

16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## NHS Test and Trace Programme starting January 2021

### Regular COVID 19 Testing for Staff and Students.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

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, and our school will be starting this in January. The NHS Test and Trace team will be testing in the school once a week those who want to participate from. In addition, the programme will help pupils to stay in education, by enabling close contacts of someone who tests positive to stay in school if they do a daily test for seven days. This is known as 'serial testing'.

Along with the other measures we are taking, **these tests will help staff and pupils to work safely.** Up to one third of people who have coronavirus have no symptoms, so by supporting them to self-isolate we will save lives and help keep our school open and as safe as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it. I will be taking one.

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

A close contact of someone 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 not, 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.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, **please fill in the consent form on our website by clicking on the link below.**

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DC7QG8N>

Students in Years 12 and 13 can complete the consent form themselves, having discussed participation with their parents/guardian.

The test will be supervised by trained staff and there will be minimal disruption to lessons. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can assist with taking the swab.

Results will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents/legal guardians will also be informed.

To reach this stage, the test has been tested at Public Health England's research laboratories in partnership with Oxford University and is totally safe, with a 99.8% specificity. Testing is free and provided by NHS Test and Trace.

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

Results will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents/legal guardians will also be notified.

Pupils will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in testing sites) to confirm the positive result, they will be able to do this at school or take a test kit home. During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate until they get their result. If it is negative, the pupils can return to school.

If the result of this secondary test is positive, the pupil and household members will need to self-isolate for 10 days following Government guidelines. **Please inform school as soon as you receive this test result.**

We will continue to support pupils with their education remotely. We recognise this may be disruptive for your family but it is really important to isolate to prevent the spread of the virus, and there is financial support available via the NHS app. Pupils might need collecting from school, so please discuss this with them. There is more advice on self-isolation and home learning on Gov.uk.

### **What if a pupil tests negative?**

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A pupil will only be told if they test positive in the first 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative.

### **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 of change to your 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 staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions.

Best wishes,



**Test and Trace**

Janis Davies

Principal