

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

Spring has arrived, the pupils have returned to the classroom and life at St Thomas More is back in full swing. The Lent Term presented us all with many challenges, but as lockdown continues to ease across the country, we continue to move ever closer to a brighter future.

In January we launched our Remote Curriculum Offer to pupils at home, with 99% of parents agreeing that our offer brought stability and routine for the pupils. Our substantial investment in technology since September 2020, significantly helped us to deliver our remote curriculum to the children. Since then, we have spent a further £16,500 replacing computers in school to further support the children in their learning.

As pupils returned at the beginning of March, our testing program was extended to accommodate all our pupils and staff, with over 1500 covid tests conducted over a 9 day period. I want to thank the staff and volunteers who supported this initiative with a special thanks to parents and carers who overwhelmingly supported the school to ensure a safe return to the classroom.

### Return after Easter

All pupils will return on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

We are waiting for confirmation from the DfE about face coverings in the classroom and we expect an announcement to be made over the Easter holidays. We will text parents and carers with an update once we have received this guidance.

### Covid-19 Testing at STM

**Home testing (LFD) should continue twice a week for pupils during the Easter holidays.** Results should be reported as usual via the NHS website. ([https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result?utm\\_source=23%20March%202021%20C19&utm\\_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm\\_campaign=DfE%20C19](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result?utm_source=23%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19))

In a change to the guidance, NHS Test and Trace is reintroducing confirmatory PCR testing for positive LFD tests conducted at all assisted testing sites, including schools and colleges. This means that all staff, pupils and students who get a positive LFD test, whether at home or supervised at school, should get a confirmatory PCR. The PCR test should be booked immediately either online (<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>) or by calling 119 and should be undertaken within 2 days. Staff, students and pupils who had a positive LFD test result, and their close contacts and other members of their household, should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance and while awaiting the PCR result. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the staff member, pupil or student can return to school, and their close contacts can end their self-isolation.

**Parents and carers should ensure that all children complete a Covid LFD test before they return to school, either the night before, or morning of, the first day back, to find and isolate any positive cases. If the test is positive, or if your child is displaying symptoms, please do not send them to school on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April.**

Families and households can also access home test kits for adults by visiting: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

### Notifying school of positive Covid-19 cases up to Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April

If a pupil tests positive for Covid-19 between now and Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April, please notify us on the following email: [covid-19@st-tm.co.uk](mailto:covid-19@st-tm.co.uk) If a pupil tests positive after this date, there is no need to notify the school for track and trace purposes. Any positive case following this date can be reported to the school when we return on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April.

### Provision for FSM

Derbyshire County Council are contacting parents/carers directly about vouchers for FSM provision over the holidays. If they have not been in contact as yet, we have been assured that they will. The roll out of this provision has been staggered as they are managing the situation for all families in receipt of FSM across Derbyshire.

If you have not received communication from Derbyshire CC, please contact the council by completing the following online form: <https://apps.derbyshire.gov.uk/applications/formBuilder/food-vouchers-for-children/143ECB51-ACAD-4FAF-A11C-915258D22724>

If your circumstances have changed recently, more information about financial support and benefits can be found at [www.derbyshire.gov.uk/winter](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/winter)



### Safeguarding and Further Support

If you are concerned for the welfare of a child whilst we are closed for the Easter Holidays, further support and guidance can be found at <https://www.st-thomasmore.derbyshire.sch.uk/page/?title=Covid%2D19&pid=164>  
Alternatively, please contact Starting Point on 01629 533190 or in an emergency, the Police on 101/999.

### Other school business

#### Internet Provision at STM

Work on our fibre broadband has unfortunately been delayed until June, but I have been assured that we are a priority and that this work should be completed by the summer.

### Uniform

When pupils return to school after Easter, they are expected to be wearing full, correct school uniform; jewellery, facial piercings and make-up are not permitted. Pupils should wear shoes and not trainers. On days when pupils have PE, they should come to school wearing their PE kit; to keep them warm when they have PE, they have the option to wear a plain black hoodie.

Pupils can wear their school summer uniform from Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Students should either wear their full school uniform, as they do now, or their summer uniform. Students should not mix the two uniforms. Further information on the summer uniform can be found in your child's planner.

### Equipment

Thank you for ensuring that pupils have all of their own equipment and can avoid sharing or borrowing equipment in school. Please check your child(ren)'s equipment over the break and replace any missing items in time for the start of the new term. Equipment must include: pens (blue/black and purple/red), pencils, ruler, rubber, pencil sharpener, compass, protractor, highlighter, glue stick, scientific calculator and ear phones for music.

### GCSE Examinations 2021

Year 11 parents and carers should have received a letter from Mr Coyle this week, detailing our plans for school assessments after Easter. If you have not received this letter, further information can be found on our website: <https://www.st-thomasmore.derbyshire.sch.uk/page/?title=GCSE+Examinations+2021&pid=298>

Once again, thank you for everything you have done to support to the school over the last several months and for your kind, supportive messages to both the staff and I.

Best wishes and Happy Easter for Sunday!



Mr D Redfern  
Headteacher

