

**Response to Covid-19 Pandemic For Patients Undergoing Orthodontic Treatment**

All appointments at all sites have been temporarily suspended. This decision has been taken in order to minimise the close personal contact that occurs in waiting rooms and in the surgeries in order to protect patients, parents/carers, clinicians and staff.

**Email Contact (for both NHS and private patients):**

Reading Site	toc.reading@nhs.net
Wokingham Site	toc.wokingham@nhs.net
Bracknell Site	toc.bracknell@nhs.net
Newbury Site (The Briars)	We are in the process of contacting patients of the Briars
Pangbourne Site	toc.reading@nhs.net
Theale Site:	toc.reading@nhs.net

**For patients currently wearing fixed appliances:**

- Continue to look after your appliances as previously directed. Please ensure that you keep them clean; our advice is to clean three times per day.
- Please be aware that loose/fractured/lost orthodontic brackets and wires do not constitute a serious orthodontic emergency; if a portion of your appliance is 'digging-in' and causing discomfort, please place wax over the offending area.
- We have made two short videos giving excellent advice about the home-management of orthodontic emergencies; these can be viewed on our Facebook page.

**For patients wearing orthodontic ELASTIC BANDS**

- If (at your most recent appointment with us), you were asked to wear these full-time, please continue to do so for 6 weeks from the date of that appointment. After this time, continue to wear the elastics, but at night only. You will need to cease the wear of elastics when/if you run out. Please email us at that stage, so that a note can be entered into your clinical card.
- If (at your most recent appointment with us), you were asked to wear these at night only, please continue to do so until you run out. Please email us at that stage, so that a note can be entered into your clinical card.
- If you have any urgent queries regarding the pattern or timings etc of your elastic band wear, please email us (see above).

**For Patients Wearing Removable Appliances (upper jaw only)**

- Please continue to wear your appliance exactly as directed at your most recent appointment
- If you are using a 'key' to turn a 'screw' (this is called an expansion appliance), please continue and complete the number of turns that you were directed to carry out. Once completed, please stop turning but continue to wear the appliance full time.
- If you have been asked to turn the screw either once a week or twice a week *until your next appointment*, please continue to do so for another 8 weeks only, but continue to wear the appliance full time thereafter.
- If your appliance breaks, please contact us by email. Please attach a photograph of the broken appliance.

### **For Patients Wearing Removable Appliances (Upper Jaw & Lower Jaw - Twin Blocks)**

- Please continue to wear your appliance exactly as directed at your most recent appointment
- If you are using a 'key' to turn a 'screw' in the upper appliance, please continue and complete the number of turns that you were directed to carry out. Once completed, please stop turning but continue to wear the appliance full time.
- If you have been asked to turn the screw either once a week or twice a week *until your next appointment*, please continue to do so for another 8 weeks only, but continue to wear the appliance full time thereafter.
- If your appliance breaks, please contact us by email. Please attach a photograph of the broken appliance.

### **For Patients Wearing Orthodontic Retainers & INVISALIGN ALIGNERS**

- Please continue to wear your retainers/aligners exactly as directed as your most recent appointment
- If your retainer(s)/aligners break, please contact us urgently by email. Please attach a photograph of the broken retainer(s)/aligners.
- Invisalign patients will be contacted in the next few days.

If you have any questions or concerns that have not been dealt with above, please email us using the email addresses noted above in red. We understand fully that you will be concerned about the implications of treatment being suspended. Please be reassured that we will continue treatment in a timely fashion once the pandemic has been controlled and the risk to both patients and staff has reduced.

There are some **important steps** that you/your child can follow to ensure you achieve the best results from treatment:

1. Please ensure you/they maintain the highest level of oral hygiene by brushing effectively three times a day and using small interdental/interspace brushes to clean behind the wires. Use a fluoride mouthwash once a day. Use this video for instruction: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpxMwiLRQyY>
2. Please ensure you/they follow the necessary dietary restrictions: no fizzy drinks (including diet/sports drinks), no chewing gum, toffees or other sweets. Limit other sweet foods, such as biscuits and cakes/puddings to mealtimes. Avoid very hard foods.

With our best wishes at this very difficult time,

Drs. Louise & Craig Harper

Directors and Specialist Orthodontics – The Orthodontic Centre (Reading) Ltd.