



THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL

Headteacher : P J Hurst, BA, MA, MBA, NPQH

Saxtead Road, Framlingham,
Suffolk, IP13 9HE

Telephone : 01728 723493

Email: inmail@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk

Website: www.thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk

Dear Parents

July 2020

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Public Health – Coronavirus – LETTER 11 (OF 11)

As always, I trust that this letter finds you all well. My aim is to share more detailed arrangements for the return of full school opening in September.

This week it has been an absolute pleasure welcoming Years 7, 8 and 9 back into school. Staff enjoyed listening to them chatting! In my address to them, I said that we have missed them and that we would be able to make up for lost ground in September. Not only does this include academic considerations but that all important social contact.

Start Dates for September 2020

Wednesday 2nd September Return for new Year 7 and Year 12

Thursday 3rd September Return for all other year groups

Government Guidance for Full Opening – Schools

I thought it would be useful to summarise key points from the Government Guidance -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Key messages and Public Health Advice

- **Returning to school is vital for children’s education and for their wellbeing** (page 3)
- The risk to children themselves of becoming ill from coronavirus is very low (page 3)
- Essential protective measures are: 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; and reducing contacts and maximising distancing between those in school (page 5)
- If anyone in school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or high temperature, or has a loss of, or a change in, their normal sense of taste or smell, they must be sent home and advised to follow ‘stay at home’ guidance. They must self-isolate for at least 7 days and arrange to have a test (page 7)
- Coronavirus is an easy virus to kill when it is on the skin. This can be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser (page 8)

School Operations

- Reducing the number of contacts between children and staff can be achieved by keeping groups separate (in our case ‘year group bubbles’) and maintaining distance between individuals (page 9)
- Separating groups and maintaining distance are not ‘all or nothing’ options and will still bring benefits even if implemented partially (page 10)
- Staff need to keep their distance from other pupils and adults. In the classroom, staff will need to stay at the front of the class (page 10)
- Passing briefly in the corridor is low risk (page 11)



- Parents are not allowed onto the school site without an appointment (page 11)
- By the Autumn Term, schools will be provided with a small number of home testing kits they can give directly to parents/carers collecting a child who has developed symptoms at school (page 13)
- **School attendance will be mandatory again from the beginning of the Autumn Term** (page 16)
- Schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits (page 23)
- Uniform policies return (page 24)

Specific School Arrangements for September Re-opening

In response to the guidance above and a risk assessment, our specific measures are detailed in a document 'September Re-opening Manual – SROM 2.' This will be in the Parents Section of the School Website or via <https://www.thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk/public/files/september-re-opening-manual-2-2071524620.pdf> .

Some of these actions for example around enhanced cleaning are not new, as we had to introduce changes for the partial return of Year 10 and Year 12 from mid-June. You will need to read this document carefully but some key points are covered below:

General Principles and Expectations

- The school has undertaken a number of adaptations but everyone has a **personal responsibility** to keep themselves and others as safe as possible
- "Excellent attendance and excellent behaviour is expected. There is no time for distractions."
- We will promote the guidance around good hygiene including social distancing
- Pupils are encouraged to bring their own sanitiser, tissues and wipes with them
- School uniform is expected

General considerations including arrival and departure

- Bins will be provided at the Crush Hall entrance for the disposal of face masks for those travelling on public buses (this is not the same as contract buses)
- Classroom desks will be front facing where possible
- Computer keyboards and some other pieces of equipment must be wiped before and after each pupil
- There will be more one-way systems around the school. Pupils and staff should also follow the keep left rule
- All pupils to have left the site by 4.00pm

Sixth Form and the Library

- The Library will be used for Sixth Form study and a general base (The Common Room will, initially, be an additional Staff Room)
- E10 will be staffed by Miss Vale at lunchtime and open on a rota to different year groups
- Library books will still be available but through a different system outlined in the SROM.

Breaktimes and the Canteen

- A lunchtime canteen rota has been established so that pupils go through at specified times.
- The menu is 'grab and go' style. Specialist wipes will be available between uses of the biometric system
- In the first part of the term, at break and lunch most pupils will be outside. Form rooms can be used by tutor groups if the weather is inclement.

Curriculum Considerations

- The rooming timetable has been amended to create a form of 'bubbles' and therefore reducing pupil movement and more space during lesson changeovers
- **It will be very important that positive working relationships are established between staff and pupils so that a thirst for learning is quickly re-created**
- Pupils must bring their own equipment such as pen, pencils, calculators, glue sticks and highlighters – and should not share with anyone

- Homework should be set as normal. Microsoft Teams may be used for some homework and some work can be submitted online.
- There are specific considerations for PE, Drama, Music, Art, Science, Technology and Learning Support.

Other Considerations for Parents

- Parents should contact the school through telephone or email
- If parents are contacted because of an unwell child it is important that they are collected quickly

I appreciate there's a lot to take in! All the measures will be under review and subject to change, particularly in the light of Government guidance. We will also need to develop a contingency plan for remote education. This would be for pupils who need to self-isolate or where there is a local lockdown.

If you have any particular worries or concerns please do contact the school. The inmail email address is preferred so that the concern may be directed to the member of staff best placed to deal with your query.

Summer Holiday

After the most unusual school year that we have ever known, the more usual Summer Holiday is very nearly upon us. It is regrettable that so many events have had to be cancelled and lots of routines as well as wider learning, disrupted. However, in my address to pupils I reminded them about the importance of life, health and happiness. It will be very important that everyone in the school community, including staff, can switch off and relax. I envisage the Autumn Term being very demanding and we will all need to muster good reserves of energy.

We will see many Year 11 and Year 13 students on Results Day and Heads of Year have been in contact about the arrangements for this. We are optimistic that the results reflect what we know you are capable of.

Over the Summer Holiday, a number of improvements will be made to the site as well as preparing the adaptations ready for September re-opening.

I am not intending to write to you over the Summer Holidays unless there is a very good reason and so this letter brings my 'Public Health – Coronavirus' Update Letters to a close. In September, we start again. I hope that future correspondence will be able to include a wider, more usual range of school matters!

I finish by thanking you all for your support and input over the past four months. I trust that you can enjoy a sense of 'Summer Holiday' and we look forward to seeing you all again in September.

With warmest wishes



P J Hurst
Headteacher