

Arrangements for a Full Return to School in September

Information for Parents and Pupils

Introduction

We are delighted to be welcoming back our entire school community on **Monday 7th September**. To this end we've been planning throughout the summer to ensure that this is the happy and rewarding experience which we have all been awaiting for many months.

The arrangements we have put in place reflect the government's overarching guidelines, which allow more local discretion than previously and our own local risk assessments. We are optimistic that, although it will not look exactly like "school as we know it", we are able to provide a broad Thomas's education for every child in school this coming term.

Given the rapidly changing situation we will re-consider every aspect of our planning and provision whenever the Government updates its guidelines for schools. We will, of course, advise parents of any changes to our arrangements at the earliest possible opportunity throughout the Michaelmas Term.

Risk Assessments and Protective Measures in Education

All decisions in relation to returning to school are subject to revised risk assessments. The overarching risk assessment can be found on the Thomas's London Day Schools website ([here](#)).

The Coronavirus Re-opening Policy can be found [here](#).

Central to this is the implementation of the advised protective measures in education and childcare settings ([here](#)).

These include:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend childcare settings, schools or colleges.
- Cleaning hands more often than usual - washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and drying them thoroughly or using alcohol hand rub or sanitiser, ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach.
- Minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as year group bubbles and one-way flows) and timetables (such as staggered arrival and dismissal).

A team of four full time cleaners will be cleaning continuously throughout the school day. The school will continue to be cleaned overnight and at weekends. It will be cleaned overnight during the week and we will have additional cleaners on duty throughout the day to keep surfaces and toilets disinfected. Teachers will also have access to cleaning materials to wipe surfaces and equipment frequently.

Children in quarantine, choosing not to return to school, or self-isolating

We are planning on the basis that every child will return to school on 7th September and able to attend school on a daily basis thereafter. However, we recognise that a very small number of children may be in post-holiday quarantine, self-isolating, or absent because you have decided they won't be returning to school. In their letter to parents on 24th August the Principals set-out some guidance in respect of these possibilities. This included clarification that whilst remote schooling won't be provided in cases of individual pupil absence, school work will be sent home and teachers will endeavour to make contact via Zoom when possible ([here](#)).

If your child is absent for any of the above reasons please contact your child's Area Leader and/or Jon Chesworth, Deputy Head (Community and Welfare) at the earliest opportunity, as well as emailing Clapham Absence (cla-absence@thomas-s.co.uk).

Jon Chesworth	Deputy Head (Community and Welfare)	jchesworth@thomas-s.co.uk
Hannah Tongue	Assistant Head (Head of Lower School)	htongue@thomas-s.co.uk
Charlotte McConnell	Assistant Head (Head of Middle School)	cmconnell@thomas-s.co.uk
Fenella Spendlove	Assistant Head (Curriculum and Innovation)	fspendlove@thomas-s.co.uk

Structure of the school day

Once the children arrive at school at the beginning of the day the timetable will run as normal. Details of the school day can be found in the Lower School Parent Information Booklet ([here](#)) and Prep School Parent Information Booklet ([here](#)) which you were sent in June

Pupil “Bubbles”

Whenever possible the children, in order to meet the revised guidelines for social distancing, will be in their class/form Bubble. The Bubble will extend to the entire year group as circumstances require (e.g. for year assemblies, games etc). Year group Bubbles will spend the school day separated from one another (i.e. lessons, break, lunch, activities, games) during the school day. There will be limited integration of children from different Bubbles for some clubs and extra-curricular activities.

Daily Timings, Arrival, Collection, Registration and Absence

Arrival arrangements

In order to comply with social distancing requirements, each year group and each class within each year, should arrive and queue **ONLY** at the times and locations listed.

Each arrival point will be clearly signed, staffed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and for the initial days of term by your child’s class or form teacher who will lead the children to their classroom once all have mustered.

A gap of 1 metre between each child/adult group should be maintained as the children arrive and queue. Parents should maintain social distancing at all times, avoid entering the school buildings except in an emergency and kindly vacate the school grounds and vicinity as soon as you can. The exit routes for parents will be clearly sign posted.

