



# Rossall

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

From: Mr J A Quartermain, Headmaster

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## COVID-19 Update

**Monday, 4th January 2021**

This evening the UK government announced a new nationwide lockdown, and, as a consequence of this, independent and maintained schools will operate remotely for the next five and a half weeks. Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has indicated that schools should return after the February half term. This has been done to ensure that the 'R' rate is kept under control whilst the BioNtech and AstraZeneca vaccines are distributed to those who are clinically vulnerable. It is a cause of intense frustration that the announcement of this measure has occurred with so little notice, but as a school community we have always welcomed measures designed to protect public health. Whilst schools remain safe in themselves, there is a concern that they act as vectors of transmissions to vulnerable family members. Nevertheless, please be assured that:

- a) We will continue to remain fully open to our boarding community throughout this period. Our boarders will access lessons online and in all other aspects will benefit from all that the school has to offer in terms of facilities, activities and outstanding pastoral care.
- b) There is no question of us asking children to return home during this period. We are very happy for them to remain here with us as part of our school community, where their welfare and safety is guaranteed. Of course, during the first lockdown we had a good number of boarders who remained with us very happily throughout.
- c) The School will remain fully open to children of key workers and any children who may be deemed vulnerable for any of a variety of reasons.
- d) International boarders who have remained with guardians within the UK are, of course, expected to return to School as indeed are those who are currently making their way back to us.

**Please note that none of the statutory restrictions come into force immediately and we look forward to welcoming those students who are due to arrive tomorrow.**

We look forward to welcoming back all remaining boarders to school at the first possible opportunity but, in the meantime, our full timetable of lessons will begin first thing on Wednesday

morning. Dina Porovic will circulate further details about this tomorrow. You will be aware that the quality of our online provision is world class and it is our promise to you that teaching and learning will continue uninterrupted for your children, as indeed it did last year.

If you would like to discuss specific circumstances with us then please do not hesitate to contact us:

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### Key points...

Inevitably this announcement will result in travel plans being altered, but we will work hard to ensure that all students are able to return to School at the first available opportunity.

School will remain open at half term and during the Easter holidays for boarders at no additional charge.

Furthermore, we intend to offer all children the opportunity to remain at School until **Friday 30th July** so that they can participate in outward bound activities and additional sporting events. Collectively all of the measures we have put in place will ensure that all children will have the opportunity to benefit from:

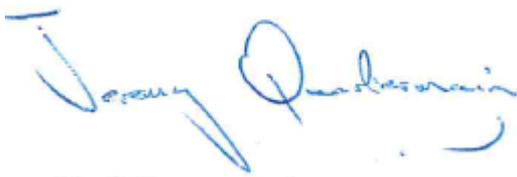
- a) Outstanding teaching and learning within an entirely safe environment
- b) The opportunity to enjoy all the benefits of School for an extended period during the late spring and summer which will compensate for the potential disruption and physical absence in the weeks ahead. Moreover, it will give back our children some of what they lost last year.

Currently the UK has vaccinated more people than the rest of Europe combined and, on this account, we are optimally placed to emerge from this situation very quickly. It has been an extraordinary year

but one in which this whole community has pulled together in ways which we could never have imagined. We have achieved the best results in a generation and I am incredibly proud to work with a team of staff who ensure that all of our children benefit from an excellent educational provision at a time when so many children around the world are missing out.

Finally, you know us well enough to know that we will be there for you, not just for your children, during the weeks ahead. We are a school, but, above all else, we are one family.

**Kindest regards,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Quartermain'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a prominent 'Q'.

**Mr J A Quartermain**  
**Headmaster**

## **Scenario Questions**

**Q. My child is an international student who stayed at Rossall over the Christmas holidays, what should I do and what will happen with my child?**

We will be remaining open for all boarders who are with us and wish to return as planned. As part of our contingency preparations we have developed a timetable of activities to ensure a healthy balance of study and well being. Please note that students will not be confined to their bedrooms during this period and will have access to the school sports facilities and furthermore will have the option to participate in Covid safe extra-curricular activities.

**Q. My child is a full boarder and was due to fly back in the next two weeks, should we still return?**

We believe that it is in the interest of every child to have continued access to learning and social contact with peers and staff. As always, please contact us to discuss personal plans and we will work with you to ensure the best possible solution.

**Q. When will face to face teaching resume?**

At this moment, the government has not given a definite date for this, but has indicated that they aim for all children to be physically back in school after the half-term break. Rossall will remain open for boarding students throughout this time, with online lessons and activities provided.

**Q. My child is currently at home and I would prefer to send them to school when face to face learning resumes, is this ok and when should I plan their return?**

We recognise that some families will choose for their children to remain with them at home for the next few weeks. Of course, this is understandable given the latest developments.