



Friday 15 January 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Colleagues

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

As I hope you are aware, we continue to work hard 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 known as **lateral flow tests**.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing, we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be trialling and quality assuring tests of all staff who are on site next week. Lessons from this trial will then be applied to the rollout of testing on all (consenting) students and staff who are on site from the week beginning 25 January. It is envisaged that all students and staff will also be tested (with their consent) when schools fully reopen. I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information (entitled *Self Testing Instructions and Questions*).

If you are happy for your child (in Years 7 to 11) to be tested, please complete and submit the correct Google Form:

- If your child is in Years 7 to 11 please [follow this link](#) to provide consent.

If you are a member of the Sixth Form or a member of staff, then you will of course provide your own consent:

- If you are in Year 12 or Year 13 please [follow this link](#) to provide consent.
- Members of staff are asked to [follow this link](#) to provide their consent as well.

We encourage you to provide consent (for each of your children separately) even if your son or daughter is currently learning at home. It would be helpful to have gathered consent from our entire school community before the reopening of schools to assist with a smooth reopening. I should add that you may refuse to give consent and may also withdraw consent at *any* time. All tests are voluntary.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to complete, using a swab of one's tonsils and nasal passage.

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Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and students participating, and uploaded to the NHS Test and Trace service – delivering the outcome of the test to the mobile phone number that is provided within the consent process referred to above. Parents and carers of students in Years 7 to 11 will, therefore, have the results sent to their mobile phone as a text message. Students in Years 12 and 13 (plus all staff) will have their results sent to their personal mobile phone number.

We understand that these tests work. The tests have lower sensitivity (than PCR tests) but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

Testing will be offered free of charge. To process the test, we will register all participating students.

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

Participating staff and students who test positive will be informed about their results in person and safely supervised in a separate area in the case of students. Where participants are in Years 7 to 11, their parents or carers will not only receive the NHS Test and Trace result message but also receive a call from one of our team to inform them of the positive result and provide guidance on the next steps, including guidance on safe travel and additional precautions.

Students and staff will then 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). We will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home or you can go to [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://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 whilst a student or member of staff awaits their PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result they (and members of their household) will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

### ***What happens if the test is negative?***

Students and staff who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A student in Years 7 to 11 will only be told when they test positive on a lateral flow test. This means that if a student (or member of staff) is not approached by a member of staff within an hour of the test they can safely assume that the test was negative. Staff, students in Years 12 and 13, and parents and carers of students in Years 7 to 11, will also receive the NHS Test and Trace text message as well.

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 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 seven days and the test is negative each day. 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/college is for people with no symptoms (asymptomatic). 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>.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format.

If you do have any questions or concerns regarding the Rapid Testing process please contact me using my direct email: [bdoherty@chippingnortonschool.org](mailto:bdoherty@chippingnortonschool.org).

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Doherty', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Doherty

Headteacher

Enclosed: *Privacy Statement and Self Testing Instructions and Questions*