



January 2021

## **NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Students**

Dear Parent or Carer

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

The school will be offering a test to all staff and secondary school age students who want to participate from week commencing 11 January 2021.

For GDPR purposes, I must make you aware that school staff have been trained to deliver this programme of testing. The school will be recording all details of the test including the result. We will of course be treating all personal information that is processed in line with our Data Protection and GDPR policies and procedures.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the online consent form which is accessible on the school website under the Covid-19 tab.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

In validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, the tests were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a PCR test (99.68% specificity). The tests have lower sensitivity but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

Testing will be offered free of charge.

### **What if a student tests positive?**

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or carers will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Students will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). To order a kit you can go to [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or call 119 to book a follow-up test.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result you will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

### **What happens if the test is negative?**

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A student will be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test whilst in school, however all results will be received via the mobile number used in the registration process. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

### **What if a close contact at school/college tests positive?**

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to school if they agree to be tested once a day for 7 days and the test is negative. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. This does not apply to household members or close contacts outside of school who will still need to self-isolate. Further details will be provided at the time, but if you would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, you can.

### **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 (such as 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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Holloway  
**Executive Headteacher**