



CORONAVIRUS POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2020 OPENING **incorporating additional Safeguarding Procedures**

INTRODUCTION

In response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, Thomas's Academy set up a remote schooling provision in order to protect the health of the community while still providing education for its pupils.

Over the summer the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased and the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running. Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).

Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from Coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school.

While coronavirus (COVID-19) remains in the community, this means making judgments at a school level about how to balance minimising any risks from coronavirus (COVID-19) by maximising control measures while providing a full educational experience for children and young people.

In relation to working in schools, whilst it is not possible to ensure a totally risk-free environment, the Office of National Statistics' analysis on coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths linked to occupations suggests that "staff in educational settings tend not to be at any greater risk from the disease than many other occupations. There is no evidence that children transmit the disease any more than adults".

During this evolving situation we will monitor and follow government guidance.

AIMS

- To re-establish as near normal programme of schooling as possible, whilst providing pupils who are unable to attend with activities to work on at home
- To re-adopt a remote schooling programme should a whole class/year/bubble be required to remain at home
- To maintain clear communication between the school and families to support the education, welfare and safeguarding of all pupils and staff
- To acknowledge the needs of particular pupils who may be the children of key workers or be in a vulnerable situation
- To provide a safe environment within the school site, acknowledging and responding to the guidance of social distancing and hygiene requirements. See Appendix 1.

Prior to pupils returning to school in greater numbers Thomas's Academy has carried out the recommended risk assessments and put strategies in place in relation to:

- Timetabling and consideration of any adjustments needed to the curriculum
- Re-organising classrooms to support social distancing measures
- Movement around the building
- Utilising outdoor space whenever possible
- Staggered arrival and departure times
- Staggered break and lunch arrangements
- Reducing 'pinch points'
- Enhanced cleaning regimes

The full risk assessment can be found [here](#)

PROCEDURES

Attendance

From September 2020 it is expected that all pupils will return to school to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. As such the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- the parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly
- the schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Pupils remaining at home

- Pupils who are self-isolating or in quarantine will be marked as "X" in the attendance codes. This will not count as an absence in the school census.
- Pupils who have a positive test result will be marked as "I" (for illness) in the attendance codes

The engagement of pupils unable to attend school will continue to be monitored through regular check-ins with office staff. Any concerns over lack of participation or any other safeguarding concerns will be flagged with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Awareness to minimise risk (Risk Assessment Point 1)

Pupils, staff and other adults must not come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or have tested positive in the last 10 days, and anyone developing those symptoms during the school day should be sent home. All staff will be made aware of this process. The school will adopt the following measures:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene

- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable

Public Health England is clear that routinely taking the temperature of pupils is not recommended as this is an unreliable method for identifying coronavirus (COVID-19).

Government legislation with regards to quarantine is currently that anyone returning from countries not currently under the UK's air bridge scheme will be required to quarantine for 14 days, even if they have had a negative test. Should this directive change at any time the school will adopt any updated measures. Parents of pupils and members of staff should employ best endeavours to allow time to quarantine prior to their return to school in time for the specified start of term.

Response to a local restriction (Risk Assessment Point 2)

While the expectation is for all pupils to return to school, there may be cases where, due a rise in cases, further restrictions may need to be implemented for certain sectors (from national direction). Thomas's Academy will follow the Government guidance with regards to this. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions>

The restrictions are divided into four tiers.

Tier 1: Attendance to continue as normal with the additional requirement that face coverings should be worn by staff outside classrooms when moving around communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained

Tier 2: In a tier 2 scenario, limiting overall numbers on-site will help to reduce the number of contacts children and young people have during a typical school day and using a rota system is likely to implement existing protective measures even more effectively. For example, while group sizes themselves may not be smaller, having fewer groups within a school is likely to reduce the chance of 'bubbles' mixing during the school day. Most importantly a rota system serves to break transmission chains, by allowing enough time at home for symptoms to present and pupils to self-isolate and avoid spreading the virus to others at the school. This is an important way to reduce the risk to pupils, families and the workforce, both in school and in the local area.

Tier 3: In the event of tier 3 local restrictions being implemented the Department for Education will issue operational guidance for the affected area that will confirm which year groups should be prioritised.

Tier 4: Attendance on site will be limited to just vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers at all settings. Should this tier need to be implemented, Thomas's will reactivate the single hub as established in March.

