



Blundell's

FOUNDED 1604

COVID-19 Questions and Answers for Overseas Families (Updated 8th July)

Current Situation:

Q: To what extent has Covid-19 affected the area around Blundell's?

A: The area around Blundell's has been relatively untouched by Covid-19. The South-west of England has the lowest number of cases of all English regions. As of 8th July 2020 there had been 2,118 cases in Devon, out of a population of 1.1m people: this total equates to 0.19% of Devon's population having caught the virus.

- In mid-Devon, the local authority where Blundell's is located, there have only been 205 cases in total, out of a population in excess of 100,000 people. Mid-Devon, North-Devon and West-Devon – the local authorities around Blundell's – all have among the lowest numbers of cases in England.
- It is also important to note that Devon is England's 3rd largest county by area. As such population density is very low, and we are surrounded by green fields and space, which significantly lowers the risk of the virus spreading.

Q: How well have pupils engaged with the home learning programme?

A: The levels of engagement with the programme have been exceptional: Over 95% of pupils are engaging on a daily basis with their home learning (compared to a national average of below 20%). Our Engagement & Enrichment website, which is home to our extensive online co-curricular programme, had over 100,000 'hits' during the course of the Summer Term.

Re-opening, Travel, and Quarantine:

Q: Will you be opening the school early for international pupils who wish to arrive to the UK before term starts?

A: Enabling our international boarders to return as soon as is possible is central to our planning. We will be opening the school from 17th August to accommodate any international boarder who wishes to return early. The UK government has confirmed that pupils can carry out their period of quarantine, if required (see below), at their boarding school.

Q: If the School re-opens, but it is not feasible for either some international pupils to return, how will lessons be delivered both in School and remotely?

A: We are currently planning for school to reopen as normal in September, and strongly encourage our international pupils to return. If pupils are unable to return for practical reasons, we will be able to support them remotely. However, as the vast majority of pupils will be back in school, this will not be in the form of Remote Learning Programme of the summer term, but a more bespoke programme based on the needs of the individual pupil.

Q: Will overseas pupils have to be quarantined on arrival in the UK?

A: The UK government requires arrivals from certain countries to complete 14 days of quarantine upon their arrival in the UK. Certain countries are exempt from this requirement: a full list of these countries can be found here: [COUNTRIES WITH NO QUARANTINE REQUIREMENT](#)

- Pupils arriving from these 'exempt' countries do not need to complete a period of quarantine, and can return to school as normal (although time will need to be allowed for completing the testing procedure, outlined below).
- Pupils arriving from countries that are NOT on this list will still need to complete 14 days of quarantine. Pupils are welcome to do this at school, which will be open from 17th August.

It is likely that this list will continue to change, and we recommend that you keep a close eye on the UK government website to see if your country is added.

Q: It is currently difficult to make travel arrangements, and I am worried that I might need to change my travel dates. Will this be a problem?

A: No, we are very aware of the challenges that some families face in booking flights, and also of the fact that plans might change when restrictions are updated/removed. We will do our very best to accommodate you, and will be as flexible as we can be. We just ask that you keep the school informed as much as you can of your plans, and if they have changed. To do this, the best approach is to email secondmaster@blundells.org

We do, however, need to know final numbers for pupils who will be staying in school from 17th August, for catering and accommodation purposes. Therefore we will be asking families to confirm their plans, as far as they are able, by the end of July. A further communication will come out at this time.

Health and Safety within School

Q: What are the School's plans for ensuring health and safety across its community when the school is open again?

A: Our priority is keeping our community safe, and we have made extensive plans ahead of opening the school in September. These plans are outlined in our 'Safe Return' brochure, which you can access by clicking [here](#).

Q: Will there be a requirement for international pupils to be tested for Covid-19 upon arrival at Blundell's?

A: Yes, there will. The full protocol is outlined in our Safe Return brochure (available [here](#)). However, in short we will ask pupils to carry out a test in their home country before departure, and then we will test them again on their arrival at Blundell's.

Q: What is the 'Covid Safe Charter', and has Blundell's signed up to it?

A: The 'Covid Safe Charter' was created by the Boarding Schools Association, which is the body which represents British Boarding Schools. If a school signs up to this charter, they commit to taking all necessary measures to ensure that their community is as protected from Covid as is possible. Blundell's has signed up to the Covid Safe Charter, and we take our commitment very seriously. A copy of the Charter can be found at the end of this document.

Q: How is the School equipped to deal with a COVID-19 outbreak?

A: We are very fortunate at Blundell's to have an extremely well-equipped Medical Centre, staffed by a specialist team and overseen by our school doctor, which is located in a building that is separated from the rest of the school. This means that we have the capacity to isolate pupils who catch Covid-19 in this facility. Our medical team has consistently provided our pupils with outstanding medical care, and the most up-to-date advice based on the latest official guidance. We also have robust procedures that will enable us to isolate and care for outbreaks in larger numbers.

Q: What is the School's approach to social distancing in Houses and around the School?

A: Once we have official guidance from the Government, we will be in a position to apply the guidelines to Blundell's and make any adjustments we deem necessary to ensure the safety of our community.

Q: What is the School's policy on masks?

A: Pupils will certainly be allowed to wear masks, and we will encourage all members of the community to do so. It is our expectation that mask wearing will be made compulsory by the government before schools return. We will also work hard to ensure that no pupil receives adverse comments or behaviour if they did choose to wear a mask.

