



Introduction

With the start of term hovering into view, and publication this week of the government's Operational Guidance for Schools, now is an opportune moment to publish the next Parent Update, to explain how we will be safely managing the return to school.

Step 4 in July marked a new phase in the government's response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone's day-to-day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk. As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to our pupils' education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low.

That said, central to the plan is our ability to increase the measures that we have taken, so though the arrangements outlined in this Update represent a relaxation of restrictions, this is not a ratcheting downwards; should the national, regional, local context change, or should we experience increasing levels of infection, we will implement our Outbreak Management Plan, and re-impose some or all of the restrictions that have marked the last academic year, and a return to online teaching cannot be ruled out.

Mixing and "bubbles"

Pupils will no longer be segregated into "households" or "bubbles". Boarders and day pupils will no longer be segregated, and cross-year extra-curricular activities, assemblies and chapel services will resume.

Tracing close contacts and isolation

In the event that a pupil returns a positive PCR test, NHS Test and Trace will work with the pupil and their parents to identify close contacts. We understand that only in exceptional cases will the School be contacted by government agencies to help to identify close contacts.

Contacts from within a school setting will only be required to isolate if the positive case and/or their parents specifically identify the individual as being a close contact.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, if any of the following apply:

- They are fully vaccinated
- They are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- They have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- They are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. The parents of day pupils will be expected to arrange this for their children; the school will make the necessary arrangements for boarders.

Staff who do not need to isolate, and children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend school, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend school as normal.

Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer required for pupils, staff or visitors, either in classrooms or in communal areas.

Pupils are, however, to continue to wear face coverings in school minibuses, public transport, and any other setting in which large numbers of people who might not be considered part of the School community are gathered together in an enclosed space.

Any member of the school community who wishes to wear a face covering is, of course, entitled to do so, and no one should have any self-consciousness about doing so.

In order to provide a greater degree of protection to the staff in the Design Technology Department (DT) at the College, however, the requirement on all pupils to wear a mask in these classrooms and workshops will remain in place. All pupils in Years 7 to 9, and all those in Years 10 and 11, and in the Sixth Form who take DT for GCSE or A level must continue to bring a mask to school and wear it when in the DT Department area.

For your information, the government's full advice on the wearing of face coverings and other PPE may be found [here](#).

Temperature testing

Pupils will no longer be required to have their temperatures tested on arrival at the start of the day.

Hygiene, hand-sanitising

The additional cleaning provision that has been in place since the start of the Summer Term 2020 will remain.

Staff will chivy pupils about basic hygiene measures, and we would be most grateful if parents could do the same. Pupils will be required to sanitise their hands as they enter a classroom at the start of a lesson, and as they leave the classroom at the end of the lesson.

Information posters, focusing on hand-washing and “Catch it, bin it, kill it” will be widely distributed around the School.

Ventilation

We will do whatever we reasonably can to ensure ample ventilation in classrooms and house areas, with classroom doors and windows remaining open, and we will continue to take advantage of warm weather in the first half of the term by keeping the main doors into all buildings (apart, of course, from boarding and day houses) chocked open.

Parents should be assured, however, that safeguarding and the prevention of harm to children remains the priority at all times.

Finally, on the issue of ventilation, you may have read in the press that the government is to issue schools with carbon dioxide monitors, to identify under-ventilated areas. This initiative, however, is limited to schools in the maintained sector.

Response to, and management of, a suspected or confirmed case of COVID

The protocols regarding the response to and management of suspected and confirmed cases has changed significantly.

The following procedures now apply:

If a member of the school community develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test whilst at home			
	Immediate action	Inform	Next steps
Academic staff	Remain at home	Adam Reid (College) Dom Floyd (Prep)	Follow the government guidance here .
Support staff		Jessica Paine	
Day Pupil	Do not come into school	Housemaster or Housemistress	Order and take a PCR test.
Boarder			

If a member of staff develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test whilst at school			
	Immediate action	As soon as you get home, inform	Next steps
Academic staff	Go home immediately, with as little contact with others as possible	Adam Reid (College) Dom Floyd (Prep)	Follow government guidance .
Support staff		Jessica Paine	Order and take a PCR test. Keep the school informed.

If a pupil develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test whilst at school			
	Immediate action	Next steps	Subsequent steps
Day pupil or boarder 8:30 – 18:00	Report to Reception at Prep or College. Don face mask, sanitise hands, and maintain social distancing Move into the isolation room.	Parents of day pupils and UK boarders will be required to collect the pupil immediately. Overseas boarders will be moved into longer-term isolation accommodation.	Follow government guidance . Order and take a PCR test.

