



1st September, 2020

Dear boarding parents and boarders,

Return to Boarding - September 2020.

I apologise for the delay in sending out this third and final update about the return to boarding, but felt that it was provident to have let you receive the wider details about the whole-school return, sent out by the Headmaster on 26th August.

His communication is based on a number of Senior management team meetings, at which I was present and, as such, should be considered as the primary source of overall advice and guidance. If there are any deviations or anomalies in what follows here, then please let me know and I will try to address them. We are back in school as a whole boarding team from Thursday of this week, and this will allow us to go through the plans and to see how the boarding provision will actually look and feel like, ahead of the boys' return on Monday evening, 7th September.

I have kept in some of the key points from the previous communication but anything new or amended has been highlighted in *italics*.

General points:

- More House can open up for *all* boarders from September, in line with national guidelines and safe parameters.
- We continue to plan so that each age group in boarding will be in its own age-group bubble or 'household' within boarding. We will be planning some additional minor alterations and plenty of signage for boarders so that we can maintain these separate areas. All boarders will be given clear and frequent reminders about what, where or how the new arrangements will look like, plus the key reasoning behind them.
- *Boarders will find that there are some new arrangements such as separate entry / exit points for each age group corridor which will be explained to them by house staff upon their arrival back in boarding. There will also be new rules about some of their social common room areas, which they must follow from the start of term.*
- *These bubbles will be headed up by the individual boarding staff responsible for that age group as follows: If you have specific questions about the age group bubble, then please contact your son's house parent, but they will be contacting you as well before the end of this week.*
 - Year 6 & 7 : Miss Sarah Roberts : sroberts@morehouseschool.co.uk
 - Year 8 : Miss Ellen Voice : evoice@morehouseschool.co.uk
 - Year 9 : Miss Julia Collington : jcollington@morehouseschool.co.uk
 - (Assisted by: Miss Hannah Willmott): hwillmott@morehouseschool.co.uk
 - Year 10 : Miss Charlotte Edwards: cedwards@morehouseschool.co.uk
 - Year 11 : Mr Luke Webb : lwebb@morehouseschool.co.uk
 - 6th form : Mr Rory Flynn & Miss Lucia Roe : rflynn@morehouseschool.co.uk
lroe@morehouseschool.co.uk

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- There may be some adjustments to separating meal times for Main House (Yrs 6-9) and St Anthony's (Yrs 10-13), but this should be manageable both at breakfast and in the evenings.
- ***New boarders and their parents will be arriving back in boarding on Monday 7th September from early afternoon, to be met and helped to settle into their new surroundings. They have been communicated with separately about how this will work.***
- ***Existing boarders will be asked to arrive back no earlier than 6.30pm, with surgery staff being available to assist with arrangements for any medications until 8pm (or 8.30pm at the latest). We ask that all boarders are back by 9pm at the latest, unless there has been prior communication with the Head of Boarding.***
- As with previous communications, and in line with the overall new restrictions on parents coming into school during the day time, ***all parents need to be aware that there will be no access for them into boarding facilities*** as in previous years. This does include the beginning and end of term, as well as any collection or drop off each week. We will work with you to ensure that staff will be on hand to assist with any challenges this presents, especially with boys who are joining us for the first time in September.
- ***Boarders in Year 6, 7, 8, & 9 (Main House)*** should arrive in the top car park, where they will be met by boarding staff so that their sons and their belongings can be taken upstairs.
- ***Boarders in Year 10, 11 & 6th form*** should arrive via the lower car park entrance where we are planning that Mr Webb and myself will be able to guide you to the best drop off point. This may be your usual 'Crossroads' spot near the swimming pool, but it may now be the smaller car park by the Gardner House (Junior) block as your son's new access point may be to the rear of the St Anthony's boarding house.

Medical:

All the latest information about medical implications around the COVID-19 situation have been included and detailed within the Headmaster's letter of August 26th. There have been no major changes since then, or since my previous letters to you, other than some governmental announcements about who the school will be seeking advice from in the event of any pupils or staff contracting the virus. As you might be aware from recent media, Public Health England has been superseded by the National Institute for Health Protection

- More House will continue to employ three State Registered Nurses as the mainstays of our medical staff and they will provide the necessary daily care for the boarders, as well as the necessary contacts between school and parents
- Our lead school nurse is Mrs Haley Scanlon and she can be contacted via email : hscanlon@morehouseschool.co.uk
- The school will be the conduit for any advice to parents about tests conducted outside of school and implications of those test results.

