



(COVID-19) POLICY – FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL

This Policy is based upon the TLDS Policy for Thomas's Schools, including the EYFS. It has been adapted for the Academy. It was reviewed in the light of Government Guidance issued on 22nd February 2021 stating that schools should fully re-open to all pupils on Monday 8th March 2021.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies including Attendance Policy, Online Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy, Bereavement Policy, Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Whistleblowing Policy.

Please note that for brevity in this policy "coronavirus (COVID-19)" is referred to simply as COVID-19.

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Aims
3. System of Controls
4. School Operations
5. School Workforce
6. Procedures following a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19
7. Legislation and Guidance
8. Policy Review Record
9. Appendices

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic Thomas's Academy has endeavoured to provide as full an educational experience as possible for children while maintaining a balance of minimising risks by maximising control measures. When the virus was particularly virulent this necessitated a programme for remote schooling. However, in line with Government guidance with regards to education, all pupils are now able and expected to return to on-site schooling from Monday 8th March 2021.

The guidance is updated regularly in response to ever-changing circumstances so parents are advised to monitor and follow the government guidance given in the web links provided.

['Schools Covid 19 Operational Guidance' February 2021.](#)

2. AIMS

- To return to as near-normal programme of schooling as possible, whilst providing pupils who are unable to attend due to quarantine or self isolation with activities to work on at home.
- To re-adopt a remote schooling programme should a whole class/year/pod 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 provide a safe environment within the school site, acknowledging and responding to the guidance of social distancing and hygiene requirements.

This is revisited regularly, implementing sensible and proportionate control measures that build upon learning to date and practices already adopted, in particular relating 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.

There are active arrangements in place to monitor that the controls are:

- effective;
- working as planned;
- updated appropriately considering any issues identified and changes in public health advice.

The full Thomas's Academy **Coronavirus Risk Assessment**, updated 2nd March 2021 can be found [here](#).

3. SYSTEM OF CONTROLS

PHE advice remains that the way to control the virus, including the new variants, is with a consistent system of controls. Following these controls will effectively reduce risks and create an inherently safer environment. 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 COVID-19 as far as possible Thomas's will:

1. minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend school;
2. ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances;
3. ensure everyone is advised to clean hands thoroughly and more often than usual;
4. ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

5. maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents;
6. consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible;
7. keep occupied spaces well ventilated

In specific circumstances:

8. ensure individuals wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary;
9. promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.

Response to any infection:

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

9. promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process;
10. manage and report confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst the school community;
11. contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

3.1 Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend school (*Risk Assessment Point 1*)

Pupils, members of staff and other adults must not come into school if:

- they have one or more [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- a member of their household (including someone in their support pod or childcare pod if they have one) COVID-19 symptoms
- they are required to quarantine having recently visited countries outside the Common Travel Area
- they have had a positive test

They must immediately cease to attend and not attend for at least 10 days from the day after:

- the start of their symptoms
- the test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive test (whether this was a [Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) or Polymerase Chain Reaction \(PCR\) test](#))

Anyone developing the COVID-19 symptoms during the day will be sent home. These are essential actions to reduce the risk in settings and further drive down transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). Full details of procedures in the case of a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) are in Point 7 of this Policy.

3.2 The use of face coverings (*Risk Assessment Point 2*)

- All adults (staff, visitors, contractors and parents) in school are required to wear face coverings in communal areas indoors where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. Thomas's Academy does not currently require adults to wear face coverings in classrooms, **unless working in close contact**. However, anyone may do so if they wish.
- Some people may be exempt from wearing [face coverings](#) due to physical or mental illness, impairment or disability. These exemptions will apply in school and members of staff and pupils are expected to be sensitive to these needs

- All catering staff and teachers must wear face coverings while serving food in dining areas.
- The school can supply face coverings if necessary to ensure that no pupil is excluded from education due to not having a face covering.
- Safe wearing of face coverings requires that everyone
 - cleans their hands before or after touching, including to remove or put them on;
 - stores them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use.
- 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. They 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 using sanitiser in their classroom.
 - Guidance on [safe working in education, childcare and children's social care](#) provides more advice.

3.3 Hand Hygiene (*Risk Assessment Point 3*)

Frequent and thorough handwashing should now be regular practice.