ARRIVAL		
Year 8	Kitchen Front Door	8CN & 8CE – 0800 8CS & 8CW – 0810
Year 7	Back Door	7CN & 7CE – 0800 7CS & 7CW – 0810
Year 6	Main Front Door	6CN & 6CE – 0800 6CS & 6CW – 0810
Year 5	Gym Door	5CN & 5CE – 0800

		5CS & 5CW – 0810
Year 4	Main Front Door	4CN & 4CE – 0815 4CS & 4CW – 0825
Year 3	Kitchen Front Door	3CN & 3CE – 0815 3CS & 3CW – 0825
Year 2	Back Door	2CN & 2CE – 0815 2CS & 2CW – 0825
Year 1	Gym Door	1CN & 1CE – 0815 1CS & 1CW – 0825
Reception	Classroom Outside Entrance (along the boundary of the playground)	All Forms – 0815

Dismissal and collection routines

Similar routines and protocols will apply at the end of the day. we would be grateful if the adult collecting your child arrives just before the allocated dismissal time, and that every effort is made to observe social distancing on the school site.

DISMISSAL		
Reception	Classroom Outside Entrance (until Friday 18 th September)	All Forms - 1215
	Classroom Outside Entrance (from Monday 21 st September)	All Forms - 1525
Year 1	Gym Door	1CN & 1CE – 1530 1CS & 1CW – 1535
Year 2	Back Door	2CN & 2CE – 1530 2CS & 2CW – 1535
Year 3	Kitchen Front Door	3CN & 3CE – 1545 3CS & 3CW - 1550
Year 4	Main Front Door	4CN & 4CE – 1545 4CS & 4CW - 1550
Year 5	Gym Door	5CN & 5CE – 1555 5CS & 5CW – 1600
Year 6	Main Front Door	6CN & 6CE – 1555 6CS & 6CW – 1600
Year 7	Back Door	7CN & 7CE – 1555 7CS & 7CW – 1600

Year 8	Kitchen Front Door	8CN & 8CE – 1555 8CS & 8CW – 1600
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School transport

Arrangements will be sent separately to the parents of those children who travel to and from school on school transport.

Registration

Due to the necessity for staggered arrival and departure we would ask that parents do their utmost to be on time in order that Registration, which is a regulatory requirement, can be carried out in good time for the first lesson of the day to begin on time.

Notifying the school of your child's absence

If your child is unwell and unable to come to school, please follow the usual procedure of emailing Clapham Absence (cla-absence@thomas-s.co.uk).

General enquiries and administrative matters for the School Office

Given that we are unable to allow parent access to the school buildings, Mrs Viki Stanton (Operations Manager) and Mrs Maine Taylor-Chappell (School Nurse) will be on hand outside the main front door from 8.00-8.30am to respond to any general or medical matters. They will be clearly identified by their name badges.

Alternatively, you can call Reception (020 7326 9300) and we will respond to your enquiry as soon as we possibly can.

Uniform and Equipment for the Day Ahead

Uniform and arriving changed for certain activities

The children should wear full School Uniform from the start of term. Details of the uniform can be found in the aforementioned parent information booklets. Ideally uniform items should be washed each evening and at the very least on a regular basis. If for reasons of unavailability your child is missing some school uniform items, please don't worry.

To avoid changing at school for certain activities, the children should come to school wearing the appropriate clothing/kit for that activity.

A comprehensive guide explaining which “outfit” your child needs to come to school wearing on any given day can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to contact your child's class/form teacher.

Red bags

Whilst children will be wearing PE kit on the days specified, red bags should be brought to school with their uniform, including their school shoes. Children will only change into their school uniform on these days in exceptional circumstances, for example wet weather when a change of clothing will be required.

Red bags for Years 3, 4 and 5 are kept in form rooms. Year 6 red bags are stored outside the changing rooms and the Year 7 and 8 red bags in the covered sheds behind the cricket nets in the playground.

Equipment

Every child will need to bring their own personal equipment to school to avoid handling shared resources. These will remain in school. Please name your child's equipment wherever possible. We will be encouraging the children not to share their equipment kit.

A guide to the equipment children should have in school follows [here](#).

Children are not permitted to bring any toys into school.

Equipment should be carried in a Thomas's navy rucksack, without key rings attached.

Bikes and scooters

Please note that we are not allowing bikes or scooters on site.

What the Arrangements Mean for the Children

Areas and zones

Year groups will have their own designated area of the school. This will include entry and exit procedures, classrooms, toilets, corridors, playground areas and dining space.

Lessons

Lessons will take place as normal, in class and form rooms and utilising all the co-curricular and outdoor learning areas in reassuringly familiar ways. However, teachers will, whenever possible, maintain social distancing and year group Bubbles will be kept apart from other year groups.

