



WINDERMERE
SCHOOL



‘A SAFE PLACE TO LEARN’

Covid Planning and Updates for 2020-2021
Issue 5: 12 November 2020

Vincit qui se vincit – one conquers, who conquers oneself

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INTRODUCTION



Dear Parents,

The purpose of this Covid Update booklet is to let you know about some of the recent changes that have taken place at School as a result of the new government guidance in the light of lockdown. Although lockdown has already started, the information came out to schools rather late. The guidance was then amended several times, so we held off contacting you until things had been clarified.

Some of the new government guidance does not affect us, as we were already implementing them as part of our desire to be 'Covid Guidance Plus', for example the wearing of masks becoming compulsory for secondary school students. The biggest changes have been felt in our activity programme, which we will explain within this booklet, and our decision to take positive action around the likely changes to education as we head towards Christmas.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

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IMPORTANT DATES

The end of the Autumn term

The end of term has been brought forward to Wednesday 9 December (from Friday 11 December). This gives everyone two full weeks for any necessary quarantining before Christmas. Wednesday 9 December will be the last day of teaching at Elleray and Browhead.

Elleray day students will remain learning on site until the end of Wednesday 9 December. Browhead day students are welcome to come onto the Browhead site to access their remote lessons, or to learn from home.

Boarders may travel home at any point from Saturday 28 November, depending on when they are able to find flights. All Browhead students should continue working online until the end of term, regardless of how they are choosing to access lessons.

The start of the Spring term

The start of the Spring Term has moved to Monday 11 January 2021 (from Tuesday 5 January) and in lieu of this there will be no February half term. Half term will be replaced by two short exeat weekends in School before Easter. Currently these are likely to take on Saturday 12 to Tuesday 16 February and Saturday 12 to Monday 15 March 2021.

This gives our community a number of benefits:

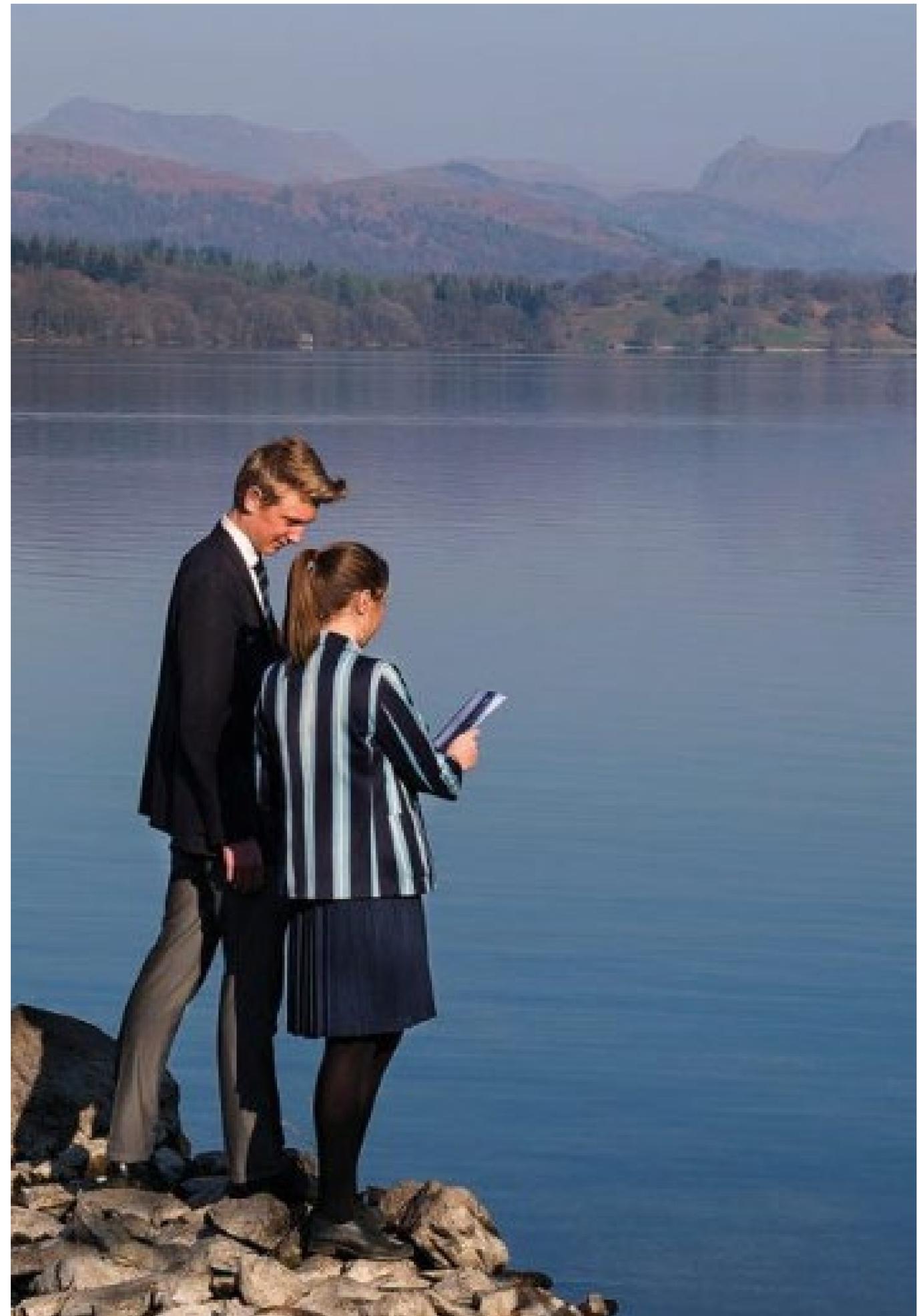
- A longer break at Christmas when contagion is expected to peak.
- It provides consistency through the Spring term, without students having to manage endless quarantining arrangements following half term travel home.
- It puts more distance between the start of term in January and the Brexit date, in case there is further dislocation to travel.