- 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.
- The school has set up increased hand washing or hand sanitiser 'stations' and time to use these will be incorporated into timetables or lesson plans.
- 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)

3.4 Respiratory Hygiene (*Risk Assessment Point 4*)

- 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 the school operates.

3.5 Cleaning (*Risk Assessment Point 5*)

Thomas's Academy will continue enhanced cleaning throughout the school, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents.

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.
- 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.

3.6 Social distancing and minimising contact across the site (*Risk Assessment Point 6*)

As all pupils return to school the overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between children and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate 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:

- pupils' ability to distance;
- the layout of the school;
- the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum.

There will be an emphasis on pupils and staff remaining in consistent small pods, generally their own class group, and reducing movement around the school as much as possible.

However mixing can take place in wider groups for:

- specialist teaching
- wraparound care (after school only, Breakfast Club to start April 2021)
- extra curricular activities and clubs (from April 2021)

All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups to facilitate the delivery of the timetable and specialist provision. Where staff need to move between groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. The number of interactions or changes will be minimised wherever 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.

When timetabling, pods 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 times and lunch times will also be considered (and time for cleaning surfaces in the dining hall between groups).

Large gatherings such as assemblies will be avoided with more than two pods.

Staff rooms and shared staff places have been adapted to help staff to distance from each other. Use of staff rooms will be minimised and alternative rooms are available to enable staff to have a break during the day without congregating in a large group.

3.7 Social Distancing within the classroom (pod) (*Risk Assessment Point 7*)

Thomas's Academy will adopt the following measures within each pod 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.
- 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 within younger years, the risk can also be reduced by keeping pupils in the smaller pods.
- 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.

3.8 Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated (*Risk Assessment Point 8*)

Thomas's Academy will aim to strike a balance between keeping the school well-ventilated whilst maintaining a comfortable teaching environment. Measures adopted will include:

- opening windows to provide natural ventilation. (In cooler weather this may be just enough to provide background ventilation and then the windows opened more fully during break times to purge the air in the space.)
- opening internal doors to assist with the throughput of air
- opening external doors where they are not fire doors or there is no safety risk

3.9 Use of PPE Equipment (*Risk Assessment Point 9*)

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 a pupil or adult becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms while at school, and only then if a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained
- where pupil already has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used

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.

3.10 Asymptomatic testing (*Risk Assessment Point 10*)

Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFD)s will support the return of face to face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have COVID-19 symptoms. Testing is voluntary but Thomas's Academy strongly recommends that all members of staff take up the offer.

The procedure will be as follows:

- Members of staff, including peripatetic staff will be provided with home kits for twice weekly testing.
- Any home test results must be reported by the member of staff as soon as the test is completed either online or by telephone as per the instructions on the kit.
- All results, whether void, positive or negative should also be shared with the school to help with contact tracing.

- Anyone who receives a positive result from an LFD test must self-isolate and take a PCR test.
- Anyone who receives a negative result from an LFD test but displays symptoms of COVID-19 must self-isolate and take a PCR test.

4. SCHOOL OPERATIONS

4.1 Attendance

All pupils are expected to attend school from 8th March 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.

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result;
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact;
- are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19.

Children who were identified at the start of the pandemic as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are advised to continue shielding and stay at home as much as possible whilst general shielding guidance is in place, until they are removed from the shielding patient list following review with the clinician.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or public health advice or in quarantine, Thomas's Academy will endeavor to provide a form of an online education (first full day generic learning to give staff the opportunity to organise learning, from Day 2 more structured curriculum based learning will be set). However, unless a whole pod is off school this will not be a full remote programme as the teacher's main priority will be with the pupils in school.

The engagement of pupils unable to attend school will continue to be monitored through daily Zoom check-ins with a member of the class team (only when 5 more more children from the Pod are absent). Daily Zoom sessions will occur to support informed engagement with lessons and allow for social interaction. This is also useful for Safeguarding where staff can check in with pupils. Any concerns over lack of participation or any other safeguarding concerns will be flagged with the pupil's Head of School or Designated Safeguarding Lead

Thomas's Academy is aware that some pupils and/or parents may be reluctant or feel anxious about the return to school. Members of staff in each school will be available to discuss concerns and provide reassurance on the measures that have been put in place to reduce risk and to reiterate the benefits of all children attending school regularly.

