



**Mayfield School
Frequently Asked Questions
May 2020**

Schools in the UK were instructed to close on 20th March 2020 - how has Mayfield School responded to this decision?

Mayfield School was well-prepared for this eventuality – and had built a remote learning platform and trained pupils and staff, ensuring everyone was set-up for this mode of learning. This enabled us to transition to an online educational environment from the next school day so there was no disruption to the girls' education.

All lessons are currently delivered online and the girls follow their usual School timetable and maintain face-to-face contact with their subject teachers, tutors and peers. With remote Art, Ceramics, Textiles, and Food and Nutrition Classes taking place as usual alongside academic subjects, life in the Mayfield community has continued almost as normal for the girls, although we have shortened each lesson to enable the girls to have regular breaks throughout the day. PE is delivered in creative and innovative ways, with a series of challenges set each week, in addition to yoga, Zumba and HIIT workouts, to ensure the girls maintain their activity levels to support their physical and mental wellbeing.

A significant number of our international boarders are able to join all the lessons but for some, whose time zones make it difficult to participate in the whole school day, all lessons are recorded for them. Feedback from girls and parents has been overwhelmingly positive about the quality of the lessons and the frequency of contact with their peers, teachers and other key staff members, such as tutors and housemistresses.

What action did Mayfield School take in respect of fees for the current summer term as pupils were unable to return to the School?

The School Governors considered it would be inappropriate to charge a boarding fee if the School remained closed for the term so instead used the day fee as a base charge for all pupils. Notwithstanding the high quality of the online education provision for pupils, Governors recognised that this cannot fully replicate the usual pupil experience and reduced the 2019-20 day fee by 10% for the current term, resulting in a total reduction of 44% for boarders for the current term.

Governors also considered the fees for the next academic year beginning September 2020, when it is expected that the School will be open again. Conscious of the likely financial impact of the pandemic on many of our fee-paying parents, Governors decided to freeze the autumn term boarding and day fee at the same rate as was charged last September. The situation from January 2021 will be reviewed as soon as we have more clarity on what the future holds.

Will the School be open in September?

We are planning for the School to be open for the beginning of the next academic year in September 2020. The UK Government published a COVID-19 recovery plan last week, which includes the phased reopening of educational establishments from 1st June, initially with nurseries and primary schools. Notably, the Government also expects that secondary schools will be able to offer some face to face contact with Year 10 and Year 12 pupils to supplement their remote education. This will only proceed if five key tests set by Government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in [the recovery strategy](#) are operating effectively.

Although the current guidance does not represent the return of Year 10 and Year 12 to school full time at this stage, it signifies the Government's desire to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific

advice allows. As such, we are planning for the School to be open for the beginning of the next academic year, so that we are fully prepared when the Government confirms that this can proceed.

What measures will Mayfield School be introducing in September to ensure pupils' safety?

Our planning will always be within the context of ensuring the safety of our pupils and staff, and to comply with Government requirements and guidance. The School completed a deep clean of the site when all pupils left in March. The cleaning programme has continued and will do so throughout the summer period in preparations for the beginning of the next school year.

Although there are still many uncertainties and questions we cannot yet answer, as we await further guidance from the Government in relation to reopening, we are currently putting in place contingency plans for a range of scenarios to ensure we are prepared, which include:

- a one-way system in the communal areas of the School, especially corridors and hallways, which will be clearly marked to maintain social distancing
- configuration of classrooms to accommodate additional space between desks
- configuration of boarding facilities to accommodate social distancing in the Houses
- the creation of isolation areas within the Health Centre
- the use of face coverings for pupils and staff
- staggered lunch and break time arrangements
- further enhanced hygiene arrangements and increased use of hand sanitisers in all areas of the School
- a review of school trips in the autumn term
- adjustments to activities such as music and sport as appropriate
- procedures for visitors to the School campus

Until we receive specific guidance on requirements, we are unable to confirm the precise arrangements. The plans we are implementing will enable us to be prepared for the School to reopen in September and we will keep families updated as the guidance is received.

Will there be a quarantine requirement for pupils arriving in September? If so, how will the School manage this?

In its recently published recovery strategy, the UK Government announced the requirement for all international arrivals, not on a short list of exemptions, to self-isolate in their accommodation for fourteen days on arrival into the UK. These travel measures will not come into force immediately but will be introduced as soon as possible and we await further details and guidance, which we have been advised will be set out shortly.

Mayfield is keen to enable current pupils returning to us from overseas and those joining us in September 2020 to complete any quarantine requirements at the School, if this is permitted. We are reviewing our boarding facilities to assess how this might be safely undertaken. The School is also consulting with Guardians, with whom we have a current relationship, to establish if they will host pupils during the quarantine period, so we can provide additional options to families. We are unable to confirm precise arrangements at this stage as the details and guidance from the Government is awaited but we will provide information on this issue as soon as we can.

What is the Schools' position on face coverings?

The UK Government's latest advice is that we should be wearing 'face coverings' in enclosed spaces, public transport and in shops. We recognise that the requirements and guidance differ between countries, where they are either compulsory, more commonly utilised or recommended in certain places and situations. The UK Government's current advice for schools is that face coverings are not required as long as social distancing rules are observed. We would encourage pupils and staff to wear a face covering if they wish to and are confident that personal choice will be respected by all. Our advice, however, may change if the Government guidance is altered to make face coverings a requirement in all or certain situations.



What happens if there is a second wave of the pandemic in the autumn term?

The transmission rate of the virus in the UK has decreased, mortality rates continue to fall, and the National Health Service is acknowledged to have coped with demand even at the peak in April. The Government's latest plans are focused on ensuring transmission rates remain low, through the gradual easing of restrictions on contact and increased testing, tracing and monitoring to minimise the risk of a second wave in the autumn. Should a second wave occur, it may result in the introduction of increased restrictions. It is expected that we would have an early indication of this (in the same way we anticipated the restrictions introduced in March) to enable us to adapt our policies and procedures as appropriate.

If my daughter cannot travel in August will it be possible to postpone her place or get a refund of our deposit?

We recognise that there is still much uncertainty about the situation in September including the ability of international pupils to travel. We wish to provide as much flexibility to families and do not wish to penalise you for circumstances outside your control. Many families have already confirmed that, subject to travel restrictions, their daughters will be arriving in September if the School has reopened, which is helpful in our scenario planning. We would ideally like confirmation as soon as possible and by 1st July 2020 at the latest, to accommodate the preparation that will take place in the summer months. We will refund deposits in full in the event families decide to keep their daughters in their home country and advise us by 1st July 2020.

We will consider deferring your daughter's arrival to January 2021 if you are uncertain about a September start. However, it will be important, especially for pupils joining Year 10 and Year 12, that your daughter completes study we will provide to her during the autumn term to ensure she can integrate with confidence in the second term of the academic year.

Who should I contact at the School if I have additional questions?

Please direct any questions to our Registrar, Mrs Shirley Coppard – registrar@mayfieldgirls.org.