We realise that this will be a long term for the students at Elleray and Browhead, and we will be conscious of this during our planning.

Mock Examinations (Browhead)

The dates of the mock examinations have been moved to later in January than is normal. The extra time will give students a further advantage, especially if their mock results become the foundation of centre assessed grades again.

The Year 13 mock examinations are now expected to start on Wednesday 27 January, with the GCSE mock examinations (for Year 10 and 11 students, and for some students in Year 9) are currently expected to begin on Wednesday 3 February.



REMOTE LEARNING AT BROWHEAD

30 November to 9 December

As of Monday 30 November, all lessons will be taught remotely. Day students, who wish to be in school, may sit in their classrooms and access lessons via their laptops. All other students will access the same lessons remotely via their laptops. This means that all students will gain an equal experience regardless of where they are. Boarding houses will still have tutorial support in the evenings.

We strongly encourage day students to continue to come into school, especially those in Year 10 and above, and we would like to see as many day students come on site as possible. However, we do appreciate that some families may wish to keep their son or daughter at home. We would like to ask all Browhead day parents to complete an intentions survey (see link below) to let us know if they intend for their son or daughter to remain learning on site during these ten days, or if they intend to learn remotely during this time. In order to assist with planning, it will not be possible to create a mix-and-match system where day students attend on certain days only.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=W6Gh56Lx_km7hi-PJiL29C7M_Yc-0M15EtyV0aj6li_1UMzFIV0xORzJTNDZYMVxUUFMnkIwNkpCVS4u