PPE - Personal protection equipment:

- ***The latest guidance on PPE remains*** that our pupils currently attending school will not be asked to wear face coverings, apart from certain situations such as transport. We will not be asking boarders or day boys to do so from September 1st. It would seem prudent for all boarders to have at least one face-covering to use on transport or for any trips out (see below), but we are happy to work with you to discuss any details around this.
- It will be necessary for all boarders who are likely to be using public transport to possess and use a face covering. It will also be compulsory for boarders (mainly those in Year 10 and older) to possess and use a face-covering in order to be allowed on any evening excursion to Sainsbury's, the Village shop or similar local venues.

Cleaning and hygiene:

- We are continuing to plan for providing sufficient cleaners and cleaning to keep boarding facilities up to and beyond the level required by the National Minimum Standards (for Residential Special Schools) and with any additional requirements as laid down by Government and Public Health England.
- ***We understand that boarders of all ages will need regular reminders about the need to hand- sanitise, wash hands, keep to their designated bathrooms & toilets etc. For evident reasons, all boarders must 'buy into' these arrangements from the first day back, so that we are able to take all reasonable steps to protect their health and minimise the risk of them contracting the virus.***

- Laundry procedures will be largely the same as in the past, although we are still in the process of working though how this might operate in practice, once the boarders have returned. This may involve weekly boarders and their parents being asked to take more of their son's clothing home with them to wash at the end of each week. Wherever practical and workable, the principle of weekly boarders having 'less rather than more' clothing with them in school is wise.
- Catering arrangements. *See previous note on meal times. All catering arrangements for boarders will continue as near to normal as before. The only obvious difference that the boarders will experience is being asked to sit at the same age-group tables for each mealtime.*
- For additional snacks or drinks in the boarders' common room areas, we hope to keep things as normal as possible. What we are asking is that boarders and their parents will be able to bring back their own personalised mug for use in their common rooms, just as they are being asked to bring back their own water bottle for daytime use. In terms of common room plates and cutlery, we hope that we are able to maintain our usual high standards of washing up to minimise any undue risk.

Activities and trips off site for boarders:

- The school is planning to reintroduce after-school activities with reference to guidelines issued by the Government. Departments such as Music, Drama and Physical Education are putting together risk assessments to allow for this to happen. Further details will become available before the start of term.
- Our plans in boarding are for the boarding bubbles to do their after-school activities together in the first instance, supervised by boarding staff and then to allow greater mixing or a range of activities after half term.

What we are asking parents of boarders:

- *At this late stage of the school holidays, it is assumed that all boarders are safe to return and that any family holidays involving overseas travel have factored in the necessary 'return to the UK' quarantine requirements. If you have any doubts about this and/or any other concerns about your son's return in terms of his health, then please don't hesitate to contact me and your son's houseparent.*
- *In terms of transport to and from boarding, please be mindful of any implications this might have for you and your son in terms of arrival back in boarding on a Sunday or Monday from September. It may well be that more of you may wish to organise a Sunday evening drop off for the first half term to make things easier. You will also need to consider any changes to the Friday afternoon pick-up or transport, should you wish to minimise his use of public transport. **In terms of train travel, the purchasing of your son's train ticket electronically is going to be necessary, as the school is unable to facilitate said purchasing of tickets at this point.***

At this stage, please contact us with any information that you might feel is relevant or important to the safe return of your son into boarding; especially if this information has not been covered in this general outline. Much of this will rely on your need to put your child's health, safety and well-being at the centre of your decision to allow him back into boarding, whilst we all share the same overriding desire of having a full academic year of uninterrupted schooling for all.

It has been a long wait for yourselves, your son and for us as boarding staff. We are ready to go and are really looking forward to seeing the boys back with us. Optimism, high spirits and enthusiasm will be at the centre of all we are about!

Yours sincerely,
Fred Pennell
Head of Boarding