



# **THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**Key document for the running of the school under  
Covid-19 restrictions, from September 2020  
through until the foreseeable future .**



## Introduction

At the end of June the Government announced their intention to reopen Schools for all year groups from September. This policy has been written using the guidance and documents from the Department for Education (DFE) that was released on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020.

*DFE Guidance: Returning to school is vital for students' education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for students' cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged students. This impact can affect both current levels of learning and students' future ability to learn, and therefore we need to ensure all pupils can return to school sooner rather than later.*

## Preparation

In preparation for the return of students our Covid19 Risk Assessment has been written and shared with the school's Senior Leadership team, Governing Body and the wider staffing body. It has been reviewed and amended at each stage after any DfE and government changes to the Covid19 guidance. This document is a summary of the actions relating to the Risk Assessment for sharing with all stakeholders and to summarise the key points raised.

Tuesday and Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> September will be used by staff as preparation days to reflect upon any changes and guidance issued during the summer break and to focus on school priorities.

From Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, we will invite all year groups to come back to school as normal on a staggered start.

## Provision for all year groups

Schools have been asked to continue to minimise social contact as far as possible and maintain social distancing wherever possible. We recognise the difficulties with social distancing for younger students but have planned provision to minimise these risks. In addition to talking to the students about social distancing, measures will include:

1. The start of the day is naturally staggered as our students travel from a wide area and this does not need to be changed
2. Students should enter the site on their own. Parents are only to enter the school site by prior appointment
3. The end of the day will be staggered to ensure there isn't a bottle-neck of students at the bus stop and year 7 parents at the school gates
4. Staff accompany Year 7 and 8 down Russell Hill to help calm dispersal of students in Purley.
5. When students arrive they go immediately to their outdoor zones – Y7-8 Junior playground; Y9 Lawns at the front and Y10-11 Senior playground
6. Students will enter the school through external doors directly into classrooms wherever possible and follow the one way system inside the main building.
7. Break times and lunch times will be staggered and areas of the site zoned so that each group has a specific area to play (see point 5)
8. The following Year groups are a bubble – 7 & 8 Bubble / Year 9 Bubble / Y10-11 Bubble / Sixth form bubble
9. The curriculum will be adapted to ensure it meets the needs of the students at this time including a recovery curriculum during the first week in tutor times and mental health support services available by referral from staff through the correct existing referral system



10. The students should arrive at school in full school uniform.
11. Classrooms will be organised so that all desks are facing forward and students sit next to each other.
12. Each student has their own general equipment on their desk (any specialist equipment such as used in PE is wiped down between uses)
13. There will be assemblies initially in year groups but may move to virtual assemblies.
14. After school clubs will be only for Year group bubbles
15. Detentions will also be for Year group bubbles only fun by Heads of Year and Departments
16. Breakfast will be provided before school, but as for lunch ALL food is takeaway and to be eaten back in bubble zones. No sitting and eating in the canteen
17. The school kitchen will be fully open providing the takeaway food.
18. Lunches will be eaten in the year groups zonal area only
19. Educational visits and visitors will only be permitted with a comprehensive risk assessment including track and trace details and once agreed in advance by the Headteacher
20. Toilets for students are also zoned – Y7-9 boys sharing those by G1 Y10-11 by G11. Y7-9 girls on the staircase between G and F floors in the main building

### **Minimising the Risks**

21. Anyone displaying any symptom of the virus should not enter the school site.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.

22. If a student or member of staff starts to display the symptoms during the school day, they will leave the classroom immediately.
23. If a student displays the symptoms, one member of staff will take them to the designated office – G14. A senior safeguarding leader then takes their temperature and ensures social distancing is maintained. G14 is then deep cleaned before use again by daytime cleaners
24. Parents will be contacted to come to school and collect their student, who should then arrange a testing slot in the nearest testing facility.
25. If the COVID test is negative then the student is permitted back into school. If the test is positive school will contact the local health protection team who will support the school in track/trace/isolate
26. The Year group bubbles that the COVID positive teacher/student was in will need to be closed and all students / adults will need to isolate for 14 days from initial closure.



27. If it is a member of staff who displays the symptoms, they will be asked to go home and request a test for the virus. (See section on 'Testing')
28. If schools have two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, there may be an outbreak, and school will continue to work with the local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.
29. No student should be given paracetamol (or similar medication) before school – this will mask symptoms and could put other people at risk.
30. Upon their return to school, all students will be taught the measures taken to minimise the risks to their health. These will include scheduled hand washing, limited use of resources, social distancing and what this will look like in the playground and around the school, and new routines for the beginning/end of break times.
31. There will be increased cleaning throughout the day with door handles and surfaces being cleaned at lunchtime. Staff in classrooms will also have access to anti-bacterial spray so that surfaces and resources can be cleaned before and after lunch, at the end of the day and as needed. Staff will wipe down surfaces, keyboards and the mouse by each work station between classes.
32. Water fountains will not be available: students must bring a water bottle, which will remain in their bag.
33. Classroom furniture will be rearranged so that tables are facing forwards.
34. School uniform should be washed on a regular basis.
35. Visits will be by prior appointment only and visitors will complete our track and trace documentation. Where a visitor needs to enter the building, they will be asked to confirm that they are well and not currently displaying any symptoms of Covid. They will be asked to use anti-bacterial hand gel and given the visitor protocol.

### **Attendance**

It is vital for all students to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on students' education, wellbeing and wider development.

36. Parents' have a legal duty to ensure that their student attends regularly at school where the student is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age
37. It is the school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence
38. Where a parent has not reported reasons for absence, school will make every effort to contact the parent, including conducting a home visit
39. Where absence cites a COVID symptom school will follow up with parents as to the nature of illness – testing will need to be carried out if the school/parent believes symptoms are COVID related.
40. School will issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authority's codes of conduct for non-attendance



## **Shielded and Clinically Vulnerable People**

We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer students and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school.

41. The small number of students who remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.
42. Students who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school
43. Where students are unable to attend school due to medical illness school will offer access to remote learning.
44. Where students are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

## **Testing**

45. All students who are attending education will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus.
46. Where a student (or staff member) tests positive, the rest of their bubble and staff they have been in direct contact with, will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of the wider group do not need to self-isolate unless the student or staff member they live with subsequently develops symptoms.
47. Names of confirmed or suspected cases of Covid will be kept confidential.
48. The risk assessment will be considered on a daily basis. Where there is an inadequate level of staffing available the Head will contact the Local Authority and the Chair of Governors to discuss the possible closure of the school.

## **Quarantine**

Many staff will want to take a holiday throughout the Year 2020-2021.

49. Staff will need to be aware of what travel restrictions are in place and which areas and/or countries are on the quarantine list. The expectation is that staff will not travel to countries where a 2 week quarantine will be necessary on their return.

This policy will be reviewed and amended as further guidance and advice are received from the DfE and Public Health England.

**Review Date: SLT 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020**