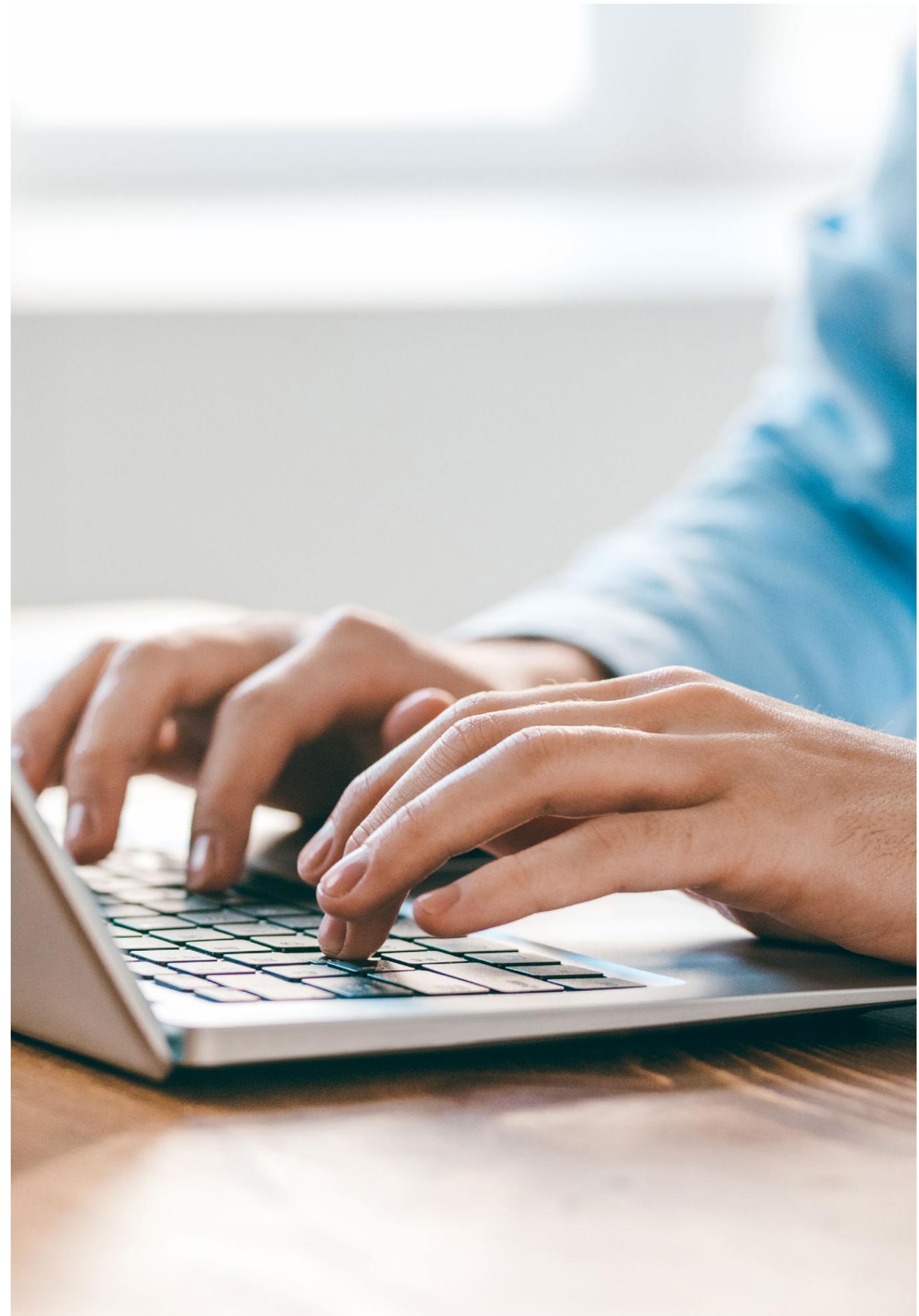
During this period of remote learning, the timetable will remain the same as it is now, with tutor time starting at 8.30am via Teams, and the final lesson finishing at 4.05pm.

As with lessons during the Summer term, staff will 'teach' some lessons directly, and other lessons will be used for directed self-study, with the teacher available for assistance as required. Each lesson will be registered and attendance will be tracked. PE and Adventure sessions will continue, as will other practical subjects such as Music, Drama and Art, although the Art subjects will naturally be more paper based than usual.

Lunch will be provided for all students, although there may be some change to the current rotas to ensure that boarders are kept separate from day students. A pared down activity programme will also continue, with the aim of encouraging students to be active, with activities running between 4.20-5.20pm for day students and after tea for the boarders. Learning support lessons will continue during the prep slot (4.20-5.20pm). Day students will be encouraged to leave school at 4.10pm unless they are participating in a physical after-school activity.

