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4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent

We are working to keep Oathall 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.

Our aim is to begin testing as soon as possible at the start of January. Our expectation is that we will be testing all staff and students who want to participate from week commencing 4th January 2021.

Before we can proceed with student testing, we will need parental consent. I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information about the test.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff will be available to assist with the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed if the test result is positive.

Testing will be offered free of charge. To process the test, we will register all participating students and you will be asked to complete a registration form on or near the date of your child's test.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the enclosed consent statement (one per student) and return it to the school office via email to [consent@oathall.org](mailto:consent@oathall.org) or by post. Your child may also bring the signed consent form, along with their registration form with them on the day of their test.

Please be aware that we have had to set this entire process up at very short notice, as a result we fully expect some of this information will change as we start the process. It will also be subject to further changes resulting from any new government guidance.

### **What happens 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). You can book a test by going to [www.gov.uk/get-](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)

[coronavirus-test](http://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) you will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result, you will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

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

Staff and pupils 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 pupils 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>. You must not send your child to school to be tested.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, 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 01444 414001 or email [office@oathall.org](mailto:office@oathall.org).

Yours faithfully

Mr Edward Rodriguez  
Headteacher