8th January 2021

# NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and pupils

Dear Staff member/Parent

We are working 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 pupils 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 are aiming to test all staff from week commencing **Monday 1st March 2021** and pupils from week commencing **Monday 8th March 2021**.

If you are happy for yourself/your child to be tested, please fill in the form below. **The form is also contained in the green ‘forms’ section of the Edulink app under ‘Personal’**. You will also need to complete the attached consent form. Both can be returned to us at office@cma.bfet.uk.

Those taking the test will be expected to attend on a specified day and at a specified time and 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 can oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and to parents and pupils via a text message.

We know these tests work - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown to be highly accurate. The tests have lower sensitivity 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.

# Registration

To process the test, we will register all participating staff and pupils.

To complete this registration please fill in the form below and complete the enclosed consent statement. By completing the consent statement you are indicating you agree to the linked privacy statement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **First Name**  |  |
| **Last Name**  |  |
| **Date of Birth**  |  |
| **Gender at birth**  |  |
| **Currently showing any COVID-19 symptoms?**  |  |
| **Home Postcode**  |  |
| **Email Address**  |  |
| **Mobile Number**  |  |

# What if a test is positive?

Participants who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Participants 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).

School will 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 participants wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate.

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

# What happens if the test is negative?

Participants will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Participants 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 participants 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?

We are aiming to provide a serial testing, or 7 day testing programme. A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 may 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. Completion of the consent form indicates that you are happy to be considered for this serial testing.

# What if a participant develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If a participant 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 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 0161 248 7009 or email office@cma.bfet.uk.

Yours faithfully,

Mr S A Platt

Vice Principal

Cedar Mount Academy