In order to help our younger students have some time away from their laptops, prep will be suspended from Monday 30 November for all students in Years 7-9, with the exception of the Year 9 Religious Knowledge GCSE students. However, optional extension tasks will be available for students to access on Show my Homework. Prep for examination classes in Year 10 and above will run as normal.

We are confident that we can offer a high level of education during this time period. This move to remote teaching will reduce the risk of contagion before the end of term and, hopefully, ensure that families can move towards Christmas celebrations as safely as possible.





TEACHING AT ELLERAY

At Elleray we will continue to teach our classes on-site until Wednesday 9 December. A small number of Year 5 and 6 boarders will be taught remotely. Each class teacher will put a plan in place for these children, to include them as much as possible in the learning and end of term activities.

The Elleray School Day

As the evenings grow darker we have been reviewing our arrangements for morning drop off and the evening pick up of children. This is out of concern for the safety of all of the children and we would appreciate your support with this. We have issued each child with a freshly laundered, high visibility and reflective vest. This is to be worn to and from school, to make each child more visible during the dark winter nights. These will be returned to school at a later date.

The Pre-School to Reception children are now being dropped off and collected from the back of the Year 2 classroom. This is to keep them safe and warm in a well-lit area. Please enter the lower car park and wait at the bottom of the hill until the turning circle at Year 2 is clear before proceeding. You will then be able to return back to the main drive and the way will be clear. Apologies for the inconvenience to families who also have children in Year 3 to 6 and now need to drive to two different locations.

Year 3 to 6 children will now be dropped off and picked up from the turning circle at the front of School. The lighting on the lower car park has been damaged by recent storms and we would rather the children were in a well-lit area to await collection, while we await the underground cable repairs. This will make the drive very busy, so thank you for your patience. The turning circle now has cones to guide the traffic, and you will be unable to pull out and overtake the car in front. At the top of the turning circle the first two cars will be able to park safely, with their engine off and their handbrake on. Children will then be able to get in or out of the car safely. If parental assistance is needed with seatbelts and safety seats then please do this at a safe distance from other people.

At present we will be following the same timings for the day, but this may be reviewed if there are issues with waiting times or there are concerns about contact between bubbles. The staff have committed to ensuring that children are ready promptly for their collection times. If there is a delay we may ask you to find a parking space and return when your child is ready.

Please note government guidance, and the current lockdown, does not allow parents to congregate on site. You are currently unable to get out of vehicles, anywhere on the drive, to chat with other families.

PROTECTING EACH OTHER

Wearing of Masks, Social Distancing and Good Ventilation

Browhead

There is increasing evidence that the wearing of masks, maintaining good ventilation in classrooms, and social distancing, are the keys to reducing the risk of Covid 19 being transmitted within schools. These are already key parts of our risk assessments, but we have stepped up the messaging around masks this half term. We are now asking that students and staff at Browhead wear masks within classrooms most of the time, as well as when moving around the site. The community has been brilliant at doing this, and it is wonderful to see everyone working so hard to keep others safe.

All classroom spaces have their windows open all of the time. This is a vital part of protecting everyone who is using the classroom, but it does mean that the classrooms cannot be kept as warm as normal, despite the heating remaining on. If students wish to wear two school fleeces or a fleece and a coat in order to keep warm, they are welcome to do so.

We have asked day students and boarders to pay careful attention to social distancing, to help protect the boarding house bubbles. Staff have amended their seating plans so that boarders and day students are not sharing desks.

