



HM Return to School Updates 20-08-21

Dear Parent and Guardian

Please find below more detail on the first week of school and some general information about the school day based on current guidelines. Even though many staff and students will be vaccinated, the Delta Variant remains very prevalent, highly transmissible, and infectious; affecting both the vaccinated and unvaccinated. Our goal remains to avoid infection in any member of the school community, and any required self-isolation, as a result of that.

For the health and safety of our entire school community, there will be a need to remain flexible and adaptive, in step with the guidance provided. As we saw last year, Covid-19 emergency measures are dynamic and subject to change.

We are currently following Version 5 of the government's '[Covid-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable operation of Post Primary Schools](#)', which asks us to maintain all mitigations that were in place in the Summer Term. Links and publications provided by the DES are:

1. Video advice for parents and students at different levels [https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a04fc-advice-for-students-and-their\[1\]families/#returning-to-school](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a04fc-advice-for-students-and-their[1]families/#returning-to-school)
2. Posters/graphics advice for parents [https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a04fc-advice-for-students-and-their\[1\]families/#returning-to-school](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a04fc-advice-for-students-and-their[1]families/#returning-to-school)
3. Multilingual advice for parents [https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/0cf46-resources-and-materials-for-parentsguardians\[1\]and-for-students-on-returning-to-school-multi-lingual/](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/0cf46-resources-and-materials-for-parentsguardians[1]and-for-students-on-returning-to-school-multi-lingual/)
4. Communications to Parents regarding School Transport – SEN and Post Primary <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/64a88-school-transport>

Expectations for students: [Watch the return to school video from last year](#)

- Do not come to school if you have a temperature or are showing any [symptoms of Covid-19](#).
- Do not come to school if you have been identified as a close contact, someone you are in close contact with has tested positive or is being tested for Covid-19.
- Wear a mask at all times in school, except if you are eating in a designated area or outside. Boarders may remove their masks in their rooms.
- Adhere to all social distancing instructions throughout the school, at all times, particularly while waiting to enter a class or in the dining hall queue.
- Wash your hands frequently and use all the hand sanitisers spread throughout the school.
- Adhere to staff instructions to wipe down your desks.
- Alert a staff member and follow the [Covid Medical Pathway](#), if you feel unwell at school.

Morning starts & evening pick-ups for day students

All drop off and pick-ups can only take place at the chapel car park continuing with the one-way system. After induction day Forms 1 & 3 enter at the Sports Hall, Forms 2, 4 & 5 at the Mercer Door & Form 6 to the Bluecoat Block. Students are encouraged by the DES to walk and cycle to school whenever possible.

Arrival times: 08:15 for Forms 1, 2 & 3, 08:30 for Forms 4, 5 & 6.

In order to maintain physical distancing in locations such as locker areas, time spent there in the morning, breaks, lunch, and after school, must remain reduced. We have moved and rearranged the locker spaces to mitigate this as much as possible, but they remain a high traffic area. Where possible, please do not drop your child to school any earlier than the times listed and all day students must be off school campus by 17:30. Supervision will not be in place outside these times. We realise that this morning requirement will not

always be possible due to school bus schedules and siblings being dropped off together, but if we can limit this to the exceptions, it will make a difference.

Finishing times: 15:40 for Forms 1, 2 & 3 and 15:45 for Forms 4, 5 & 6

There are 3 options available to day students after school:

- Extra-curricular activity attendance
- Supervised study details & locations TBC
- Go home as soon as classes end at either 15:40 or 15:45

All day students off campus by 17:30. Students **are not permitted** to leave the school campus and return for collection.

Chapel Services

There will be no chapel service for the multiple year groups each morning but the Chapel will be used initially for drop off, inductions and larger meetings. Morning chapel has always formed an integral part of our school ethos and wellbeing program so suitable alternatives will be provided for the students and community once school routines are established.