Break times

The children will have their snack in their classroom. They will remain in their Bubbles in designated areas of the playground. Playground equipment will be kept to a minimum and will be allocated to each Bubble for their exclusive use. These will be cleaned after each break time usage.

Assemblies and church

Assemblies will be organised for form or year group Bubbles and where the space allows there may be assemblies of up to three-year group Bubbles together.

Church services are likely to be re-organised as year group assemblies and held in school until further notice. The format of festival occasions, such as the Remembrance Day Service and the Carol Services, are under review. For the time being they remain calendar fixtures which we hope can go ahead in some shape or form when the time comes. However, as things currently stand it is unlikely that parents would be permitted to attend. If this were to be so, the event would be live streamed.

Lunch

Cooked school lunches will be served at the normal times, following the published timetabled arrangements. The children will be served and sit in year group Bubbles. Queuing will be kept to a minimum and the highest standards of serving hygiene will be adhered to.

PE/Games

The children will enjoy and benefit from a full and active PE and Games programme which, subject to regular review, will be offered within the guidelines set out by the government, IAPS and the relevant governing bodies.

Regrettably there will be no matches with and against other schools, so the focus will be on skills development and small sided games within year group Bubbles. The commitment to a programme of Saturday morning sport, less matches against other schools, will continue, as will our use of off-site facilities including REMPF.

Every opportunity will be grasped to engage the children in physical activity outside both on the school site and on the Commons.

The facilities for sport on the school site have been greatly enhanced with the laying of astroturf across the entire school playground during the summer. Notwithstanding the current limitations placed on school sporting fixtures, this provision will significantly enhance our games playing capacity.

Swimming

There will be no class swimming during the Michaelmas Term. After school club swimming is under review subject to guidance and access to swimming pools.

Music

Class Music will continue, and singing limited, according to class and year group bubbles. Mixed age choirs are not permitted, nor congregational singing in church or assembly.

Orchestras and instrumental ensembles can go ahead with special provision made for brass and woodwind players.

As things stand it is very unlikely that we will be able to invite parents to concerts which, whenever possible, will be live streamed.

Every effort will be made to teach and provide peripatetic music lessons in school, with appropriate measures in place. The Music Department will advise on the arrangements as soon as possible.

Drama

Productions will go ahead. These will be class-based shows, 25 minutes long, which can involve limited cast singing. Each show will be filmed and parents given a dvd, or live streamed as

circumstances allow, given that the restrictions are very likely to mean that we are unable to allow a parent audience.

Clubs

The Clubs programme is going ahead, albeit with some unavoidable amendments and local adjustments which Mrs Fisher will communicate later this week.

Lectures

Visiting lecturers and presenters will continue to visit the school, subject to risk assessments.

Trips

Day trips are allowed to proceed, subject to risk assessments. However, the government's guidelines have stipulated that residential trips cannot take place for the time being. We have rescheduled several residential trips accordingly for 2021.

Outdoor education

We can proceed with the class and year-based curriculum outdoor education programme and we are very excited by the extended capacity and provision offered by the new Thomas's Outdoor Department.

What This Means for Parents

Communications and contact

You can find details of who you can speak to regarding any issue and how to contact them, by clicking on the links to the aforementioned parent information booklets.

Most queries or concerns can be addressed to your child's class/form teacher in the first instance.

Parent meetings

There will, of course, be occasions when you wish to meet with a teacher, a senior colleague or possibly the Headmaster. This might take the form of a phone conversation, a meeting via Zoom, or as appropriate, face-to-face. If you would like to explore one of these options, do get in touch with us.

Arrival and dismissal

The detailed arrangements are set out towards the beginning of this document. The key issues are that your child arrives at the allocated time and place and is collected at the end of the day at the correct dismissal time and place.

Dismissal and collection at the end of a Club activity

Although Clubs are advertised as finishing at 5.15pm, dismissal timings will be staggered until further notice, starting at 5.00pm. Each club will be allocated a collection point, please ensure you are punctual in collecting your child. Specific details regarding club dismissal and collection points will be sent separately.

General access and School Office enquiries

We regret that for the time being access by parents to the school buildings is not permitted.

In view of this, Mrs Viki Stanton (Operations Manager) and Mrs Maine Taylor-Chappell (School Nurse) will be on hand outside the main front door from 8.00-8.30am to respond to any general or medical matters. They will be clearly identified by their name badges.

Alternatively, you can call Reception (020 7326 9300) and we will respond to your enquiry as soon as we possibly can.

