

Ref DJB/AQG/Letters/Student Testing

25 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

**RE: NHS TEST AND TRACE: COVID-19 TESTING FOR STUDENTS**

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 devices'. This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme 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 settings through asymptomatic transmission. I am, therefore, strongly encouraging those students currently in school to be tested.

**Plan for testing**

We will be looking to test all staff and students as they return to school. Students will be offered two lateral flow device tests spaced 3 to 5 days apart. In addition, in future, any staff member or student who has come into contact with positive cases in our school may be able to be tested daily for seven days to allow them to remain in school, however the government has postponed this contact testing at the moment.

As your son/daughter is currently in school (due to provision for children of critical workers/vulnerable children) they will be able to access testing before all students return to school. Testing will begin week beginning 1 February. Note: testing is voluntary and any student tested under the age of 16 will require parental consent.

**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 using the details provided on the consent form (see below). The school will inform the student and parent of a positive test result. A text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system will be provided using the details submitted in the registration process. Please note, lateral flow tests are free of charge.

I enclose a leaflet with further information about how the test is taken.

**What if my child tests positive?**

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they and their parents will be informed immediately by school (and also via text/email) 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. School will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home. During the time while waiting for the PCR result students 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. Students/parents will be informed of negative test results via text/email.

### **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 for testing**

In order for students to be tested as part of the test and trace programme consent is needed from parents. To consent, please complete the consent form

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=HnypklpiskmKnVw6Pae-8Gu393UTepOv-LLJKAeFjxUQzRSS0ZFWJOUkVXMDcyWkNZSjRUWUVURS4u>

We will support our students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions at all.

Yours sincerely



**MRS D J BUNN**  
**Head of Academy**