



FAO: Parents & carers

RE: COVID-19 testing for students returning to College in the week commencing 8th March 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

As you will be aware, on Monday 22nd February 2021 the Prime Minister announced to the nation that from 8th March 2021 'pupils and students in all schools and further education settings can safely return to face-to-face teaching' and that 'school attendance will be mandatory for all pupils, with secondary schools and colleges able to phase return over the week of 8th March to allow students to be offered testing on return'.

The testing will use 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 college.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing, we will help to reduce the spread in school and college settings through asymptomatic transmission. I am therefore strongly encouraging all students on return to college to be tested.

Plan for testing

Testing will occur in two phases. Firstly, we are going to test all students three times within a minimum of six and a maximum of ten days upon their return to college in the week commencing 8th March 2021. After these 3 initial tests in college, we will move into the second phase of testing in which students will be issued with test kits to undertake home testing twice a week. Further information about the home testing phase will follow once phase one is underway.

How the testing in college will work

Trained staff will supervise students taking the tests. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results take around half an hour from testing. The college will only inform the student of the result if the test is positive. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. The parent/carer who gave consent for the test will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. Tests are free of charge.

What if my child tests positive?

If a pupil tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will be informed immediately by college and will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, pupils who test negative will be able to stay in college and resume their activities as normal. Parents/carers will be informed of negative test results via text/email.

HEADTEACHER: Mr G Rule

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at college 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>.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



Greg Rule
Headteacher