In the case of a whole class or year group being required to remain at home, that group will be provided with a remote schooling programme. From 22nd October, any pupil off school for a COVID related reason, will have

home learning to complete.

Contact within school (Risk Assessment Point 3)

Within school Thomas's Academy will aim to reduce contact as much as possible by adopting the following procedures:

- grouping children together
- avoiding contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

Supporting those who are clinically vulnerable in line with PH Advice (see Risk Assessment Point 4)

Pupils who are clinically vulnerable: We expect that the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. However a small number of pupils may still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19).

If rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, may be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and, therefore, they may be temporarily unable to attend.

Pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional are likely to discuss their care with their health professional at their next planned clinical appointment - you can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or public health advice, we aim to provide an online education programme. However, unless a whole class/bubble is off school this will not be a full remote programme as the teacher's main priority will be with the pupils in school.

Where children are not able to attend school as parents and carers are following clinical or public health advice, for example, self-isolation or family isolation, the absence will not be penalised.

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable: Rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) are now reduced to levels below those seen when shielding was introduced. Therefore, it is advised that staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable can return to school in September 2020. To support this Thomas's has implemented the system of controls outlined in this document, in line with our own workplace risk assessment. In all respects, the clinically extremely vulnerable should now follow the same guidance as the clinically vulnerable population, taking particular care to practise frequent, thorough hand washing, and cleaning of frequently touched areas in their home and/or workspace.

Staff who are clinically vulnerable: Clinically vulnerable staff can return to school in September. While in school they should follow the sector-specific measures in this document to minimise the risks of transmission. This includes

taking particular care to observe good hand and respiratory hygiene, minimising contact and maintaining social distancing.

People who live with those who are clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable can attend the workplace.

Staff who are pregnant: Pregnant women are in the 'clinically vulnerable' category, and are generally advised to follow the above advice, which applies to all staff in schools. Thomas's will conduct a risk assessment for pregnant women in line with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW).

The Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (RCOG) has published [occupational health advice for employers and pregnant women](#). This document includes advice for women from 28 weeks gestation or with underlying health conditions who may be at greater risk.

Staff who may otherwise be at increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) Some people with particular characteristics may be at comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), as set out in the [COVID-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes report](#). These staff can return to school in September and Thomas's will implement the system of controls outlined in this document to support their needs.

People who live with those who have comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) can attend the workplace.

Physical arrangements to minimise Coronavirus (COVID-19) (Risk Assessment Point 5)

Thomas's Academy plans to adopt the following physical arrangements. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection' and are outlined in more detail in the sections below.

Prevention

In order to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) as far as possible the school will:

1. minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
2. clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
3. ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
4. introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach
5. minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible
6. where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

Numbers 1 to 4 will be in place, all the time. Number 5 will be properly considered measures will be put in place to suit circumstances. Number 6 will apply in specific circumstances.

Response

In response to any case of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Thomas's Academy will:

7. engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
8. manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community
9. contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Numbers 7 to 9 will be followed in every case where they are relevant.

Arrival at and Departure from School (Risk Assessment Point 6)

Thomas's Academy will follow the following procedures at the start and end of the school day.

- Arrival and departure times will be staggered by year groups
- Parents should wear masks on site and not gather at the school gates or come into school without an appointment
- For pupils and staff who wear face coverings on their journeys to school, there will be a process for removing them safely once on site.
 - Pupils should not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing them.
 - They must wash or sanitise their hands immediately on arrival (as is the case for all pupils), dispose of temporary face coverings in a covered bin or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash/sanitise their hands again before heading to their classroom.
 - Guidance on [safe working in education, childcare and children's social care](#) provides more advice.

Supply Teachers and Visitors Supply teachers, peripatetic teachers and/or other temporary staff can move between schools. They should ensure they minimise contact and maintain as much distance as possible from other staff. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND should provide interventions as usual.

- Thomas's Academy will address and accommodate the risks associated with managing contractors, visitors, catering staff and deliveries, as well as cleaning staff on site who may be working throughout the school and

across different groups.