4.2 Recording attendance

- Pupils who are self-isolating, shielding 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

4.3 Arrival at and Departure from School (*Risk Assessment Point 11*)

Thomas’s will adopt the following procedures at the start and end of the school day.

- Arrival and departure times will be staggered by year groups where felt to be beneficial
- For families with more than one child, all children should arrive at the allocated time of the eldest sibling to avoid congregation outside the school
- Parents should not gather at the school gates or come into school without an appointment
- Parents should follow one way routes when on the school site and leave promptly after collecting their children

4.4 Supply Teachers and Visitors (*Risk Assessment Point 12*)

Supply teachers, peripatetic teachers, club leaders and/or other temporary staff, specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND can move between schools and should provide interventions as usual.

- All staff and visitors should follow the schools’ arrangements for managing and minimising risk based on the system of controls.
- Thomas’s 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
- Visitors to the school should be kept to a minimum and visits kept to outside of school hours wherever possible. A record will be kept of any visitors who arrive in order to support contact tracing if needed.

4.5 Uniform (*Risk Assessment Point 13*)

Pupils are expected to wear their full Thomas’s Academy uniform from 8th March.

- 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.
- On days when pupils have PE or sports activities they should come to school in PE kit and remain in it for the day to lessen the need for changing
- Pupils should bring their coats/jumpers to school daily as the need continues for classrooms to be well-ventilated

4.6 Curriculum (*Risk Assessment Point 14*)

Thomas’s staff will continue to teach an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects. Whilst we have confidence in our curriculum coverage to date, teachers will take careful note of any gaps in pupils’ knowledge and prioritise teaching time to address these where appropriate. However, the very strong focus of these forthcoming weeks in school will be on human reconnection and on the mental health and wellbeing of our school community. We will not, for example, be setting academic home learning (with the exception of reading), but will instead place great importance on rebuilding the community and re-establishing the human relationships which are so fundamental to our children's school careers and, indeed, to all our lives.

4.7 Physical activity (*Risk Assessment Point 16*)

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 pods
- Outdoor sports should be prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximising ventilation, flows, distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene.
- Curriculum swimming lessons will remain on hold pending further review.
- Timetabled swimming lessons will be replaced with PE activities.

4.8 Music and Dance (*Risk Assessment Point 17*)

Careful consideration will be given to music, dance and drama lessons, particularly when pupils are playing instruments or working in small groups. It is acknowledged that these subjects help to build pupil's confidence and support their wellbeing.

- Procedures to counteract the possible additional risk of infection from these subjects may include:
 - physical distancing and playing outside wherever possible;
 - if inside, using large rooms with the space to socially distance;
 - using seating to help maintain social distancing;
 - positioning pupils back-to-back or side-to-side, or, if face to face at a 2m distance;
 - avoiding sharing of instruments or microphones;
 - wash hands before and after using instruments;
 - ensuring good ventilation;
 - using microphones where possible or encourage singing quietly;
 - limiting handling of scores, parts and scripts;
 - limiting group activity in terms of numbers;
 - avoiding physical correction by teachers and contact in dance and drama;
 - keeping background music to levels which do not necessitate performers having to raise their voices unduly.
- At present, singing will not take place in larger groups such as school choirs and ensembles, or school assemblies, unless significant space, natural airflow and strict social distancing and mitigation can be maintained.
- There will be no performances with an audience. Shows or class assemblies will be via Zoom for parents/ carers to view at home.
- Class music lessons can take place with all pupils facing the same way, in rows.
- Individual and small group 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 1metre apart from pupils.
- Peripatetic teachers can attend school. However, some Visiting Music Teachers who are clinically extremely vulnerable may continue to teach remotely.

4.9 Other activities (*Risk Assessment Point 18*)

Thomas's Academy has considered a number of other activities that normally form part of the broad curriculum and, subject to any changes in Government guidance, aims to adopt the following measures:

- All day trips, residential trips, lectures and community involvement activities will be put on hold

- Parent meetings and meetings between staff members will likely to be held on Zoom for the remainder of this term. Formal Parents Meetings held in May 2021 (arrangements TBC)
- PTA meetings and other events to be held on Zoom

4.10 Equipment and Resources (*Risk Assessment Point 19*)

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 pod; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces.
- Sharing of resources across should be avoided or, if unavoidable, they should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between pods, 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 pods.
- Outdoor playground equipment will be more frequently cleaned.
- Pupils are recommended to limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials such as coats, books and mobile phones (for Years 5 and 6 only – see [Personal Devices and Photography Policy](#)). Bags are allowed.
- 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.
- Water fountains are not to be used and pupils should bring in reusable water bottles
- Catering staff to serve food to pupils to reduce pupils contact with tongs
- Take away containers or plates will be provided for staff to eat out of the dining room area

4.11 Wider public transport

Parents/ carers, 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](#).

