



St. Thomas More High School

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2nd January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we begin to prepare to return to school and guidance from Government has been updated, I just wanted to remind you that we begin this new year with some new advice and procedures. Lateral Flow Device testing will be offered to students on the morning of their return to school Wednesday 5th January 2022 and each morning during form time for the first two weeks back in January. It would be helpful if you could arrange to test at home on Tuesday 4th January before making any journey to school, to try and reduce the spread of Covid-19. In the light of the current rise in numbers and updated guidance to schools, it is really important that you discuss with your son/daughter the following health & safety advice and guidance for their return to school this week;

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

Do

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- students should sanitise their hands using hand sanitisers in classrooms or at stations around the school if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Maintain social distancing between individuals wherever possible
- Follow NHS guidance and get a PCR test if you show symptoms or feel unwell
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

Do Not

- come into school if you have symptoms of Covid 19 [St Thomas More High School Student COVID Absence Report \(office.com\)](#)

Updated guidance on the use of face coverings in education settings

- From today, Sunday 2 January, it is **recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms** where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, unless exempt. The advice is short term only, to support pupils and teachers as they return to school this term and builds on the existing proportionate guidance that recommends face coverings for all adults in communal areas of all settings. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire, at which point it will be reviewed.

Testing for students after the holiday period

- Testing will be offered to all students on the morning of their return to school Wednesday 5th January 2022 and each morning during form time for the first two weeks back in January.
- Test twice weekly and to upload the result to [NHS Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing either at home or at school once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection.

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- If your son/daughter tests positive from a Lateral Flow Device at home, you must book for a confirmatory PCR test as soon as possible. You must inform school using the [Student COVID Test Results \(office.com\)](#)
- If at any point (including during the holidays) your son/ daughter is tested positive, please report to school via the school website link [Student COVID Test Results \(office.com\)](#)

Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19

- People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time. If the test is positive, they should follow the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#)

Information on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19

- Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.
- Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 8.

I have also attached a chart that may prove useful in determining when to return to school/ work after a positive test.

Exams and assessments in January

Examinations and assessments in January will go ahead as originally planned in a socially distanced examination setting.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a happy, healthy and safe New Year.

Yours sincerely

Mrs G Ackred
Headteacher