Q: What will the sporting programme look like?

A: Exercise remains a central support to mental and physical health and has been fully integrated into our online teaching and learning model. Once we are back in School, we will aim to provide as many sporting options as possible within Public Health England guidelines and within our own health and safety protocols.

Q: Will overseas families be able to visit their children in term time?

A: We very much look forward to welcoming you back to Blundell's as visiting parents. Clearly any such visits will be subject to government guidelines, but as soon as restrictions allow we will be very happy for you to visit the school.

Q: Will there be a visitor protocol once the School is open?

A: Our visitor protocol will be reviewed and will depend on Government guidance and any additional measures we believe to be prudent.

Q: Are there any circumstances in which the School will remain open during the October half term?

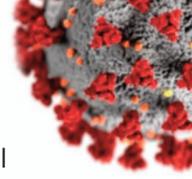
A: We are currently considering all options in this regard. Whilst in usual circumstances we would expect overseas pupils to go to their guardian if unable to return home or have no plans to do so, we fully appreciate that these are extraordinary times. If pupils are unable to go to a guardian or go home, we will keep a boarding house open to cater for these pupils.

Q: If there is another UK lockdown or School closure, what will the process be for ensuring overseas pupils can get home safely?

A: Just as was the case before Easter, we will enable pupils to return home as soon as is practicable. If this is not possible, we will keep boarding houses open to enable pupils to stay at school.

COVID-SAFE charter

All member schools which have adopted the BSA Covid-Safe Charter confirm that they will comply with all government rules and guidance and will meet the following requirements when boarding reopens



Prior to reopening schools will:

- Conduct a deep-clean of all school indoor environments, including classrooms, bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms
- Decide on any regular testing procedures and advise pupils and parents accordingly. Support Covid-19 testing wherever possible
- Evaluate and adapt any medical procedures to ensure compliance with the recommendations of public health bodies
- Ensure that staff do not work (or have contact with pupils) if they have symptoms, have tested positive or have been in contact (within the last 14 days) with anyone who has
- Provide a suitable isolation area to care for pupils who show symptoms and/or test positive
- Train staff in the safe management of boarding houses under new guidance and school procedures and in Covid-19 nursing for appropriate staff
- Advise parents, guardians and agents of the school's policies on contact sports, trips and external matches, school assemblies and the provision of boarding during exets and October half-term holiday.

Before departure from home

- Contact each pupil and their family, through their guardian if appropriate, to explain arrangements and answer any questions
- Provide written information on arrival procedures, including restrictions on parents entering the buildings
- For international pupils, confirm the arrangements for collecting the pupil from the point of arrival in the country, transport to school and quarantine procedures
- Provide each international pupil and parent with a letter on school-headed paper confirming those arrangements in line with sponsor requirements
- Provide international pupils and parents with emergency contact details which includes a 24hr out-of-hours service while any pupils are travelling.

For international pupils upon arrival in the country

- Ensure the pupil is met by a named person, which could be a guardian, who is aware of, and follows, appropriate social distancing guidance
- Ensure that the named person wears a face covering at all times when in proximity to the student in enclosed areas, especially in vehicles unless screens are provided
- Ensure that the journey to school is direct, that the vehicle contains sanitiser and suitable wipes, and that any required toilet stops are conducted in accordance with relevant safety guidelines
- Depending on the length of journey, provide the student with suitable food and drink and ensure that packets, bottles and containers are sanitised before use.

For all pupils upon arrival at school

- Ensure all changes to routines and all new safety arrangements, which have been previously notified in writing, are fully explained to pupils, with full induction for any pupils new to the school
- Encourage the pupil to contact home shortly after arrival
- Explain the new fire evacuation procedures and conduct a drill soon after arrival
- Ensure the pupil has an opportunity to discuss their fears, worries and concerns with a trusted adult.

At school

- Require appropriate social distancing in all areas of school
- Guarantee availability of soap and disposable paper towels in all washing areas
- Require regular hand washing by pupils and staff
- Provide hand sanitiser¹ stations at key points in the house and around the campus
- Provide pupils and staff with the opportunity to raise any concerns
- Ensure laundry procedures are clear and safe for staff and pupils
- Ensure appropriate PPE for any staff performing roles which will require it²
- Implement enhanced daily cleaning procedures in the boarding houses and school and ensure all relevant staff have appropriate PPE
- Allow pupils and staff to wear masks or face coverings (other than for activities where this is not advised)³
- Display clear notices explaining new procedures
- Ensure safe occupancy levels of all facilities and areas, including classrooms, dining rooms, bedrooms and bathrooms
- Explain clearly any measures required when pupils are allowed to leave site
- Ensure equipment is not shared between pupils, other than when appropriate cleaning has taken place
- Allocate appropriate recreation areas (inside and outside) for use by designated boarders and ensure they are aware of any new procedures and safe occupancy levels
- Conduct regular temperature checks of all pupils and staff and of any visitors, including parents
- Be very clear that any bullying related to the pandemic will not be tolerated.

¹Schools are advised to follow public health advice on the suitability and chemical properties of such products

²Schools must take care to ensure the equipment is suitable for the tasks concerned and that staff have been trained in safe use

³Use of face coverings should be risk-assessed if pupils are undertaking any strenuous activity

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