4.12 Travel from abroad

Any pupils (and their parents or family members) who are returning to the UK must quarantine in line with Government guidance. Pupils may not return to school until 10 days after their return to the UK and then only if they have no symptoms of COVID-19.

4.13 Behaviour Expectations

As the pupils settle back once again to life in school, members of staff will aim to provide as near a normal education as possible whilst acknowledging the changes and new rules to be followed. However some pupils may be disengaged on their return due to a lack of routine, classroom discipline, anxiety, bereavement, or other circumstances during Lockdown. Members of staff will work with pupils to ensure that new behaviour expectations are clearly understood and consistently followed.

4.14 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. Talking, being honest about the situation and acknowledging their concerns can help pupils to be open about how they are feeling. **See Appendix 4.**

All parents / carers are 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.

All members of staff will be asked to be particularly alert to signs of stress in pupils and enable pupils to talk about how they are feeling. Additional pastoral and safeguarding activities may be used to:

- support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement;
- address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to COVID-19;
- support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing (home learning optional activities).

Any safeguarding concerns will continue to be passed to the DSL (or deputy DSLs) promptly and any necessary referrals made to the relevant agencies or services as usual in line with the guidance in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping children safe in education (2021). Additional support will be provided for pupils in school where appropriate and available.

5. SCHOOL WORKFORCE

5.1 Supporting those who are clinically vulnerable in line with PH Advice (*Risk Assessment Point 20*)

All members of staff must follow the system of controls to minimise the risks of transmission.

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV)

Staff who are CEV are advised to shield in line with government guidance. As such they should work from home and not attend the workplace.

Staff who are clinically vulnerable (CV)

CV staff can continue to attend school. They must follow the system of controls to minimise the risks of transmission.

Staff who live with those who are CEV or CV can attend the workplace but should ensure they maintain good prevention practice in the work place and at home.

Staff who are pregnant

Pregnant women are in the CV category, and are generally advised to follow the above advice, which applies to all staff in schools. However some pregnant women may also have other health conditions which would mean they are considered CEV and should follow that advice. Anyone who is more than 28 weeks pregnant should be particularly attentive to social distancing.

Thomas's Academy will conduct a risk assessment for pregnant women and those who have given birth within the last 6 months in line with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW).

The Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (RCOG) has published [COVID-19 Information for pregnant women and their families](#) which gives further advice.

Staff who may otherwise be at increased risk from COVID-19

Some people with underlying health conditions may be at comparatively increased risk from COVID-19. Those at particularly high risk from will have received a letter to confirm this and should be included in the CEV group, following the guidance above.

Other members of staff who feel they may be at increased risk can attend school where it is not possible to work from home and Thomas's will implement the system of controls outlined in this document to support their needs.

There is further [information available on who is at higher risk from COVID-19](#)

People who live with those who have comparatively increased risk from COVID-19 can attend the workplace if so required.

5.2 Staff Wellbeing

Thomas's Academy will have regard to staff work-life and balance and wellbeing. The school has a duty of care to its employees and has put in mechanisms to support staff wellbeing.

5.3 Staff Deployment

Thomas's Academy may need to alter the way in which staff are deployed and use existing staff more flexibly. These will be discussed with members of staff and will build in the need to avoid increases in unnecessary and unmanageable workload burdens.

Recruitment of staff will continue as usual although it may be necessary to consider a flexible approach to interviews, with alternatives to face to face interviews offered where possible.