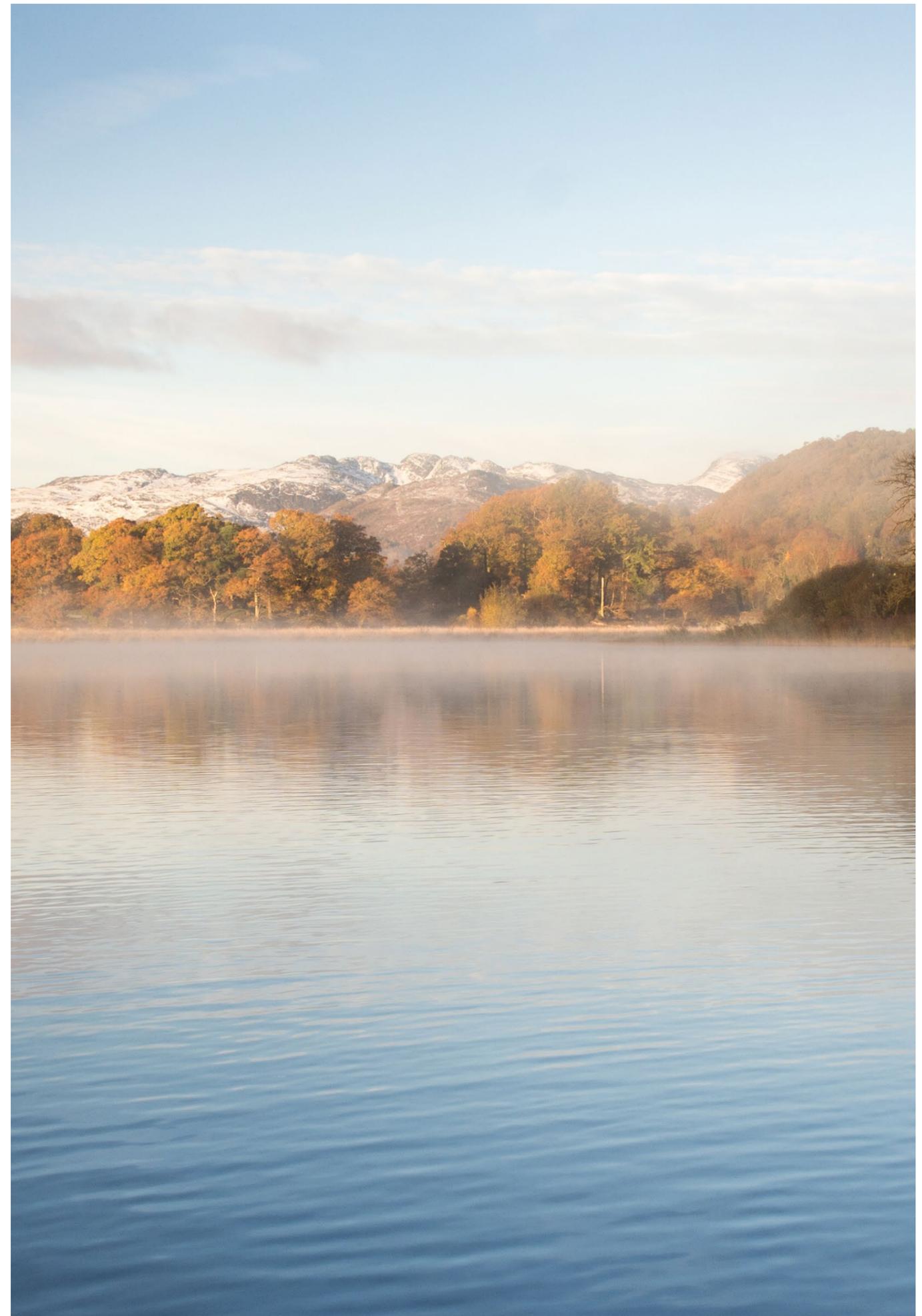
Social distancing has proven to be a difficult message to get across to students, as we are asking them to maintain social distance even during their free time and this goes against every natural instinct they have.

As part of educating the community, we have shared the article below with students in an attempt to help them understand the effect that all three strategies can have. This article, taken from the English version of El Pais and published towards the end of October, has some striking visuals that really help to explain how Covid 19 spreads: <https://english.elpais.com/society/2020-10-28/a-room-a-bar-and-a-class-how-the-coronavirus-is-spread-through-the-air.html>

Elleray

At Elleray we are ensuring that the children are warm whilst maintaining good ventilation. At times staff may be wearing masks, particularly in communal areas such as the School office. Staff may also choose to wear a mask to protect children if they are working closely with them on a one to one basis.

