



St. Thomas More High School

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17th May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware, there have been changes to restrictions across England from today, Monday 17th May due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Guidance to schools was issued early last week.

Face Coverings

One of the major changes is to relax the requirements for students wearing masks in secondary schools. We welcome this change, as we realise wearing masks all day can be uncomfortable. Students and staff will no longer have to wear masks whilst on the school site and this includes in classrooms and communal areas. Of course they may do so if they wish, or if their health needs suggest they may be more vulnerable to Covid-19. If students or staff still wish to wear a face mask whilst on the school site, then this is a personal choice and, of course, this will be respected. Staff may also choose to continue wearing a face mask throughout the school day; once again this decision will be respected. In particular, it is recommended for staff to wear a face covering where social distancing cannot be adequately maintained.

Students will be required to wear a face mask on public transport, school dedicated transport and in retail shops/businesses in line with the current Government guidance.

Systems of Control and Prevention in school

Other aspects of our risk assessment remain in place, including our enhanced cleaning schedule at evenings and weekends and it is important that students:

- Regularly sanitise/wash their hands, especially on arrival to school, before lessons and at lunchtimes.
- Do not move into areas of the school where they are not timetabled and remain outdoors at lunchtime until called in with their year group
- Remain as socially distanced from others as possible
- Remain in the same seat identified on the teacher's seating plan during the lesson

It is important we stay vigilant as we move into this next stage of the road map out of lockdown and continue to do everything we can to minimise the risk of transmission in school.

Wednesday 9th June Moderation Afternoon – Early Closure

Our Year 11 and Year 13 students are now mid-way through their final Assessment Opportunity and we keep them all in our prayers at this stressful time. We know they and their teachers have prepared well and should draw strength from the knowledge we continue to hold them in our thoughts and prayers. Staff will be marking and collating the evidence for the Centre Assessed Grades until early June. However, to comprehensively moderate this work in advance of submission to the examination boards, it has become necessary to have an **early closure for students on Wednesday 9th June. Years 7, 8, 9 and 12 will therefore be dismissed from school after period 4 from 1.20pm. Year 10 will be dismissed from school at 12.45pm.**

Extra-Curricular Clubs and Activities

Additional changes to the guidance also relax restrictions around extra-curricular activities. We are beginning to scale up our extra-curricular offer once more, and I do hope that your son or daughter gets involved in the opportunities on offer. Please read [Contact](#) – our weekly newsletter to ensure you are aware of the timings of the clubs on offer for each year group bubble.

Twice weekly testing

It remains important that staff and students continue with their lateral flow testing at home every Wednesday and Sunday. Please report these results to [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and [Student COVID Test Results \(office.com\)](#)

A reminder that your son/daughter should not attend school if they have:

- a new, continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of taste or smell

If symptoms appear, you must book a PCR test at the earliest possible time and report this to the school if the result is positive. [St Thomas More High School Student COVID Absence Report \(office.com\)](#)

Likewise, I have attached a flow chart that highlights what happens if someone tests positive and the procedures that will need to be followed. I hope you find this useful. There may be some further modifications to our protocols after half term and I will write to you again once we have clarification on key issues.

I would like to thank the school community for the fantastic way in which they have responded to the challenges placed upon us by the pandemic. Thank you for all your support, encouragement, help and understanding during the past fifteen months. I have nothing but the greatest respect for the way our students and staff have worked throughout this time and I know that, as we move forward through the next few months, we will see the school stronger and more resilient because of the challenges we have faced.

Yours sincerely



Mrs G Ackred
Headteacher