



St. Thomas More High School

Kenilworth Gardens
Westcliff-on-Sea
Essex SS0 0BW
Telephone: Southend (01702) 344933

Headteacher:
Mrs G Ackred

Email: office@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk www.st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk

3rd March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over the past week we have been working with the DfE, Local Authority and Secondary Heads to plan for the re-opening of schools in Southend.

Our original plans were to open from 8th March with a staggered start for year groups so testing could be carried out over several days. In working closely with the Local Authority, St Thomas More High School have now sited two St Johns Ambulances which will serve as mobile testing units for our students in our car park. These units will be fully staffed with trained testing operatives, who test themselves daily and we have permission for testing to start this week to allow our school time to complete the tests before the school fully reopens to all pupils according to the timetable below.

As a result of this change, we are able to **start testing students this Friday, 5th March**. Testing is optional and only carried out on students whose parents have provided consent. If you haven't yet provided consent for your child and knowing the test site is at our school are now happy for your child to be tested as part of their school day on their return (see the timetable below), please complete this [Consent Form](#) **one form for each child**. Please note that consent is to test at our school site and to the sharing of data with NHS Track & Trace, as laid out in the privacy statement.

Students over the age of 16 may give their own consent, if preferred. In this case, please discuss this with them and ensure they complete the [Consent Form](#) themselves.

The timetable for testing and gradual return to school full time is as below. You may wish to use the test date information below to alternatively book a test at your local community test centre or the designated school site at **Garon's Sports Centre (for school children and their families only)** Eastern Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 4FA. This site is open 7 days a week 8am to 8pm. You can [book your appointment here](#). You must have no symptoms to attend this site and parking is available. You may also prefer to have a LFD test delivered to your home. [Schools testing: Order coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow home test kits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Students will only be on site for their test between Friday 5th and Thursday 11th and will then go home. Full school uniform must be worn. Students will be self-swabbing under the supervision and guidance of medical staff and results will be sent to the contact details that you provided when giving consent.

Children who have taken a test in less than 3 days before their test date below or have tested positive within the last 90 days or who do not have consent to test should **NOT** attend school on their test date but attend on their return to school date.

As the year groups come to and from school for testing next week, live lessons via Teams are suspended throughout as next week, although remote learning will continue, with work set on Teams for Years 7 – 10 on Monday 8th – Thursday 11th March until their return to school.

The return to school and testing timetable is as follows:

Year Group	Date of first or second test on site at St Thomas More (no booking necessary)	Date of return to school
13	Between 9am and 3pm Fri 5 th March	Full time from Monday 8 th March
12	Between 9am and 3pm Fri 5 th March	Full time from Monday 8 th March
11	Between 9am and 3pm Fri 5 th March	Full time from Monday 8 th March
10	Between 8am and 10.30am Monday 8 th March	Full time Wednesday 10 th March
9	Between 8am and 10.30am Tuesday 9 th March	Full time Thursday 11 th March
8	Between 8am and 10.30am Wednesday 10 th March	Full time Friday 12 th March
7	Between 8am and 10.30am Thursday 11 th March	Full time Friday 12 th March
Year Group	Date of second or third test on site at St Thomas More (no booking necessary)	
13	Between 8am and 10.30am Fri 12 th March	
12	Between 8am and 10.30am Fri 12 th March	
11	Between 8am and 10.30am Fri 12 th March	
10	Between 8am and 10.30am Monday 15 th March	
9	Between 8am and 10.30am Tuesday 16 th March	
8	Between 8am and 10.30am Wednesday 17 th March	
7	Between 8am and 10.30am Thursday 18 th March	
Year Group	Date of third test on site at St Thomas More (no booking necessary)	
13	Between 8am and 10.30am Fri 19 th March	
12	Between 8am and 10.30am Fri 19 th March	
11	Between 8am and 10.30am Fri 19 th March	
10	Between 8am and 10.30am Monday 22 nd March	
9	Between 8am and 10.30am Tuesday 23 rd March	
8	Between 8am and 10.30am Wednesday 24 th March	
7	Between 8am and 10.30am Thursday 25 th March	

Testing will continue to be carried out in school for each year group until 19th March, after which date students will be asked to test at home under supervision, using test kits that are being provided by Department of Education and Public Health England. These will be sent out from the school with further instructions and guidance once they have been delivered to us.

Preparing to test and reopen the school has been a massive undertaking and I am grateful to my colleagues for all their support and input. Our plans now have to be tested and put into action and that in itself, is a considerable challenge.

The full reopening of school from Monday 8th is something we can all look forward to and we will be meeting with students on their first day back to go through some of the key issues for students. You may wish to use this resource <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>, to help discuss with your child how they are feeling about returning to school. Please as always do let us know of any concerns you have welfare@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk

On the day students return to full time face to face education, they will be issued with a new timetable (which in most cases will be the same as the one they have been following), students will have the same staggered lunchtime and staggered end of the school day as we had in the Autumn term. We will start

back on week 1. Face masks/coverings are to be worn at all times (unless exempt), including in classrooms as one of our control measures to reduce the spread of the virus.

Thank you for all you continue to do to support our school and your sons and daughters. There is light at the end of the tunnel and certainly things are much more positive now than they were at the start of January. We all just need to be vigilant and maintain the highest standards in everything we do when we all return to school.

We will continue to do everything we can to support their transition back into school life and we are really looking forward to seeing them all again.

Let's all pray for a positive reopening of the school from 8th March.

Kind regards and God bless.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Ackred', written in a cursive style.

Mrs G Ackred
Headteacher