6. PROCEDURES TO MANAGE SUSPECTED/CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID-19

6.1 Initial response to a suspected case of COVID-19 (*Risk Assessment Point 21*)

The guidance from the Government changes regularly in response to new information. Thomas's will update procedures as necessary in line with recommendations.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are a new, continuous cough or a HIGH temperature, or a loss of, or change in normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

In the case of anyone (member of staff or pupil) displaying these symptoms they must:

- go home as soon as possible to self-isolate. The isolation period includes the day the symptoms started and the next 10 days.
- follow the [Guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection](#).
- arrange to have a PCR test. [Getting a test](#). These can be booked online through the [NHS Testing and Tracing website](#) or ordered by telephone via NHS 119. Essential workers have priority access to testing. Provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with, in case the test result is positive. Details will be shared of anyone the symptomatic person has been in close contact with in case the test result is positive

- While a pupil is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to an isolated room, 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.
- Staff caring for a pupil while they are awaiting collection should maintain a distance of 2 metres. If this cannot be maintained, (for example with a young child or a child with complex needs) they should wear suitable PPE:
 - If a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained a face covering should be worn
 - If contact is necessary, gloves, an apron and a face covering should be worn
 - If there is a risk of fluids entering the eye (eg from coughing, spitting or vomiting) eye protection should also be worn
- 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.
- If the pupil needs 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.
- 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 COVID-19 symptoms should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital, or travel on public transport.

6.2 Follow up to treating a suspected case of COVID-19 amongst the school community (*Risk Assessment Point 22*)

- Everyone who has had contact with the symptomatic pupil/adult must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser.
- 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 have a test);
 - the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below);
 - they are requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace;
 - they test positive from an LFD test as part of a community or worker programme.
- The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household detergent after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- The symptomatic person should arrange to have a test as soon as possible and inform the school of the result immediately. The Head will follow up if a test result is not received.
 - All members of the symptomatic person's household should self-isolate until the result of the test is received.
 - If the test result is negative the person feels well and no longer has symptoms they can return to school.
 - If the test result is negative but the person still feels unwell or has symptoms, they should not return to school until they are better

6.3 Managing a confirmed case of COVID-19 amongst the school community (*Risk Assessment Point 23*)

- In the case of a member of the school community testing positive for COVID-19 they should inform the school immediately.
- The school can seek advice from Public Health England if needed, by contacting the DfE helpline on 0800 047 8787.
- Anyone who has been in close contact with the person who has tested positive must go home and self-isolate for at least 10 days, counting from the day after contact with the individual who tested positive. Close contact means:
 - anyone who lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive
 - anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 with a PCR or LFD test:
 - face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre;
 - been within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact;
 - been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as one-off contact, or added up together over one day);
 - travelled in the same vehicle or a plane.
- In order to keep track of “close contacts” the school will keep a record of pupils and staff in each group as far as is possible and proportionate.
- Other household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the contact in their household who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms.
- If someone who is self-isolating develops symptoms they should have a test.
 - If the test delivers a negative test result they must still remain in isolation for the 10 day period in case they develop symptoms subsequently.
 - If the test result is positive they must inform school immediately and then self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms.
- In this is the case other household members should self-isolate from the day the person develops symptoms or received the positive test result and then the next 10 days.
- There is no need for households to start their isolation again if a second member falls ill.
- The previous advice of 7 days of daily testing has been paused.
- The school will complete a record of any confirmed COVID-19 cases. If there are 2 or more cases within 14 days or an overall rise in sickness absence where COVID-19 is suspected the school will call the DfE Helpline on 0800 046 8687 for further advice.
- Parents will be informed if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school. However, the name of the person will not be shared unless essential to protect others.
- The pupil or staff member who tested positive for COVID-19 can return to their normal routine and stop self-isolating after they have finished their isolation period and their symptoms have gone or if they continue to have only a residual cough or anosmia (smell blindness).
- In the majority of cases the parents and the School will be in agreement that a child with symptoms should not attend school, given the potential risk to others. In the event that a parent/carer insists on a child attending school, Thomas’s Academy may take the decision to refuse the child if, in their reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect the other children and staff from possible infection from

COVID-19. Any such decision would be carefully considered in the light of all circumstances and current public health advice

6.4 Managing a suspected case of COVID-19 by association (*Risk Assessment Point 24*)

If a member of the Thomas's Academy community (pupil or member of staff) is advised that they have been in contact with someone (family or household member/friend/other individual) who has become 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 procedure should be followed:

- The school should be informed and the Thomas's Academy member should go home immediately to self-isolate for 10 days from the day the contact displayed symptoms. They should not wait for any test results.
- If the Thomas's Academy member then develops COVID-19 symptoms, they should arrange to get a test and follow the guidance in paragraph 6.2 above.
- If the contact's test result is negative the pupil/member of staff may return to school as long as they are well