If a pupil develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test whilst at school			
	Immediate action	Next steps	Subsequent steps
Boarder 18:00 – 8:30	Report to House Matron or Prep Matron. Don face mask, sanitise hands, and maintain social distancing Move into the isolation room.	Parents will be informed and the pupil moved either to temporary isolation accommodation, or to longer-term isolation accommodation.	As determined by SLT, in consultation with School Nurse and HSO.

Since Mon 16 Aug, anyone in the same household as someone with COVID, but who is fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months, is **not** required to self-isolate.

In the event of a boarder showing symptoms or returning a positive test result, however, the following action will be taken:

- All members of the House (including resident staff) will return to, and remain in, the House.
- All members of the House will take a LFD test.
- The SLT, in consultation with internal and external agencies, will determine next steps. The response is likely to range from allowing all pupils in the House to resume normal school life, to putting the whole House in isolation.

Testing for pupils

The government requires that all pupils are to take two Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests three to five days apart after their return to school.

Though not prescribed by government, in order to ensure the biosecurity of the School community from the very start of term, we will test all pupils in Year 7 and above immediately on arrival. It is critical that no pupil moves around the School or enters a boarding House until they have returned a negative test result.

The arrival schedule for pupils in Year 7 and above is at Appendix A to this Update.

Please note that on account of the testing programme some timings may have altered slightly from those previously published. Likewise, pupils will now not be required to produce evidence of a negative test result.

The parents of all pupils in Year 7 and above should read this most carefully, and ensure their sons and daughters report to Reception at Prep or College at the allotted time. We appreciate that this will create some inconvenience for parents, but only by staggering day pupil arrival times will we be able to manage the first round of testing.

All pupils in Year 7 and above will take a second LFD test on Mon 6 Sep, after which the programme of twice-weekly self-testing will resume, until Fri 1 Oct.

We should make it clear that parents who bring their sons and daughters to school in person are required to wait in their cars until the result of the test is known. Parents of a pupil who returns a positive LFD test result will be required to take them home immediately.

Any pupil who arrives unaccompanied, and who returns a positive LFD test result, will be moved immediately into isolation, and parents will be contacted.

Conclusion

The significant relaxation by the government of the COVID restrictions that have blighted school life for so long appears to signal full steam ahead, and with the reefs and shoals of the last eighteen months now receding into the distance, we look forward with optimism to resuming our normal speed through the water.

Without wishing to stretch the nautical analogy too far, however, it may very well be that over the not too distant horizon any manner of peril looms, so it is beholden on all of us to keep a sharp look out, and be prepared to react effectively to any threat.

In particular, please continue to remind your sons and daughters of the vital importance of good hygiene, and if your son or daughter displays any of the symptoms of COVID, do not send them into school.

In the meantime, should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Reid at the College (reida@mountkelly.com) or Dom Floyd at the Prep (floydd@mountkelly.com).



HMS Kelly at full power during sea-trials, August 1939

Arrangements for pupil arrival and testing

The tables below set out the arrival arrangements for day pupils and boarders in each year group. It is very important that pupils do not arrive outside their prescribed arrival window. Pupils that arrive early will be asked to wait.

The only moderation in this is for overseas pupils arriving from the airports.

Please note that “New” in this context means those pupils new to Mount Kelly and/or new to the College

Tuesday 31 August			
Pupils	Pupils <u>not</u> to arrive before	Pupils <u>not</u> to arrive later than	Report to
Boarders in the Lower Sixth	14:00	18:00	College Reception

Wednesday 1 September			
Pupils	Pupils <u>not</u> to arrive before	Pupils <u>not</u> to arrive later than	Report to
Day pupils in the Lower Sixth	8:00	8:30	College Reception
New boarders in Years 9 - 11	13:30	15:00	College Reception
Day pupils in Year 7	13:45	14:30	Prep Reception
Day pupils in Year 8	14:45	15:30	Prep Reception
Day pupil in Years 7 and 8 are strongly encouraged to come to school for testing on Wednesday afternoon. Those who are unable to attend at these times on Wednesday should email prepreception@mountkelly.com so we can make alternative arrangements.			
New day pupils in Years 9 - 11	15:00	15:20	College Reception
New day pupils in Years 9 – 11 will not be tested on Wednesday afternoon, but will instead be tested with all other pupils on Thursday morning.			
Boarders in Years 6, 7 & 8	16:30	17:00	Prep Reception
All remaining current boarders in Year 10 and above	15:00	17:00	College Reception

Thursday 2 September			
Year Group	Pupils <u>not</u> to arrive before	Pupils not to arrive later than	Report to
Day pupils in Year 9	8:00	8:30	College Reception
Day pupils in Year 10	9:00	9:15	
Day pupils in Year 11	9:30	9:45	
Day pupils in the Upper Sixth	10:00	10:15	
Day pupils in the Lower Sixth	10:15	10:30	

Pupils in Year 6 and below will not be tested, and so should report to Prep Reception or the Pre-Prep at the normal times.