

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

Dear Parent/carer,

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. Testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

We hope to be able to use the lateral flow test to test all Year 11 and 13 students from the week commencing 11th January 2021. The test is voluntary and you need to complete the consent form (which will be sent separately) in order for your child to be tested.

From the 18th January we hope to be offering testing for all other year groups in school who are identified as a close contact of a positive case. If you are happy for your child to be tested, please read and complete the consent form.

Those taking the test will be supervised. The 'lateral flow' tests according to government guidelines are quick and easy to do using a nose and throat swab. For students under 18s, staff will oversee the swab process. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with those students participating in the test. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

Registration

To process the test, we will register all participating students. Any details of the student will be recorded securely to protect their privacy. If the information that we currently hold on the school's information systems is not up to date, can you please contact the school office as a matter of urgency. Each time students are tested they will be registered and asked to confirm whether they are currently showing any Covid 19 symptoms.

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 legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results. Students who test positive 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). You can go to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, you should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test. During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) students will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result, students 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 only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative. 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 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our students throughout this process, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 01833 638 166 or email office@teesdaleschool.co.uk

Yours faithfully,

Dan Pilling
Head of School