



1 February 2021

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and pupils

Dear parent and carers,

You will be aware of the COVID-19 testing programme that is in place in our school.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school and college settings through asymptomatic transmission.

Updated plan for testing Feb 2021

We have been testing all staff and secondary school pupils as they come into school for the first time after the Christmas holidays and then on a weekly basis the first day each individual comes into school each week. The government recently announced that staff will now be offered twice weekly testing. In our schools we are also able to offer this to pupils having taken into account the risk assessment for opening the school to all pupils and the testing resources we have available.

Previously any staff member or student who is identified as a close contact of a positive case in our school was tested daily for seven days to allow them to remain in school. **This practice has now been paused by the government and close contacts of anyone who tests positive will not be asked to go home and self-isolate for ten days in line with guidance prior to the Christmas holidays.**

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff who will be able to support your child with the process. 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. We will inform the pupil of a positive test result. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. Tests are free of charge – please click [here for an information leaflet](#) about how to do the test.

What if my child tests positive?

If a pupil tests positive on a lateral flow device, we will tell them immediately. They will **no longer** need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result as the government has paused this from 28 January 2021. Anyone with a positive test will have to self-isolate for ten days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, pupils who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. If you do not hear from us you can assume your child's test is negative.

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

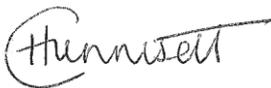
The staff member or pupil will be notified that they are a close contact by the school and in line with guidance from the government announced on 22 January, all close contacts will need to self-isolate for ten days

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme 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>.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please complete the [online consent statement available here](#). We will support our staff and pupils throughout - you can contact me via the school office if you have any questions or concerns.

Best wishes



Collette Hunnisett, Headteacher
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