

Preparing boarding schools for reopening and intake of international students

BSA has prepared the checklist below for schools to use and adapt as they wish. Schools will vary in those items they consider to be relevant.

Review all relevant risk assessments and adapt as necessary to take account of changed circumstances
Review databases for any checks, permissions or training which have become out of date during lockdown
Check hot and cold water supply is operating fully, and ensure legionella testing is up to date
Check gas supply and functionality of all appliances
Continue regular testing of equipment, alarm systems, call points, emergency lighting and fire doors
Consider how to operate a fire drill under social distancing procedures and conduct a drill straight after reopening
Conduct visual hazard check of all areas
Ensure security and access control systems are working properly. Consider plans for changing or updating codes and/or passwords
Encourage boarders and staff to report any areas or practices they consider unsafe under current restrictions
Agree and implement any necessary changes to laundry procedures
Agree and implement any variations to cleaning frequency or procedures
Ensure appropriate PPE for any staff performing roles which will require it
Consider maintenance requirements of any school vehicles and make any adaptations to use as required by social distancing limitations
Ensure appropriate boarding house supervision if some pupils are not in lessons
Ensure appropriate access to online learning as appropriate
Consider the impact of any variation to the school day
Ensure the needs are met of any year groups not in school or not currently being taught face-to-face
Take out of use any areas not required and remove any furniture from use which impedes flow or social distancing requirements
Consider how to replace any “whole school” assemblies and events, or any other whole school gatherings
Ensure staff have sufficient time for appropriate cleaning procedures before service resumes
Decide on kitchen safety protocols to ensure social distancing requirements as appropriate
Consider arrangements for service, including queuing, seating, staff supervision and possible “staggered” mealtimes
Conduct food stock check to identify out of date items
Liaise with Catering Manager to ensure appropriate stock order levels to cater for any new school numbers and arrangements
Adapt dining house layout as appropriate, including flow, rearranged seating, floor markings etc.
Identify safe occupation levels for each House
Match boarding capacity to school requirements (in the event of phased or staggered timetables)
Consider staffing levels if not all pupils in lessons
Consider the flow of pupils within the house
Arrange suitable bathroom occupancy
Ensure availability of PPE for pupils and staff as appropriate
Display clear notices regarding expectations but also ensure some positive content
Ensure clear communication with parents, carers and pupils
Maintain communication with those boarders unable to return to school
Remove into storage any furniture not required, to ensure greater space
Designate use of social spaces to ensure hygienic operation
Deep clean boarding house kitchens and plan for appropriate use by boarders

Agree and communicate appropriate procedures for parents and carers dropping off and collecting pupils from the House
Decide appropriate measures for pupils leaving site and communicate with local stakeholders as appropriate
Decide on appropriate procedures and/or sanctions for accidental or deliberate infringement of social distancing requirements and any Covid related bullying (including online)
Inform boarders of any issues – positive and negative – which have affected the school community since they were last in school
Keep boarders informed of the nature of the worldwide emergency as appropriate, and be sensitive to any incidents within their home countries.
Consider the needs of any pupils and staff with underlying health issues or compromised immunity, and also pupils with family members being shielded
Consider PPE requirements for any staff undertaking medical care or other healthcare tasks
Decide on any how to operate any testing procedures which might be advised by public health bodies or deemed appropriate by the school
Evaluate cleaning arrangements within the medical centre and adjust as necessary
Ensure relevant communication with local health providers regarding the health needs of returning boarders
Evaluate and adapt any current procedures for dealing with cleaning up bodily fluids, and advise boarding and other staff of the changes
Draw up detailed arrangements for the management of any suspected or confirmed cases in school and communicate with parents and pupils so they know what would happen.
Review arrangements for transporting pupils to appointments
Check for any changes to local doctor and hospital opening hours and arrangements
Designate appropriate recreation areas (inside and outside) for use by boarders
Decide upon appropriate levels of occupancy of each area
Agree safe leisure activities with boarders and explain those which do not comply with current restrictions
Ensure appropriate checks and testing of any areas which require them, such as pools, courts, sports halls, ranges etc.
Consider how bands, orchestras, theatre groups and other performing arts could safely operate
Ensure safe operation of any clubs and societies
Ensure appropriate staffing levels at all times
Make appropriate adjustments for any staff unable to work (self-isolating, not in the country etc.)
Consider the needs of any resident staff and their families, and ensure they understand and abide by any restrictions
Review staff visitor policies
Give a full briefing to staff who do not operate in “pupil-facing” parts of the school, so they understand the situation
Ensure current arrangement for pupil well-being are functioning appropriately
Ensure pupils considered to be vulnerable are fully supported
Consider the changed needs of the school community as a whole – be aware of any bereavements, children of key workers and other considerations
Enhance curriculum provision for well-being as appropriate
Ensure boarding house staff are aware of any additional well-being procedures
Provide appropriate support to staff.
Ensure appropriate arrangements for induction of new pupils and/or suitable transfer for pupils leaving
Decide on appropriate procedures for parents and carers of prospective pupils to view the school
Tailor written guidance and handbooks for September 2020 to reflect any potential changes to previous procedures