- Site guidance on physical distancing and hygiene will be explained to visitors on or before arrival.
- Visits will take place out of school hours wherever possible
- A record will be kept of all visitors

Hand Hygiene (Risk Assessment Point 7)

- All pupils and adults should clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
- Teachers will ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms and before and after eating. Regular and thorough hand cleaning is going to be needed for the foreseeable future:
- The school will set up increased hand washing or hand sanitiser 'stations' available so that all pupils and staff can clean their hands regularly
- Teachers will ensure supervision of hand sanitiser use given risks around ingestion. Small children and pupils with complex needs will be helped to clean their hands properly. Skin friendly skin cleaning wipes can be used as an alternative
- The School will build these routines into school culture and help ensure younger children and those with complex needs understand the need to follow them
- All adults will be responsible for ensuring pupil hand hygiene, (including catering staff/bus drivers etc)

Respiratory Hygiene (Risk Assessment Point 8)

- All adults will ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- The school will ensure that enough tissues and bins are available in the school to support pupils and staff to follow this routine. As with hand cleaning, staff will ensure younger children and those with complex needs are helped to get this right, and all pupils understand that this is now part of how school operates.
- As a result of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) [new statement](#) on 21st August, the government has revised its guidance on face coverings for staff and children in Year 7 or above in England:
- At Thomas's Academy, pupils and adults are not required to wear masks on their return to school. However, anyone who wishes to wear a mask in school may do so.
- In the event of a local lockdown, pupils in Years 7 & 8 and adults will be required to wear masks in communal areas.

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Reviewed August 2020 Cleaning (Risk Assessment Point 9)

Thomas's Academy has introduced enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach. These include:

- more frequent cleaning of rooms / shared areas that are used by different groups
- frequently touched surfaces being cleaned more often than normal
- regular cleaning of loos and encouraging pupils to clean their hands thoroughly after using the loo. NB:

Different groups don't need to be allocated their own loo blocks.

- an additional full-time cleaner to be on site throughout the day

Public Health England has published revised [guidance for cleaning non-healthcare settings](#) to advise on general cleaning required in addition to the existing advice on cleaning those settings when there is a suspected case.

Social distancing – contact (Risk Assessment Point 10)

The school aims to do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum.

The overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between children and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (in 'pods') and through maintaining distance between individuals. These are not alternative options and both measures will help, but the balance between them will change depending on:

- children's ability to distance
- the lay out of the school
- the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum

For younger children the emphasis will be on separating groups, and for older children it will be on distancing. For children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff where possible.

These measures should help to reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other to only those within the group. It also makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate, and keep that number as small as possible.

However, the use of small groups restricts the normal operation of schools and presents both educational and logistical challenges, including the cleaning and use of shared spaces, such as playgrounds, dining halls, and loos, and the provision of specialist teaching.

As such, for the Autumn term 2020, maintaining consistent groups remains important, but given the decrease in the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the resumption of the full range of curriculum subjects, Thomas's Academy intends to change the previous emphasis on pods of 15 and increase the size of these groups to a year group level, in order to offer the full breadth of curriculum.

The school will continue to take steps to limit interaction, sharing of rooms and social spaces between groups as much as possible. When using larger groups, the other measures from the system of controls become even more important, to minimise transmission risks and to minimise the numbers of pupils and staff who may need to self-isolate. It is recognised that younger children will not be able to maintain social distancing, and it is acceptable for them not to distance within their group.

Both the approaches of separating groups and maintaining distance are not 'all-or-nothing' options, and will still bring benefits even if implemented partially. It is anticipated that children will remain in their class groups for the majority of the classroom time, but also mix into wider groups for specialist teaching, wraparound care and

transport. Siblings may also be in different groups.

All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. However, this is not likely to be possible with younger children and our teachers can still work across groups if that is needed to enable a full educational offer.

Social Distancing within the classroom (Risk Assessment Point 11)

Thomas's Academy will adopt the following measures within the classroom to support social distancing:

- Maintaining a distance between people whilst inside and reducing the amount of time they are in face to face to contact
- Ideally, adults should maintain 2 metre distance from each other, and from children, although this is not always possible, especially with younger children.
- Staff to avoid close face to face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone.
- For pupils who have complex needs or who need close contact care, educational and care support should be provided as normal.
- For children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers where possible. This will not be possible for the youngest children and some children with complex needs and may not be feasible in some areas of the school where space does not allow. However, the school acknowledges that doing this where they can, and even doing this some of the time, will help.
- When staff or children cannot maintain distancing, particularly with younger years, the risk can also be reduced by keeping pupils in the smaller, class-sized groups described above.
- Where possible Thomas's Academy has made small adaptations to the classroom to support distancing where possible. This includes seating pupils side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space.