Drama productions, Concerts and Church Services

For the time being we are unable to invite parents to class drama productions, concerts or church services. We hope very much that the guidelines will be reviewed which will allow some relaxation here. In the meantime, we are arranging for either recorded or live streaming of all pupil performances as circumstances allow.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Plans are in hand to carry out scheduled parent teacher meetings via Zoom until such time as meetings in school can resume.

PTA

Sadly, we have had to postpone all PTA events scheduled to take place within the school this term. Weekly meetings of the PTA Chair with the Headmaster and the Senior Deputy Head will take place via Zoom, as will the start of year PTA reps meeting.

Calendar and weekly updates

The Michaelmas Term calendar is something of a metaphor for the challenges we have been presented with. Many of the special diary events we planned some time ago have been removed, whilst others can be resurrected if circumstances permit. The weekly parent communication will help you to keep abreast of confirmed forthcoming events.

Health, Welfare, Wellbeing and Safeguarding

Hand-washing and personal hygiene

Please remember that your child will be washing their hands more than normal everyday, which can lead to the skin drying out and becoming painful and sore. Children are much less likely to wash their hands properly if it hurts them to do so. Please check your child's hands and assist with applying nourishing hand creams with vitamin E and ceramides to hydrate and replenish lost moisture and prevent further moisture loss and cracking.

Hand sanitisers

We have installed a large number of high-quality hand sanitisers around the school and we will be continually asking your children to use them.

Social distancing

It is very important that parents understand that social distancing is almost impossible within the school setting. The Government recognises this and therefore guidance focuses on

reducing the spread of infection by keeping Bubbles apart as much as possible, which we will be able to manage. Within each Bubble we accept that social distancing will be encouraged but cannot be guaranteed. It is essential that parents are aware of this very key fact.

Face masks and PPE

Pupils and staff are not required to wear face coverings at school.

We will not object, however, to any teacher, pupil or parent who chooses to wear their own, with the exception that for security checks the full face must be visible. Please be aware that teachers will not be able to manage the use of pupils' PPE throughout the day.

In the event of a local lockdown, we will require pupils in Years 7 and 8 and adults to wear masks in communal areas.

Cleaning arrangements throughout the day

A team of four full time cleaners will be cleaning continuously throughout the school day. The school will continue to be cleaned overnight and at weekends. It will be cleaned overnight during the week and we will have additional cleaners on duty throughout the day to keep surfaces and toilets disinfected. Teachers will also have access to cleaning materials to wipe surfaces and equipment frequently.

Fresh air and exercise

We will take the children outside as much as possible every day within their Bubbles. All classrooms will be ventilated throughout the day, with windows and doors open at all times. Fans are provided in all classrooms to aid air flow.

Child illness

If your child is unwell the evening before or morning of the school day please do not send them in to see how they get on. You will need to keep your child at home for at least 24 hours, or 48 hours if their illness is related to vomiting/nausea or diarrhoea.

SAFETY

We will be implementing measures throughout the day to keep year group Bubbles separate. The only collective of up to three, year group Bubbles will be lunch, break times, and when the Bubbles will be separated, arriving and leaving at staggered intervals and will have their own allocated dining and playground area.

Year group Bubbles will not mix at any time.

Children and staff will wash/sanitise every time they leave their class or year Bubble and they will use only designated toilets.

All corridors and staircases have been marked clearly so that the community walks on the right-hand side at all times to reduce the risk of contact with others.

The staff and children will make regular reference to our **Staying Safe in School** poster which is displayed around the school ([here](#)).

Safeguarding

We are proud of our rigorous culture of Safeguarding and this will continue to be the case throughout the period of return to school and Remote Schooling. Any matter relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection will be given the highest priority and addressed immediately by the Designated Safeguarding Leader and/or the Deputy Safeguarding Leaders.

- **Designated Safeguarding Leader**
Jon Chesworth (jchesworth@thomas-s.co.uk)
- **Deputy Safeguarding Leader**
Helen Stewart Morgan (hstewartmorgan@thomas-s.co.uk)
- **Deputy Safeguarding Leader (Lower School)**
Hannah Tongue (htongue@thomas-s.co.uk)

Conclusion

We feel confident and optimistic that your child will have a happy and successful term in spite of the unique circumstances which have reshaped the arrangements for all of us to different degree.

If there is any aspect of the arrangements set out in this document which you are left uncertain or concerned about, or if you have a query of any sort, please do get in touch. In the meantime, thank you in anticipation for your support.

PC Ward

Headmaster (pward@thomas-s.co.uk)

1st September 2020