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Headteacher: Mrs Julia Hinchliffe **MA (Hons), MA, NPQH**

4 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

COVID-19 testing for staff and students

I am writing to give you further information about 'lateral flow tests'. The aim of these tests is to keep staff and students in school as safely as possible. At the time of writing, we are expecting Y11 students to be back in school from 11 January and all other students back from 18 January, so aim to carry out tests for students in the next 2 weeks.

The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it. It is free of charge.

I would like to thank all the parents who volunteered to help us with mass testing, what a huge support you are to us! We are extremely grateful for your offers of help and will be in touch as soon as we can with further details.

We will be testing all staff and secondary school students **who have no Covid-19 symptoms** and who want to participate in this testing. If your child has Covid symptoms, they must not come into school, and must book a test externally. The testing will start as soon as we have taken delivery of the items and when staff/volunteers are trained.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please complete the [Online CONSENT Form](#) by **Wednesday 6th January**. The [Privacy Notice](#) can be viewed here.

Only students with full consent for testing will receive a test. Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick using a swab of the nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process which is **self-administered**. Results take around half an hour from testing, and any positive results will be shared directly with participants and their parent/carer.

What if I don't consent? Your child will not receive any tests in school. This means that if your child is identified as a close contact of a positive Covid case, then they have to go home and study remotely. Students who have consent can stay in school learning as long as they have a negative COVID-19 test for the following 7 days.

I enclose further details below, but if you have any concerns or questions, please contact your Pastoral Manager.

Yours sincerely

Julia Hinchliffe, Headteacher



Further Guidance from the Department for Education

What if a pupil tests positive?

Participating staff and pupils 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.

Pupils 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). The school may be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home or 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 you wait for the PCR result (via text / email), your child will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result your child will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

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