

Covid-19 Education Q&A

1. Will FIG be bringing back students to the Falkland Islands from the UK?

- A. FIG currently has no plans at this stage to bring back students from the UK. Parents are able to decide to bring back their own children at any time, and for any reason, although this will be at their own expense. The only point at which FIG may consider bringing back students will be if a specific university, college or school is closed for an indefinite period – i.e. not a temporary lockdown such as a 14-day circuit breaker approach.

FIG will continue to closely monitor the situation. It is also important to note that children exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19 would not be permitted to board the Airbridge and that everyone arriving back into the Islands is still subject to a 14-day quarantine period.

2. What happens to associated education costs if I choose to bring my child home?

- A. If you choose to bring your child home then the financial liability for associated costs will generally rest with parents; however, the Education Directorate is happy to meet with parents considering bringing their child home to discuss the individual circumstances on a case by case basis. This is in line with current FIG policy.

3. What plans are in place to support students in the UK who are asked to self-isolate?

- A. On 20 August, prior to students departing the Islands, the Education Directorate held a meeting to discuss with parents and caregivers the best way to support young people studying in the UK. Following this meeting, Director of Education Marie Horton, confirmed that FIG has contracted Crown Guardians to provide an opt-in service for UK-based students.

This is an emergency service which is only used in the event that their nominated Guardians cannot enact the student's safety plan immediately. Every post-16 student studying in the UK must have at least one Guardian living in the country, who can act as a surrogate parent, and is not part of the Crown Guardians contract. Each safety plan has been shared with families, FIGO and Crown Guardians to enable all parties to work closely together as needed.

4. What happens if there is UK-wide lockdown again?

- A. All of the advice and guidance coming out of the UK Government has stated that a second national UK-wide lockdown is not anticipated, and even if it were to occur, educational establishments would not be shutdown. If this information changes then FIG will consider the potential impact on our students studying overseas; it is more likely that short-term, local changes may come into force if UK infection rates continue to increase.

5. Who do I contact if I am worried about my child's wellbeing/their situation?

- A. You should get in touch with their place of education initially, as they will have local plans and services in place to support students through a range of different issues, including those relating to Covid-19. This is an important early step so that families can make education providers aware of any concerns so that these can be addressed and mitigating actions can be considered. All parents should have the contact information for their child's place of study, but if you need help locating this, then please contact the Education Directorate by emailing Lucille McMullen: lmcmullen@education.ac.fk or by calling 27289.

6. What can I do to help my child during this time?

- A. The best thing that you can do is provide reassurance. It is fair to say that there are some stark headlines in the UK media at the moment, but it's very important to make sure that

your child knows about the safety measures in place to protect them and that they know who they should be contacting if they have any concerns. It's natural for people to feel anxious during a global pandemic, so the best way to address this is to have an open conversation about what in particular is worrying your child.

7. Will FIG pay for a parent to travel to the UK to support a child who is ill?

- A. In most cases, safety plans will be enacted to support any student who falls ill, which will not require a parent to travel to the UK. If a parent chooses to travel to the UK to support their child then they will be responsible for financing this themselves. A parent can discuss their concerns and personal circumstances with the Director of Education. Any request will be considered on a case by case basis.

8. How do the Crown Guardians arrangements work?

- A. It is an emergency service that is only to be used when a student's usual guardians are unavailable, for example if a student is asked to leave their place of study at short notice. The Crown Guardian service will make sure that the student is given bed and board until such time as they can be collected or reunited with their guardian, so that they are not left alone or without support. To date the service has been used once and operated as expected. Although FIG pays for the Crown Guardian contract, it is an optional service, and parents need to ensure that their child is opted into the service if they wish to use it as a safety net.

9. What is the Peter Symonds College 'bubble' system?

- A. At Peter Symonds College (PSC) they operate a bubble system to limit contact between students. Each bubble is made up of students from the same household and allows these individuals to mix socially, however they must maintain appropriate social distancing between those not in their bubble. This means that if one student within a bubble has Covid-19 symptoms, then all other members of the same bubble are required to self-isolate and to take a Covid-19 test. PSC has sent out numerous communications to parents outlining how the system works.

10. How are tests carried out?

- A. All tests need to be booked by the student, their parent or guardian – this can be done online or over the phone. All of the details on how to arrange a test and what to be aware of are available on the UK Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

11. Where can I find out more about testing and other Covid-19 measures in the area in which my child is studying?

- A. We have listed each educational establishment below in alphabetical order, together with a hyperlink which will take you to the relevant page on the local authority's website.

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| Bishop Burton | East Riding of Yorkshire Council |
| Chichester | West Sussex County Council |
| Dornoch Academy | Highland Council |
| Exeter College | Devon County Council |
| Gordonstoun School | Grampian Assistance Hub |
| Loughborough College | Leicestershire County Council |
| Merchiston School | Edinburgh City Council |
| Okanagan Hockey Academy UK | Wiltshire County Council |
| Peter Symonds College | Hampshire County Council |
| Sparsholt College | Hampshire County Council |
| St Leonards | Fife Council |

12. Who is responsible for the safety plan and how can I get hold of a copy?

- A. Each student has a bespoke safety plan which was developed by their parent/carer, who remain responsible for that plan. If you have mislaid your copy you can request a copy from the Education Directorate by emailing via Lucille McMullen: lmcmullen@education.ac.fk or by calling 27289.

13. What options there are if the young people return for continuing education on return to the Islands?

- A. There may be opportunities for standalone, online learning through Falkland College, but this will depend on the stage of each student's studies and whether their existing place of education offers online learning. Students will also be able to access the FIG IAG Counsellor (Information, Advice and Guidance) should they wish to talk through their options.

14. Can the students be placed into alternative colleges/schools at this stage?

- A. It depends on the stage that they are at with their studies, for most students it would be difficult to transfer to an alternative college or school. However, there may be opportunities for online learning via Falkland College.

15. Will FIG pay for a third year of study for students whose UK education is interrupted as a result of Covid-19?

- A. This is not a provision that FIG would ordinarily make and would ultimately be a political decision, were there a need to consider a change in this policy.