



# THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Parents

28<sup>th</sup> August 2020

## **Headteacher's Update 2020/2021 – Letter 1 (of 1)**

I trust that this letter finds you well and that you have been able to enjoy some of the summer. With many aspects of education in the news at the moment, I expect that there are some natural anxieties about the return to school.

The purpose of this letter is to signpost you to some important information as well as respond to some of the announcements mentioned in the media. We are looking forward to the re-opening of school and are ready to welcome pupils and staff.

## **September Re-Opening Manual**

Over the Summer Holiday many plans for September re-opening have moved forward. More detail can be found via the following link:

<https://www.thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk/public/files/september-re-opening-manual-2-2071524620.pdf>

My 11<sup>th</sup> update letter from last academic year outlined the key points and this letter can be found in the Parents' section of the school website. I would strongly recommend re-reading both documents.

In line with Government guidance we have tried to reduce the mixing of different year groups. One strategy has been to create year group 'bubbles.' The timetable and social interactions enables pupils within the same year group to mix. Initially many lessons will not take place in specialist rooms because year groups are based in certain areas of the school:

Sixth Form	Rooms 601 to 610 and BE2
Year 11	Science Labs
Year 10	David Floyd Rooms and Mills Charity rooms
Year 9	East side of the Main Building, rooms E3 to E9
Year 8	Scrivener's Building
Year 7	West Block and Room E2

## **Suffolk County Council and School Transport**

Suffolk County Council have been working with contractors to ensure that eligible pupils are transported to school safely. They have asked us to forward a guide that they have produced and this can be found here:

<https://suffolk.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5c2782ab1264cda5bb7f549a9&id=6936dd9333&e=26ab45bd8b>

## **School Refurbishments**

Over the holidays, several significant improvements have been undertaken. The Music Room (LR1) and Science Lab (N4) have been refurbished. The boys' toilets in the Main Corridor has been completely gutted. Further improvements will also be made to the girls' toilets in the Main Corridor. We expect to take possession of the new toilets in a few weeks and until then some temporary toilet facilities are on site.



## Face Coverings

In this week's bulletin from the Department for Education, nothing was mentioned about face coverings. However, the news media has now widely reported that the Government has made a "u turn" on this issue. According to the BBC for example, secondary school pupils will have to wear face coverings in corridors in local lock down areas. They also report that headteachers have flexibility to introduce masks in their schools.

At the moment, I would recommend that:

- All pupils have face coverings with them (they will after all be used to this in some public settings).
- It is personal choice whether pupils (and indeed staff) wear face coverings in corridors and at lunchtimes and breaktimes for example.

When we receive more detailed Government guidance we will amend our procedures as appropriate.

## Awarding of Qualifications

After much uncertainty, our congratulations to students who received qualifications this summer. In the vast majority of cases, this enables students to move forward.

As you will know from the media reporting there were many problems with the awarding of grades. I have been in touch with our local MP Dan Poulter about this.

## Return to school

As the last few days have reminded us, some change and further adaptation is almost inevitable. We will be keeping abreast of developments and will look at things in a calm and measured way.

As you will probably know, we have created an additional pupil day on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September to support induction for our new Year 7 and Year 12. Year 7 should make their way to the Main Hall, entering through the Crush Hall doors. Year 12 should also enter via the Crush Hall where they will also be directed to tutor bases. Staff will be on hand to guide pupils.

We look forward to welcoming back all other year groups on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. They can make their way to their tutor group base:

Year 7	Room
7JBa	E3
7RWO	W1
7AFI	W2
7CRz	W3
7BPa	W4
7OFR	W5

Year 8	Room
8MHe/MRo	SB1
8SCh	SB2
8HDe	SB3
8ICo	SB4
8COv	SB5
8LAn	SB6

Year 9	Room
9LEw	E4
9JMr/NFa	E8
9SSp (ex RHo)	E5
9MMc	E6
9KEd (ex CLa)	E3
9GPa	E7
9BPu	E9

Year 10	Room
10MAh	MC5
10NBr	MC3
10BCa	MC1
10AHO	MC4
10RGi	MC6
10AWa	MC2

Year 11	Room
11ERi	N3
11JCp	N5
11SCa/MHs	N2
11TMa	N7 (N4)
11AGr/HBa (Ex HDi)	N6
11JWi	N1

Sixth Form	Room
CCo/SPs	608
APo	606
DHa	602
MHa	610
KJe	609
HLa	605
SMi	607
SPe	601
MWt	604
AEv	603
NSh	BE2
NFI	IT1

I expect to be writing these update letters from time to time and although addressed to parents are for the whole school community. In the meantime, I trust that you remain safe and well.

Yours sincerely



P J Hurst  
Headteacher