

Queen Margaret's

Escrick Park • York



KEEPING THE QM COMMUNITY SAFE

Guidance for girls and parents
for September 2020

Introduction

Whether you are travelling to QM for the first time or are a returning student, the prospect of arriving at School for the new academic year may raise many different questions. This guide will outline the measures that we are implementing in order to protect our small community during this time of pandemic and is broken down into the following sections:

- Welfare of QM Girls
- Health Protocols
- The School Day
- Arrangements for Overseas Boarders

QM has signed the [BSA COVID Safe Charter >>>](#) which means we comply with the latest UK government guidance. The Charter details what you can expect in terms of our approach to protecting the QM community against COVID-19.



QM is a small boarding school located in Escrick Park, a rural parkland estate six miles south of York. Our girls enjoy having access to substantial private grounds as well as the adjacent village of Escrick. They live in a happy, spacious and secure environment that is insulated from the wider world.



Message from the Head,

Sue Baillie

The challenges of the last few months have created uncertainty and confusion amongst students intending to travel to QM in September. Whilst I have personally responded to many of these concerns, I also wanted to provide some information that would help reassure all parents that the safety of their daughters is our main priority.

This guide lays out the measures we are currently implementing to ensure that no one in our community is placed at any unnecessary risk and that we have the plans in place to respond to a continually evolving situation.

The transition back into School may be a challenge for all of us, trying to adjust to a new way of 'being', coping with fear of the unknown and, in some cases, balancing a mix of online and face to face learning. The wellbeing of our girls, parents and staff is our highest priority.

QM is a small school and is well placed to respond to this crisis, not only because of its size and rural location, but more importantly because of the caring and dedicated staff who will ensure our students have the best possible experience.

I hope you will find this guide useful and that our commitment to the safety of our School community is clear to see.

With best wishes

Sue Baillie
Head



Welfare of QM Girls

We always monitor the general wellbeing of girls, keeping a watchful eye on their ability to deal with the evolving School environment.

The QM Spirit of Inclusivity

All girls joining us are welcomed into our unique QM Family. Girls are encouraged to be themselves and our community is one that respects and accepts international diversity and cultural individuality. These values are even more important now during this pandemic, and the School will continue to ensure they are upheld so that no girl feels isolated during these challenging times. For example the wearing of face masks, which will become an increasingly acceptable practice when School resumes, will be openly addressed by the Head in Assembly.

Pastoral Support

We treat our community as a family, and our small size means everybody gets to know each other. This has many advantages as our pastoral staff can easily ensure everything is going well for girls across all aspects of their School life, including their boarding experience and academic lessons, as well as their emotional health.



Health and Wellbeing Centre

The School's Health and Wellbeing Centre operates an open door policy for girls to drop in. Alongside this, nursing support is available 24 hours a day. The School Medical Officer holds surgeries at School on Mondays and Fridays and, along with her colleagues, will also see girls by appointment at the Escrick GP surgery. The Emotional Wellbeing Practitioner is available for confidential advice.



Health Protocols

Monitoring the Health of our Community

We will be conducting regular temperature checks for all girls and this will be overseen by nursing staff from our Health and Wellbeing Centre. As a small school we are able to effectively monitor the health of our students through periodic checks and coordination with our teaching and boarding staff.

Reducing Social Interaction

We will be configuring our School facilities so that we can adhere to current government guidance. In particular, the layout of classrooms will ensure that girls can learn in an environment that conforms to the latest social distancing guidelines. Our Dining Hall layout has been changed to ensure adequate distancing is maintained and meal times will be staggered to ensure an even flow of girls.

We will control the movement of girls through the School by reducing class sizes, putting year groups into segregated 'bubbles' and implementing a one-way system in confined areas.

Face Masks and Hand Sanitisation

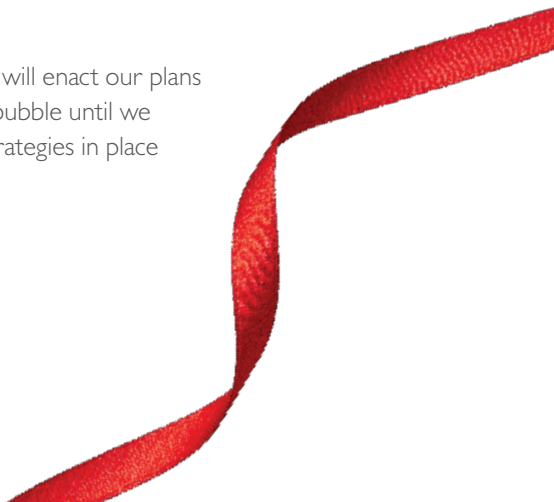
Whilst we continue to follow government advice in relation to the wearing of face coverings we will be making disposable face masks readily available to any girl or staff member who chooses to wear them. Additional hand washing stations have been installed across the School and girls will be monitored to ensure they are washing hands at regular intervals and especially before meal times.

Deep Cleaning

We will be carrying out regimented regular deep cleaning of our classrooms and other commonly used areas such as bathrooms and the Dining Hall.

Responding to Suspected Cases

Should a member of our community present symptoms of COVID-19 then we will enact our plans to isolate and test the individual concerned as well as isolating their year group bubble until we understand whether a case has been confirmed. We have regularly reviewed strategies in place to protect our community should we have a confirmed case.



The School Day

We'd like to give you a sense of what the School day will be like when you arrive for the new academic year. These changes are temporary and will remain in place only until the risks posed by the pandemic are reduced.

Blended Learning

We will be adopting a blended approach to learning for the start of term, this means girls will be able to attend classes at School if they are able to do so, and if not, they will access lessons via our virtual learning platform **QM Connect**. The timetable will recognise the need for proper hygiene precautions whilst also protecting teaching time and prioritising learning.

A Temporary Change to Saturdays

We are condensing all academic lessons into a Monday - Friday timetable, reflecting the pressure this pandemic is placing on our community. Weekends will be an opportunity to participate in guided non-contact sports, enrichment activities or to simply make best use of our excellent arts facilities. Enrichment activities will take place on and off site within regulatory guidelines.

Lunch and Break Times

Lunch and break times will be extended and/or staggered to ensure that all girls can safely make use of our dining and recreation facilities.





Arrangements for

Overseas Boarders

We look forward to welcoming our international girls to QM later this year. We have made additional arrangements to comply with current UK government guidance.

Quarantine and Half Term Arrangements

There may be a requirement for all overseas visitors arriving in the UK to self-isolate for 14 days. The School is able to offer provision for overseas students to quarantine at QM between Sunday 23 August and Saturday 5 September (subject to government approval). Girls will be provided with a home from home environment in single rooms with meals and regular health checks, all under the watchful eye of our friendly house staff and School nurses.

Any girl travelling to QM in order to quarantine will be supported in getting to the School. QM staff will meet girls at any of the main UK airports between Thursday 20 and Saturday 22 August and escort them safely back to School.

Leave Out and Half Term

The School will remain open for overseas boarders during Leave Out weekends and for the October Half Term. Should it be possible for girls to travel safely to alternative accommodation then they will be free to do so.

We will also assist girls who need to depart School earlier than normal at the end of term should quarantine rules continue to affect how people can travel internationally.

QM Connect will continue to be available to girls who are unable to join QM for the start of term.



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