6.5 Managing a confirmed case of COVID-19 by association (*Risk Assessment Point 25*)

If a member of the school community (pupil or staff member) is advised they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 they must do the following:

- Inform the school and go home immediately to self-isolate for 10 days
- Arrange to have a COVID-19 test
 - If the test result is positive the individual must self-isolate for 10 days
 - If the test result is negative the individual should continue to self-isolate for the 10 day period in case symptoms develop subsequently

6.6 Managing a confirmed case of COVID-19 by SECONDARY association (*Risk Assessment Point 26*)

If a member of the school community (pupil or staff member) is advised that a member of their household has been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 the following procedure should be followed:

- The household member should self-isolate for 10 days
- The member of the school community does not need to self-isolate unless their household member goes on to develop symptoms, in which case paragraph 6.5 above applies
- Arrange to have a COVID-19 test
 - If the test result is positive the individual must self-isolate for 10 days
 - If the test result is negative the individual may return to school

A summary of procedures can be found in **Appendix 5** of this Policy.

7. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This Policy bears due regard to the following statutory guidance and other advice.

DfE Guidance '[Schools coronavirus \(COVID-19\) operational guidance](#)' (22nd February 2021)

PHE '[Stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)' (15th February 2021)

DfE Guidance '[COVID-19 asymptomatic testing in schools and colleges](#)' (2nd February 2021)

DfE Guidance '[COVID-19: test kits for schools and FE providers](#)' (14th December 2020)

DfE statutory guidance '[Keeping children safe in education](#)' (January 2021)

8. POLICY REVIEW RECORD

This policy will be reviewed every two years unless there is a change in legislation		
Created: March 2020	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal
Latest Review: January 2021	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal
Approved: January 2021	By:	Tobyn Thomas, Ben Thomas, Principals Simon O'Malley, Headmaster, Battersea Phil Ward, Headmaster, Clapham Annette Dobson, Headmistress, Fulham Jo Ebner, Headmistress, Kensington Ben Thomas, Head, Battersea Square
Adapted: 2nd January 2021	By	Suzanne Kelly, Associate Head Teacher
Adapted: 5th January, 18th January, 26th February 2021	By	Clare James, Deputy Head teacher, Thomas's Academy
Next Review: 12th April 2021	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal Heads and Principals

9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Staying Safe Guidance

Appendix 2: Six Steps

Appendix 3: COVID-19 Flowchart for managing cases

Appendix 4: Specific Bereavement Advice in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 POLICY APPENDIX 1:

Staying Safe at School

A large, colorful 3D letter 'S' with a blue shadow, positioned to the left of the first rule.

Sanitise: Remember to sanitise or wash your hands every time you arrive at or leave school, go in and out of your classroom, before snack and lunch and when you go to the loo

A large, colorful 3D letter 'A' with a blue shadow, positioned to the left of the second rule.

Always stay with your class or year group Pod: these are the friends you will spend your time with

A large, colorful 3D letter 'F' with a blue shadow, positioned to the left of the third rule.

Follow instructions and signs to make sure that you are staying within your Pod and in your designated area

A large, colorful 3D letter 'E' with a blue shadow, positioned to the left of the fourth rule.

Equipment: You are responsible for looking after your own equipment. Remember we can't share our things

A large, colorful 3D letter 'T' with a blue shadow, positioned to the left of the fifth rule.

Touch: Avoid touching things where possible - and try not to touch other people! Keep your distance!

A large, colorful 3D letter 'Y' with a blue shadow, positioned to the left of the sixth rule.

Your health and wellbeing are the most important things, so help us to look after you and everybody else

COVID-19 POLICY APPENDIX 2:

How to protect ourselves & others Six important steps for all:



01 Do the basics

- Hands
- Face
- Space



02 Daily screening for symptoms

Protect the community. Do not come to school if there are any signs of:

- A new continuous cough
- A high temperature
- A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)



03 Don't be a close contact!

- Within 1m - being coughed on, face-to-face conversation, skin-to-skin contact
- Within 2m for more than 15 mins
- Travel in a small vehicle, or near a positive case in a large vehicle or plane



04 Hygiene

- Continuous cleaning of surfaces
- Regular hand-washing
- Cover nose and mouth if coughing or sneezing ('Catch it, bin it, kill it')