Social Distancing elsewhere and curriculum amendments (Risk Assessment Point 12)

In other areas of the school Thomas's will adopt the following measures:

- Groups should be kept apart, large gatherings such as Whole School assemblies will be avoided. However, year group gatherings may be permitted in order to offer as near a normal school experience as possible
- Careful consideration will be given to music lessons, particularly when pupils are playing instruments or singing in small groups. Possible adaptations may include:
 - positioning pupils back-to-back or side-to-side,
 - avoiding sharing of instruments
 - ensuring good ventilation.

At present, singing will not take place in larger groups such as school choirs and ensembles, or school assemblies

- Class music lessons can take place with all pupils facing the same way, in rows
- Individual music lessons will adopt additional measures. Where appropriate screens will be provided or members of staff may be offered visors. The rooms will be ventilated between sessions and teachers will aim to stay 1 metre apart from pupils.
- When timetabling, groups should be kept apart and movement around the school site kept to a minimum. While passing briefly in the corridor or playground is low risk, the school will aim to avoid creating busy corridors, entrances and exits. Staggered break time and lunch times will also be considered (and time for cleaning surfaces in the dining hall between groups).
- Staff rooms and shared staff places will be adapted to help staff to distance from each other. Use of staff rooms should be minimized.

Equipment and Resources (Risk Assessment Point 13)

For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that staff and pupils have their own items that are not shared.

- Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces.
- Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.
- Outdoor playground equipment will be more frequently cleaned.
- Pupils are recommended to limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day.
- Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to pupil education and development. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources

Uniform (Risk Assessment Point 14)

Pupils are expected to wear their usual uniform for the Autumn term.

- Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.
- PE kits should be worn all day on days that children have P.E.

PPE Equipment (Risk Assessment Point 15)

The majority of staff will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases, including:

- where an individual child or young person becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while at schools, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained

- where a child or young person already has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used.

- It is recommended that catering staff wear masks when serving lunch to pupils Further guidance can be found in [safe working in education, childcare and children's social care](#) including preventing and controlling infection, how PPE should be used, what type of PPE to use, and how to source it.

Transport (Risk Assessment Point 16)

Parents, staff and pupils are encouraged to walk or cycle to school if at all possible. Families using public transport should refer to the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#).

Physical activity (Risk Assessment Point 17)

Thomas's Academy recognises the benefit of physical activity for pupils and aims to incorporate this into the school day as normal, whilst following the measures in their system of controls.

- Pupils will be kept in consistent groups,
- Sports equipment will be thoroughly cleaned between each use by different individual groups
- Outdoor sports should be prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximising distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene.
- Fixtures against other schools will be on hold until further review.
- Swimming lessons are on hold pending further review. Timetabled swimming times will be replaced with PE activities.

Response to a suspected case of coronavirus (COVID-19) on site (Risk Assessment Point 18)

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a HIGH temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), the following protocol will be adopted:

- The individual (pupil or member of staff) must be sent home and advised to follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19).
- If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10 day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.
- Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days
from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.
- If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age and needs of the child, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, they should remain in an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.
- If they need to go to the loo while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate loo if possible. The loo must be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

- PPE must be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). More information on PPE use can be found in the [safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#) guidance.
- As is usual practice, in an emergency, if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. 999 should be called immediately.
- Anyone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below) or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

Follow up to treating a suspected case of Coronavirus (COVID-19) (Risk Assessment Point 20)

- Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell.
- The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household bleach after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- Supervising staff members and cohorts should wash hands thoroughly. They do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms or the child subsequently tests positive.
- The Head will follow up if a test result is not received.
- If one pupil or teacher tests positive for coronavirus, the whole class/group should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days (the other household members of the wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they with in that group subsequently develops symptoms).
- The Head should complete a record of the incident and inform the local authority.
- Isolation rules <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>:
- Symptomatic individuals should self-isolate for 10 days, or longer if still unwell or feverish (contact NHS 111 or 111 online if symptoms persist).
- Household members should self-isolate for 14 days.
- If household members develop symptoms, they should isolate for 10 days (or longer if still unwell) from the start of their symptoms.
- There is no need for households to start their isolation again if a second member falls ill.
- On receipt of a negative test result, a pupil or staff member may return.
- Testing is available for all staff, pupils who are eligible to return to school, and their households.