Staggered start dates and times

Wednesday August 25th	Form 1 induction 11-1pm ½ day boarders arrive that day & stay.	Students will be met in Chapel carpark and taken to meeting rooms.
Wednesday August 25th	Form 6 induction 11-1pm ½ day boarders return that day & stay.	Go to Bluecoat for details on meeting locations.
Thursday, August 26th	Form 5 & 4 induction 11-1pm ½ day boarders return that day & stay.	Meet at Chapel Carpark – detail on designated rooms emailed on Wednesday.
Friday, August 27th	Form 3 & 2 induction 11-1pm ½ day boarders return that day.	Meet at Chapel Carpark – detail on designated rooms emailed on Wednesday.
Full uniform for induction. Only notebook & pen required.	Boarding sibs can arrive together and stay.	No hot lunches served on induction day for day students.

SPORTS & ECA'S – a separate email will detail Covid-19 sports protocols and outline activities for the first week. Please email space@thekingshospital.ie with any Sports or ECA queries and it will be forwarded to the correct staff member.

LUNCH

New this term – Forms 1, 2 & 5 first lunch period, Forms 3, 4 & 6 second lunch period.

This change allows the Form 5 mentors more time to fulfil their duties over lunch.

Our lunch service remains as operated in the Summer Term and is necessary to maintain physical distancing and cleaning regimes. All protocols will be reviewed after 4 weeks and we hope to reinstate some previous options later in the school year. Cash wallet will not be an option There will only be a 3-course hot lunch option available, which must be paid for at the beginning of term to allow the catering team to plan for the numbers entering the halls each day. To reduce time in the queue allowing for distancing, there will be only one meat option in addition to the other preference/dietary/allergen-related servings. Students will sit appropriately spaced at tables and there will be 2 lunch sittings.

All boarder meals are included in boarding fee. Day students may bring a packed lunch and depending on numbers signing up for hot lunch can sit in the WWH or an alternate designated space, as assigned by their houseperson.

Form 1 parents have been emailed out a unique sign-up code for hot lunch. Email a.clayton@thekingshospital.ie if you have not received your code.

Sign up instructions for hot lunches can be found under [Parent Info](#) on our website.

Facemasks

It is once again required that all students and staff wear a face mask. School crested masks will be made available upon request at reception, 1 per day student, 3 per boarder. Students can also wear a navy or black plain face mask of their own choosing, or a disposable mask. If there is a greater demand for school crested masks, we will make some available at €5 each.

Boarding Covid-19 Protocols

A separate email went out to boarding parents, [linked here](#). It is recommended that all boarding students have 2 sets of school uniform, PE clothes, casual wear, bed linen and towels and at least 3 face masks. Boarding protocols will be reiterated to students at their year group inductions, on return. All boarding students are asked to return to school with a negative PCR test, as even students who are vaccinated or have already tested positive may be infected unknowingly with the delta variant. This is necessary to protect students in their bedroom when they are unmasked, and mitigate for infection outbreak.

Mentors & Prefects

Congratulations to the new Form 5 mentors and Form 6 prefects, who we are looking forward to working with this year. We are delighted to announce that this year's Head Girl is Kate Edgehill, Head Boy Cian O'Dowd and the Deputy Heads are Grace Adams and David Saint, They will all no doubt lead their peers through the next year with enthusiasm and determination. Mr UaBruadair has been in touch with them all on their roles for school inductions next week.

Academic Timetables

School academic timetables are available to view on the SOCS or SIMS Parent App. You can email Claire c.elmeskirby@thekingshospital.ie for details on how to access the Parent App. Rebecca space@thekingshospital.ie can assist on any SOCS or extra-curricular queries.

Well-being

If your child has any physical or mental health updates that you wish to share with staff please email nurses@thekingshospital.ie or Clair Breen counsellor@thekingshospital.ie, as appropriate. Yvonne Mahady is at senco@thekinghospital.ie.

Houseperson list

A list of housepeople, their teams and contact details can be found on [Parent Info](#) here.

All School Policies are available to view [here](#).

Outside these queries please email my PA, [Lorraine Walker](#), with any questions around the return to school, and she will forward them on to the relevant staff member.

We are really looking forward to welcoming the students back and remain optimistic for a term packed with stimulating classes, invigorating sports activities and enriching extra-curricular opportunities.

Yours,

Mark Ronan

Headmaster / Principal