be able to interact with their boarding household. Pupils will still be required to take a further test on day 8. This programme will start on the **9th of April** which gives us more than the 7 days suggested. This allows extra time to carry out all the PCR testing and results to be returned. It will also give a good opportunity for the pupils to be able to interact (once a negative result is received and within their household bubble) prior to the start of school. Full details of the Easter Programme and information on how to register have been emailed to the parents of International Boarders by our Assistant Director of Summer School, Mr Danny Kenward, and can also be found in this week's parent newsletter and on the [dedicated website](#). Unfortunately, this option is not open to Boarders travelling from countries on the government's 'Red List'.
6. Once Boarders have returned to the school one particular area of concern for us is the mingling of pupils in the bus bay at the end of the school day, when boarders and day students can tend to mix together. Please can you help us reinforce the message that there *must* be adherence to **social distancing guidelines**. Boarders should return to their House after lessons and not mingle at the bus bay. We also ask that masks are worn around the school site at all times and that Day Boarders make their way directly onto buses and do not congregate in groups prior to embarking on the buses.
7. **Online 'blended' lessons** will continue to be available for the rest of this half term for those Boarders who are unable to attend School in person until the Easter Quarantine Programme.

There will be further updates as we get further guidance from the Government, but in the meantime, please contact your child's Housemaster or Housemistress if you have any general questions about the return to school, or [Mr Danny Kenward](#) with any questions about our Easter Quarantine Programme.

Best wishes,



**Paul Juniper**  
Head of Boarding