05 Ventilation

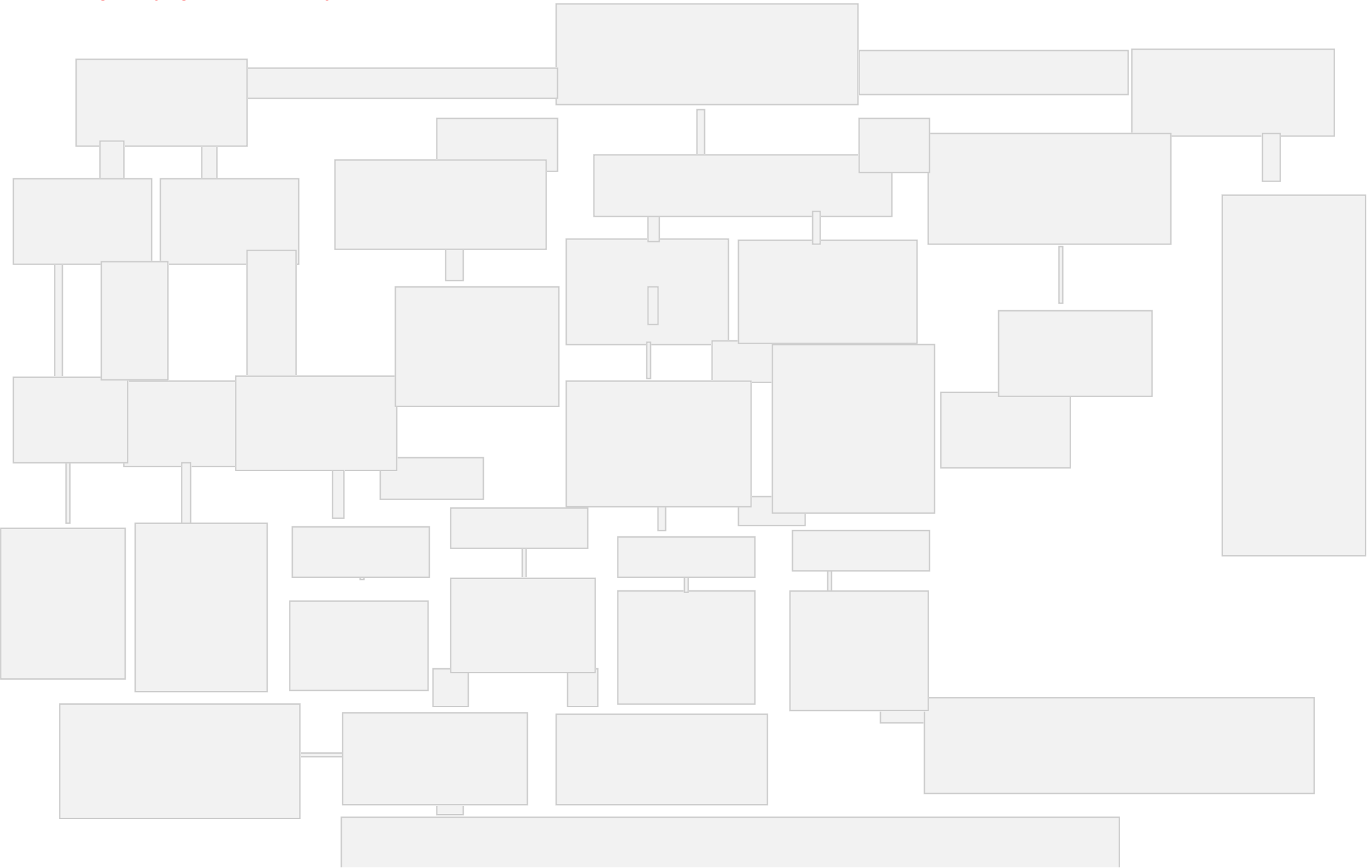
- Open windows and doors for natural ventilation
- Maximise fresh air
- "Up to 100% of outdoor air where possible"



06 Face coverings

- In all communal areas
- For pupils in Y7 & 8 and all adults
- In all schools

COVID-19 POLICY APPENDIX 3:



COVID-19 POLICY APPENDIX 4:



SPECIFIC BEREAVEMENT ADVICE IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC 2020/2021

Frightening events widely reported in the media, such as the COVID-19 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 COVID-19, 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.