



**ST THOMAS**  
**CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

4 January 2022

Dear Parents & Carers

I hope you have had a restful Christmas break. I am very aware that some of you will have had your celebrations disrupted by personal and family isolation after positive Covid tests; if you were affected, I hope that everyone is fully recovered and that you were able to celebrate in some way with your family.

The Government guidance received this week made very little reference to primary school settings which means we continue to rely on our own risk assessment and contingency plans approved by our Governing Body and teaching unions. I am writing to clarify the arrangements for returning to school on Wednesday 5 January. **Please read this email carefully to help keep everyone in our community safe, support us with a smooth return and to ensure we can operate as normally as possible.**

- School adults will continue to wear masks in communal or congested areas
- School adults are encouraged to test twice weekly
- Primary age children are not required to do twice weekly LFD tests but we would appreciate it if your child could join in with this practice if they are able to do so - especially before returning to school on Wednesday 5 January.
- All classrooms have CO2 monitors provided which are monitored regularly and extra ventilation breaks will be given if required. Ventilation breaks remain part of our daily practice.
- Pupils will not be in formal bubbles but whilst rates in the community remain high we will be reducing large scale mixing as much as possible meaning that assemblies will be class based. We will keep this under review and may need to make allowances for mixing classes if we have staff shortages as this is one of the recommendations given to us.
- If your child is a close contact with a positive case, even if they are in the same household, they should undertake daily lateral flow tests for 7 days and should continue to come to school if they are negative. In these circumstances daily testing is not required by under 5s but whenever possible we would ask you to join in the practice which is expected for older pupils.
- As before, anyone who has a positive LFD test result should stay at home and arrange for a PCR test to confirm the result.

**ST THOMAS CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL SHERWOOD AVENUE BRADLEY HUDDERSFIELD HD2 1RQ**  
**PHONE** 01484 226557 **FAX** 01484 226613 **EMAIL** [office@stthomas.org.uk](mailto:office@stthomas.org.uk) **WEB** [www.stthomas.org.uk](http://www.stthomas.org.uk)

**HEADTEACHER** MRS KATE MEADE **DEPUTY HEADTEACHER** MRS CATHRYN GODDARD **CHAIR OF GOVERNORS** MRS SILVA SCOTT



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We have also received from government, the following clarification of the new rules around isolation after testing positive:

*Individuals may now take a lateral flow test on **day 6** and **day 7** of their self-isolation period, if both of those test results are negative they are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and the tests must be taken **24 hours apart**. If both these test results are negative, and the individual does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school from day 8. If they test positive and/or have a high temperature, they should continue to isolate until the end of day 10.*

The government guidance has made it clear that face to face teaching remains a priority for all settings and this is supported by myself and all St Thomas staff. However, the guidance has also advised that it is likely that we may face significant staff absences, making remote learning necessary for some classes/year groups. We will endeavour to ensure that if this is required it will be for the shortest amount of time possible and that all pupils have access to remote learning. Vulnerable pupils and key worker pupils would remain a priority for in school learning but the safe supervision of pupils would be the deciding factor in the numbers we could support.

Despite the possible challenges ahead, I can reassure you that all the St Thomas staff will continue to work hard to keep our school operating as normally as possible and to support your children, both emotionally and educationally, to enable them to continue to make progress and enjoy their schooling.

Please remember that all our staff are working hard in unusual circumstances, and I would ask that you always treat them with the courtesy and respect that you would expect from us.

I would like to thank you for the support you provide both to us and to your children as parents. Working together is essential to re-establishing the routines that help students settle calmly back into school. These routines also provide them with some certainty in a period of disruption.

We are really looking forward to seeing all our pupils on Wednesday and feeling the fun and buzz for learning that is so much part of the St Thomas environment and spirit.

Wishing you a very Happy New Year.

Kate Meade  
Headteacher