Additional Pastoral and Safeguarding Awareness

The School recognises that many pupils will have been affected by aspects of the pandemic and the lockdown and may require additional support. Some pupils may have experienced bereavements of close family members, others may have suffered abuse or neglect which they have not been able to disclose. Many pupils will have experienced anxiety or distress due to the overall situation, things they have seen on social media or been told, been impacted on by difficulties their families have experienced in relation to financial matters or other family issues.

Researchers have identified five key losses (routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom) that may have occurred as a result of this pandemic and these have the potential to hugely impact the mental health of children, potentially triggering the emergence of increased anxiety. Some pupils may find it difficult to settle back into the academic structure of school and some may experience difficulties with peer relationships after a lengthy period of isolation from others their own age.

All staff will be alert to signs of stress in pupils and enable pupils to talk about how they are feeling. See Appendix 2. Any safeguarding concerns will be passed to the DSL (or deputy DSLs) promptly and any necessary referrals made to the relevant agencies or services. Additional support will be provided for pupils in school where appropriate and available.

All parents / carers will be asked to inform the school if their child has experienced any key family changes (eg bereavements, changes in contact with key adults, significant events, health difficulties etc) so that school staff can ensure they can be effectively supported.

Any emerging concerns will be discussed with parents in the usual way, unless the information known, leads the DSL to believe this could place a pupil at risk of immediate and further harm, in which case a referral will be made to MASH without delay.

REFERENCES

This policy has been informed by and complies with:

DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2020)

DfE guidance 'Coronavirus, Education and Childcare' (August 2020)

DfE guidance 'Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers' (May 2020)

Wandsworth 'Covid-19 Child Protection and Safeguarding Guidance' (March 2020)

Safer Recruitment Consortium 'Guidance for safe working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' (May 2019)

See also TLDS Policies: Attendance Policy, Behaviour Policy, Bereavement Policy, Code of Conduct, Coronavirus Risk Assessment, Confidentiality Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Online Safety Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Whistleblowing Policy

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This policy was originally compiled by Joanna Copland, Vice Principal, Ben and Tobyn Thomas, Principals, of Thomas's London Day Schools. It was adapted for Thomas's Academy by Miles Chester, Executive Head and Suzanne Kelly, Associate Head in September 2020.

Next review: October 2020 By: Miles Chester, Executive Head and Suzanne Kelly, Associate Head in September 2020.

Appendices Appendix 1: Coronavirus Behaviour Guide Appendix 2: Specific Bereavement Advice in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic 2020



SPECIFIC BEREAVEMENT ADVICE IN RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC 2020

Frightening events widely reported in the media, such as the coronavirus pandemic, can cause children to worry about themselves and others. It is normal for children to feel unsettled when something scary is happening or has happened, and many will be upset, sad or fearful at times.

Talk

Children and young people often find it helpful if they can talk about what is happening, helping them to make sense of events and feel less afraid. Even young children are likely to hear reports in the media or overhear adults talking about deaths due to coronavirus, or the risk of death from becoming ill with the virus. It's important to talk about their fears or anxieties honestly and openly in age-appropriate language. It may also help to restrict the amount of media coverage and social media they are exposed to, and balance this with other activities and positive things to focus on. Children's understanding of death varies with their stage of development. See [Bereavement Policy - Appendix 1](#)

Be honest

Give children honest, factual information in language appropriate to their age and level of understanding, and be guided by their questions. Children tend to pick up when questions are avoided and may then imagine all kinds of things, causing further anxiety. It's not necessary to go into detail but it will be helpful to explain things that affect them directly, such as why they are being asked to wash their hands regularly and how the virus is spread, why their school has been closed, why they couldn't visit a grandparent or why a parent is working from home.

Acknowledge concerns

Children may be concerned about someone they know becoming ill or even dying. Explain that some people will have no symptoms and will be fine, most people will experience only a mild form of the virus and will get better, but some people are more vulnerable and so we need to make sure they are protected. Be honest though and don't shy away from explaining that some people may die, as children need to trust that you are being honest and open with them, so that they can ask you other questions with confidence.