



Safe Return to Boarding at Barney





Headmaster's Welcome

I wish you a warm welcome to Barnard Castle School. To those new to 'Barney', we are based in beautiful Teesdale in North East England, a 2.5 hour train ride from London, meaning that Boarding at Barney provides a rural, family setting where young people can flourish within extensive outdoor space.

During the recent COVID-19 crisis our pupils have enjoyed our **Home Learning @ Barney** programme. Following a successful phased reopening of our site to Day pupils, we are now planning the safe return of our Boarding pupils to Barney in September.

This document will outline our plans and reassure families that the health, safety and welfare of our pupils and staff remains our first priority.

Every measure we put in place is both guided by and subject to the most up-to-date government guidance, as well as based on the advice of professional bodies and, as such, updates will be communicated as they are released.

Please enjoy this glimpse into Boarding at Barney from September 2020.

Tony Jackson
Headmaster



Location and the School Site

Barney is situated in stunning countryside. The market town of Barnard Castle boasts historic buildings, as well as a local market and shops. We are fortunate that our school site provides significant outdoor space and that our Boarders can take full advantage of our wonderful onsite facilities.

The school site has been fully adapted in response to government guidelines on COVID-19. Entry to the school site and buildings is carefully controlled with daily temperature checks and health questionnaires.

School Signposting

One-way systems are in place in teaching blocks and there are numerous signs reminding pupils about social distancing rules visible throughout all buildings. Hand sanitiser dispensers are in every corridor and classroom and pupils are reminded to wash their hands at regular intervals.

Cleaning staff provide frequent cleaning services in each building throughout the day to minimise hard surface contamination risk.



Boarding and Pastoral Care

The pastoral care at Barney is excellent and throughout this period, tutors and Houseparents have continued to keep in daily contact with their pupils, as well as communicating regularly with their pupils' families.

Upon their return to Barney, pupils will continue to receive the highest levels of pastoral support, looking after their physical and emotional wellbeing. Pupils will have daily contact with their tutor and Housemaster or Housemistress, as well as the support of staff and Boarding House Matrons.

The greatest of care will be taken to ensure that rules around social distancing and household bubble guidance are observed and all rooms will be well-ventilated around the clock. Where possible, pupils will be allocated single bedrooms.

There will be frequent cleaning in all areas of Boarding Houses throughout the day.



Learning, Co-Curricular Activities and House Competitions

Pupil safety remains our priority. We anticipate that learning will return to classrooms in September and measures are in place to ensure that social distancing rules will be observed. We are fortunate to enjoy small class sizes in well-ventilated rooms and the school routines will be adapted to minimise pupil movement.

In the event that a pupil is unable to attend a lesson or is required to isolate, online learning will enable them to access their lessons remotely.

Barney's huge range of sports and activities will take place, subject to government guidelines and the rules put in place by sports' governing bodies, and a flexible programme will ensure that pupils are able to pursue the sports they love in a safe environment.

Non-sporting co-curricular activities, such as the Arts and Drama, will continue to flourish whilst observing social distancing measures.

The success of our **Home Learning @ Barney** programme demonstrated that we can maintain our House competitions through innovative thinking, and our traditional Barney House spirit was in abundance!

We envisage facilitating a number of online co-curricular activities and House competitions through our Microsoft Teams platform.

Social Distancing

We have embedded government guidelines on social distancing to support our normal school routines. As such, the following measures may be in place:

- Staggered break and meal times
- Online assemblies and virtual whole-school events
- Strict controls on gathering together for whole-school events
- Restrictions on leaving the school site
- Clear guidance regarding socialising around school





Medical Provision

The highly qualified and experienced nurses in our Medical Centre at Barney provide cover throughout each day, while Boarding House Matrons provide medical cover overnight.

Regular temperature checks will be taken at registration points in the day and any pupils showing signs of concern will be quickly isolated, as well as anyone from their 'household' with whom they have had regular contact. This quarantine period will remain in place until confirmation is received that they are not carrying the virus.

