

## **Return to Campus Health and Safety Measures 2021-2022**

While it is difficult to predict the ways in which our current health context might change in the future, one thing is constant – our steadfast commitment to the ongoing social, emotional, spiritual and academic growth and development of our students. Our dedicated faculty and staff are putting forth their finest efforts to prepare for the new school year. We cannot wait to see the children again, and we look forward to a healthy, happy and successful year ahead.

We continue to monitor the CDC, state guidelines and public health conditions in New Haven as we align our measures of practice accordingly. We recognize that these plans may change. We will remain flexible and adapt as needed throughout the year.

St. Thomas's continues to have four guiding principles that help to inform our decisions as we return to campus. These principles speak to our school mission and our school motto.

### ***Safety***

St. Thomas's highest priority is the health and well-being of its community. We believe that a healthy and nurturing environment is necessary for students, teachers and staff to thrive. We also believe that we have an obligation to support the health and welfare of the broader community – from our families to those near and far. We will continue to monitor the CDC, state guidelines and public health conditions in New Haven as we align our measures of practice accordingly.

### ***On-Campus Instruction***

St. Thomas's recognizes that the optimal learning environment for children is one in which they are learning from their teachers and fellow students in person. We also recognize that our school size and building footprint uniquely positions us to provide our students with an in-school learning experience. To the best of our ability, and in accordance with official health guidelines, all enrolled students will receive an in-person educational experience five full days a week.

### ***Academic Coherence and Excellence***

The culture of St. Thomas's Day School affirms the whole child as an intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual being. Our balanced approach to learning, the pursuit of academic excellence and a continuous educational experience is vitally important. While health circumstances may necessitate certain changes or restrictions to student life, our ultimate goal is to support our students' learning and development as seamlessly as possible.

### ***Flexibility and Adaptability***

St. Thomas's recognizes that any plan we design to respond to external health conditions must be flexible and able to adapt to circumstances beyond our control. Our overarching goal is to create a continuous in person learning experience.

### ***The Important Role of Families***

Families play a vital role in maintaining safety on campus. More than ever, the home-school connection will be vital to the success and well-being of our students. The number one safety measure is to keep children home if they are sick.

We understand that there are families with higher risk members in their households. As a community that prioritizes health and safety, we must all do our part to adhere to state health recommendations and regulations to control transmission and potential future outbreaks. We expect you will have questions and welcome your feedback and suggestions. We are eager to listen to and help each family navigate any concerns they may have. Please feel free to contact Gina Panza, Head of School @ [gpanza@stthomasday.org](mailto:gpanza@stthomasday.org) or Heather Mokotoff, School Nurse @ [hmokotoff@stthomasday.org](mailto:hmokotoff@stthomasday.org) with any questions and concerns.

### ***Community Expectations***

All members of the St. Thomas's Day School Community have a shared responsibility to prevent the spread of illness, especially when they are aware of a diagnosed communicable disease or suspect that they have contracted a communicable disease.

It is imperative that all members of our school community remain committed to the safety policies and procedures listed in this and future communications to help keep students, faculty and staff safe. By enrolling your child at St. Thomas's, you agree to the following requirements:

»**Follow Federal, State, and Local Orders.** All families are expected to adhere to the directives of applicable federal, state, and local government health departments, including the CDC, regarding physical distancing and masking in public and other measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

»**Influenza Vaccine.** For the safety of our students, staff, and families, all students, faculty and staff will be required to have a current influenza vaccine in order to return to school after winter break. Exceptions will be made ONLY for students who have a written note from their primary care provider noting medical exemption.

»**Stay Home if Sick.** If your child is sick, you are expected to keep him/her home from school.

»**Stay Home if Exposed.** If your child or someone in your household has been notified that they test positive with COVID-19, you must notify Heather Mokotoff, School Nurse, as soon as possible @ [hmokotoff@stthomasday.org](mailto:hmokotoff@stthomasday.org) You may be asked to keep your child home from school based on current CDC guidelines. Our faculty and staff will work with students in isolation to provide continuing instructional support insofar as that is possible.

»**Travel.**

Domestic airplane travel will require the following quarantine and testing guidelines per the [CDC domestic travel recommendations](#). International airplane travel will require the following quarantine and testing guidelines per the [CDC international travel recommendations](#). For all out-of-state travel by car, please closely monitor for symptoms and test/quarantine if any COVID-19 symptoms develop.