The visiting music teachers are now only working in our setting. They are wearing clear masks and, where possible, are behind large Perspex screens.



RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Windermere School risk assessments, as they relate to the Covid-19 pandemic, are updated on an on-going basis. Further details on specific risk assessments are available from our Operations Manager Mr Richard Hennah (rhennah@windermereschool.co.uk).

We will continue to keep students and their families well-informed of any changes to our provision through these regular Covid Planning updates, as well as through our well-established system of tutor emails.

Key information from the new/amended government guidance

The wearing of face masks has become **mandatory** for all students and staff at Browhead as they move around site.

The government remains clear that they are planning for GCSE examinations to go ahead in the Summer of 2021. These examinations will take place three weeks later than is normal, and will take place within June and early July. Given the recent news concerning examinations in Wales and Scotland it will be interesting to see if this position is maintained, but we will ensure that our students are well prepared whatever the final decision.

Trying to navigate what is and is not acceptable for schools within lockdown is tricky, and certain activities have had to be curtailed. Adventure and PE are continuing to make use of the local area, for example for fell running and for local cycle trips, but this is having to be managed very carefully.

The regulations around after school activities have been amended, and are currently not as clear as we would like. The guidance suggests that students should only be attending after school activities where child care at home is not available. We are planning to continue with our current activity programme until the guidance is clarified, but at Browhead we have had to return to the single year group system we originally had in place. As a result, some activities, e.g. race sailing on a Saturday or day student access to 6-a-side football in the evening, have had to be put on hold. If day students at Browhead, who are remaining at School to attend the prep session (rather than for a physical activity), are able to go home at 4.10pm this would assist with our management of students on site within their year group bubbles.

At Elleray we will also continue to provide after school care and activities, but we would encourage you to consider if these are currently essential. This is in line with the change in government guidance regarding after school activities. We feel that it is important for students to stay for the sporting activities, as this is good for well-being, however if prep can be carried out at home we would encourage you to collect your child at the 3.50 or 4.00pm pick up time. We appreciate that Elleray parents have just completed their activity choices, but would appreciate you completing the following survey in light of this new information. As is customary, please complete this form for each child you have at Elleray: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=W6Gh56Lx_km7hI-PJil_29L8scQ6DypIHuEKEzV4Bfw9UNVVaM1I2WVVFSTBKMIl-FSTU5QUJZM1dJOC4u

As usual, we will keep you updated if there are any further changes to government guidance. Please be aware that the government may ask schools to move to 'Tier 2' or 'Tier 3' measures. This might involve schools asking students to attend on a year group rota basis (Tier 2) or asking all students to learn remotely (Tier 3). This is likely to have the most impact on Browhead.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS UNWELL

Please exercise caution if your son or daughter is unwell. If you are unsure whether to send them into school or not, it would be sensible to err on the side of caution. If you are at all unsure, please do contact either of the School Nurses. If your son or daughter has been given a painkiller in the morning, please do not send them into school before you have spoken to one of the Nurses.

STUDENT ABSENCE

If, for whatever reason, your son or daughter will not be coming into school on a specific day, please ring the main office at Browhead (015394 46164) or Elleray (015394 46803) or email:

- Browhead – absence@windermereschool.co.uk
- Elleray – csilverwood@windermereschool.co.uk

At Elleray and Browhead, if a child is too unwell to come to school we would like to give them time to rest and recuperate. Light work can be provided via email, if a child is feeling a little unwell.

However, if a child has to self-isolate due to other family members being unwell, or due to a range of quarantine restrictions, then please do contact your child's tutor to discuss remote learning. They will be able to plan the best way forward for your son or daughter.

DEALING WITH WORRIES

Covid-19 has changed the way we live, and we are all adapting to these new ways of living. It is important for all of us, adults and students, to acknowledge how we are feeling and to know that there are people and resources available to support us.

Kooth: www.kooth.com (Online counselling service)

Childline: Tel: 08001111 <https://www.childline.org.uk/inf> and <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org

Mind: www.mind.org.uk

Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org

