

8th January 2021

Dear Parent or Guardian,

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Staff and Students

You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the Country using new, quicker COVID19 tests known as 'lateral flow devices'. This letter is provide more information about the testing programme in our school. Up to one third of people who have Coronavirus are asymptomatic, but by testing we will help to reduce the spread in school through asymptomatic transmission. I am therefore strongly encouraging those returning to school to be tested.

Plan for testing

We will be looking to test all staff and secondary school age students as soon as possible when they return after the Christmas break, in addition, any staff member or student who has come into contact with positive cases in our school can be tested daily for seven days to allow them to remain in school.

How the tests work?

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant. The school will inform the student/staff member of a positive test result. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. The student/staff member will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system.

What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will be informed immediately by the school and will need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result. This should be on the same day, or as soon as possible afterwards. The school will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home. While waiting for the PCR result (via text/email) they will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, students who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Parents or legal guardians will be informed.

What if students or staff have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?

The student or staff member will be notified that they are a close contact by the school. If close contacts agree to be tested each day for a maximum period of 7 days, and they test negative every day, they will be allowed to remain in school. There may be instances where close contacts are also contacted by NHS Test and Trace. In this instance they should notify NHS Test and Trace that they are a close contact through school and are participating in daily contact testing.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (including a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Consent form & Privacy Notice

Attached is a consent form and a copy of the Privacy Notice relating to data that will be collected as part of COVID-19 Testing. It is important that you complete and return the consent form to school, indicating whether **you do or do not** give consent for yourself (if a member of staff) or your child to be tested in school. We will support our students and staff throughout this process, but please contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

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