



from Tom Lawson MA (Oxon), Headmaster

5 January 2021

National Lockdown

Dear Parents,

We have made our very best efforts to stay open, as you know, but despite reassurances from the Prime Minister as recently as Sunday that keeping schools open was a priority, last night saw an immediate national lockdown announced.

I apologise for the disruption and confusion that would have been less great had we not been so determined to open this week and provide the best in-person education for your children. I hope you accept that our optimism came from the very best motives. **From tomorrow (Wednesday 6 January) we will move to online learning for all pupils.**

Critical workers' children, vulnerable pupils and international boarders unable to return home may remain/come onsite to access the online learning at the College (**see below for information and a form that needs your earliest attention**). **All other boarders and day pupils should be at home accessing school online.**

Our excellent staff will deliver high-quality teaching online, building on the infrastructure and experience of the lockdown during the summer term. Teachers will be adapting resources over the coming days to improve and hone the online experience for pupils. Almost all lessons will be **taught live** at the normal timetabled time along with an amended lunch break to allow families to eat together and pupils to get a proper break from the screen during daylight hours.

Following the announcement about the cancellation of summer GCSE and A-level exams, we expect further information from the Secretary of State for Education in the next day or so, and more details will emerge thereafter. Once we have more information we will adapt our provision accordingly **to provide all our pupils the best possible preparation for whatever scheme of assessment is devised**. We will keep you and your children fully informed of the expectations, including the nature and timing of mock exams. In the meantime, please encourage your children to take full advantage of the continued delivery of their subjects and maintain a good balance of work, rest and exercise.

We will provide support and guidance for the co-curriculum accessible to all pupils and will maintain the **highest standard of pastoral care for pupils** even while they are not here in person. **Morale and wellbeing for pupils is uppermost** in our minds as they inevitably face the anxiety and disruption caused by uncertainty and the lockdown.

Thank you so much for your forbearance as we adapt to the fast changes and reversals of government policy in the face of the pandemic. There is much detail you will want to know so please expect updates from me, hsms, or the senior team over the coming days.

With very best wishes,

Headmaster
Tom Lawson MA (Oxon)

+44 (0)1323 452320
headmaster@eastbourne-college.co.uk
www.eastbourne-college.co.uk

Eastbourne College
Headmaster's House
Old Wish Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 4JX

ECi Eastbourne
College
Incorporated
Marlborough House
Old Wish Road, Eastbourne
East Sussex BN21 4JY

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Annexes:

1. On-site provision for critical worker's children and vulnerable children

For parents who wish their children to remain on site at the College because they are classified as vulnerable please contact [Mrs Taylor-Hall \(Deputy Head Pastoral\)](#) as soon as possible to discuss your child's needs, or discuss with your hsm who will then contact Mrs Taylor-Hall. Please first check the list of categories that constitute 'vulnerable pupils', which is on the same webpage as for critical workers below.

For parents who are **critical workers**, please first check the categories at the following web address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

If you need on-site provision because you qualify with these categories **then the College will be able to provide it** (through the normal house system until further notice). Please fill in **this form by 2pm tomorrow (Wednesday)** if you need this service, giving an indication of days required, to help us with crucial planning.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=C4bZQ3645kmlcWktJDcLTZfUWYm9cBNOoYtbetgK5Z5URFhaSEZjWjhETEs2S0RaVUNPSIY3MVMIMi4u>

2. On-site provision for international boarders

NB while we are not allowed to provide for domestic boarders who do not fall into the critical worker or vulnerable category, we understand that it may take time for plans to be made for them to go home and parents should speak to hsms about the arrangements in any case of difficulty.

Current guidance states that international boarders in transit to, or already in, school may stay if they are unable to go home. Accordingly we will provide access to online learning in the College and the facilities and support the children's needs while they are with us. Please liaise with hsms at your earliest opportunity if you are a parent of an international boarder so they can assist you with any plans and provide any reassurance.