»**Face Masks.** Send your child to school with 2-3 well-fitting face masks every day. If using fabric masks, ensure that your child's mask is cleaned daily.

»**Hygiene.** Practice and reinforce good hygiene practices at home, in particular, the importance of frequent handwashing and proper respiratory etiquette.

»**Medical Forms; Emergency Contacts.** Families must provide a minimum of 3 emergency contacts who are able to pick up your child from the school within one (1) hour of receiving a call from the school if your child presents with a temperature or becomes ill during the school day.

### ***COVID-19 Monitoring Plan***

Members of the School Health and Safety Committee will regularly monitor health indicators reported by the State of Connecticut agencies as well as our school community. They will track the number of COVID-19 cases in the state; the number of students and employees on campus who report illnesses; the number of people with reported fevers; attendance and a host of other data points that will factor into our community's health status and inform any actions our school will take. We will monitor and analyze these indicators for predictive trends and anomalies. Any changes to our health protocols will be shared with our school community.

## ***Health and Safety Measures***

The health and safety of our community is our highest priority. The following is a list of safety measures that we currently have in place.

- » A formal school nurse's office with an isolation room.
- » A School Health and Safety Committee.
- » Upgraded ventilation systems in compliance with CT state guidelines with remote monitoring and daily flushing of air.
- » Touchless hand sanitizer stations
- » Touchless fixtures in classrooms and bathrooms
- » Amplified cleaning practices as per the CDC guidelines

**Face coverings:** Students and employees will wear face coverings while indoors throughout the school day. Students will be required to arrive at school with his/her own clean face coverings.

**Physical distancing:** All movement on campus will be controlled and directed to reduce the overall intermixing of classes. Unnecessary foot traffic will be limited as much as possible in hallways. Desks will be placed 3 feet apart with students facing in the same direction to minimize transmission risk.

**Hand hygiene:** Students and faculty will follow a regular schedule of hand washing or use of hand sanitizer throughout the day. Students will be required to wash their hands each time they enter the classroom. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be available at numerous locations as well as sinks for handwashing in most classrooms. No-touch lighting, bathroom fixtures and trash cans will be used wherever possible.

**Enhanced cleaning/ disinfection schedule:** St. Thomas's will deep clean and disinfect school spaces thoroughly prior to reopening. Daily cleaning practices will be compliant with CDC recommendations, including the types of cleaning products used and the frequency of cleaning. Special attention will be paid to the cleaning of high touch surfaces throughout the day.

### **Health screening:**

Parents, students, faculty and staff will be asked to self-screen for the following symptoms before school each day:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue

- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Students with any symptoms of COVID-19 during school will be separated from other students and parents/guardians will be contacted to arrange pick-up within the hour.

**Updated sick policy and enforcement practices:** Rules regarding sick policies for students and employees will be strictly enforced to minimize the number of sick people on campus,

**Quarantine and contact tracing:** If a student or employee has a COVID-19 infection, the school nurse will support the Department of Health's efforts for contact tracing and enforcing quarantining of those infected and their contacts.

**Self care and well-being:** Pedagogy and classroom practices will provide greater attention to student mental health and well-being to build resilience and cope with the stress or anxiety students may experience in this pandemic context. We are keenly aware that feelings of anxiety can be heightened in situations such as this. St. Thomas's has a full time School Nurse and access to mental health professionals and other resources to assist families.

### ***Accommodations and Support***

We recognize that there are situations where a student, teacher or staff member has a personal health situation that puts them at particular risk for COVID-19.

We support the health and wellness of all of our community members and will do our best to accommodate the unique needs of individual students and employees. If you feel your child is at higher risk or if you have particular concerns about their presence on our campus or if you have any questions about school policy, we encourage you to notify Gina Panza, Head of School @ [gpanza@stthomasday.org](mailto:gpanza@stthomasday.org) as soon as possible.

### **Questions:**

If you have any questions or concerns about school policy, please contact *Gina Panza, Head of School* @ [gpanza@stthomasday.org](mailto:gpanza@stthomasday.org).

We wish everyone a safe and healthy year ahead.  
The Health & Safety Committee