In the event of a pupil becoming unwell, a clear medical protocol will be followed, ensuring rapid assessment of individuals. We are able to facilitate isolation in our medical

facility and have quick access to local medical professionals and facilities.

Members of the school community will be allowed to wear face masks, although this will not be mandatory for staff or pupils except when using school or public transport, in line with UK government guidelines. Pupils may wish to bring their own masks, but the school will provide masks where required.

Staff who work in close contact with children who may be unwell will be required to wear PPE, but there will be no expectation that they will have to wear this at other times.

Returning to School

We continue to follow UK government guidelines regarding travel. In the event of a required quarantine period before the start of term, we can confirm that our Boarding Houses will be open to welcome pupils from a suitable date in August. We will contact individual families to organise this provision as required. The charge for this accommodation will be kept as low as possible.

Such a period would involve some time for pupils to familiarise themselves with the school site and routines, as well as accessing learning and leisure facilities. House staff will be present to supervise and care for pupils on their arrival.

On arrival in the UK, pupils will take either school transport or a taxi with one of our approved companies from the airport to the front door of school.

As the situation regarding travel becomes clearer, we will communicate with all boarding families to make arrangements for your child to return safely to Barney.

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We are expecting our school year to start, as normal, in **September 2020**.

Monday 7th September - New Pupils Induction Day
Existing Boarders Return: Monday 7th September by 5pm

Term Begins: Tuesday 8th September





Emotional Wellbeing

This period has put considerable pressure on young people to show resilience and self-care. In addition to tutors and House staff, our school counsellor, Mrs Thirling, is available to provide confidential support to all pupils.

Our “12 To Turn To” programme ensures that every pupil has a number of people they can reach out to in support of their emotional wellbeing.

The 12 To Turn To

In addition to your parents or family, there are 12 additional routes that you can turn to if you have something you want or need to say about anything that concerns you:

- 1 A Friend
- 2 A Peer Supporter
- 3 Your Head of House
- 4 Your Teachers
- 5 Your Tutor
- 6 Your Housemaster / Housemistress
- 7 A member of the Senior Team*
- 8 The School Counsellor | Mrs Thirling
- 9 The Independent Listener | Mrs Ewart 07810087980
- 10 The School Nurses | Mrs Robson & Mrs Farren
- 11 The Chaplain | Father Darren
- 12 Confidential Post Boxes



If you can't tell anyone initially, but know you need to say something, write it down on a piece of paper, put your name on it, and put it into one of the 6 confidential post boxes around the school.

* Mr Jackson, Headmaster; Mr Pepper, Second Master; Mr Lavery, Deputy Head (Pastoral) Dr Truss, Deputy Head (Academic) or Mrs Beadnell, Deputy Head (Sixth Form)

Ongoing Support

If the COVID-19 situation continues into the Michaelmas term, Barney will offer accommodation to pupils unable to return home during the half-term break, for which a reasonable fee will be charged.

Our Boarding Houses will remain open, as usual, across Exeat weekends for pupils who wish to stay on site.

Flexible departure dates at the end of term will be in place to ensure that pupils are able to serve any period of quarantine required in their home country.

Should any pupil miss a period of school, access to our **Home Learning @ Barney** programme will ensure the impact of absence in school is minimal.



Barney is advised by

- UK Government
- Department for Education (DfE)
- World Health Organisation (WHO)
- The Boarding Schools' Association (BSA)
- Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC)
- Independent Schools' Bursars Association (ISBA)
- Independent Association of Prep School (IAPS)
- Independent Schools' Council (ISC)





BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

At Barney we are committed to maintaining the highest of standards in hygiene, health, safety and welfare in order to reduce and remove the risk of infection.

We are a compassionate and family-focused school, where our priority is your child's safety.

We look forward to you becoming part of our Barney Community.



HM Government

WWW.BARNARDCASTLESCHOOL.ORG.UK