

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2021

## **NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Pupils and Staff using Lateral Flow Device Testing**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

One of the key ways in which the government wants to support the safe return of pupils and staff to school is through the use of lateral flow device testing for those coronavirus symptoms (asymptomatic testing).

[Mass testing for secondary pupils as all schools and colleges fully reopen from 8 March - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mass-testing-for-secondary-pupils-as-all-schools-and-colleges-fully-reopen-from-8-march)

This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme in our school.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school settings through asymptomatic transmission. I am therefore strongly encouraging those returning to school to be tested.

### **Plan for testing**

We will be looking to test all staff and secondary school age pupils as they return to school.

The school will conduct the first of these tests on **Monday 8th March** in the Taunton School Sports Hall. The following guidelines are vital to ensure that this process can run smoothly and we are able to open the school up for face to face lessons on Tuesday 9th March. These guidelines are based on the following guidance with specific reference to pages 29-31.

[Schools coronavirus \(COVID-19\) operational guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/guidance/schools-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance)

- **Parents must book a time slot using the school booking system:** <https://tauntonschool.schoolcloud.co.uk/> (user guide attached)
- The testing process will take 40 minutes and you will have a result at the end
- Parents must accompany their child to school. **If parents cannot accompany their child to school (for example, UK based boarding parents) then they will need to contact Mrs Wells to sign the relevant permission form.**
- Parents should park in the Durrant Car Park where they will sign the permission form. Their child will then be accompanied to the Sports Hall with their personal device (a phone or tablet, not a laptop) to complete the test. This is required to complete the online documentation, prior to taking the test. If a pupil does not have a phone or tablet, the school has a small bank of ipads to be able to loan during the test.
- Once the test is complete you and your child must return home. For boarders this will be their boarding house. If the test is negative your child can return to school on Tuesday 9th March and commence lessons, if it is positive they will need to self-isolate as per the NHS protocols.
- The pupils will complete the rest of their school lateral flow device tests over the course of the next week. Parents will not need to be in attendance for their second and third tests.
- Once this testing (3 tests in school) is complete all testing will move to home testing kits and we will provide more information on this in due course.

## **How the tests work**

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow device tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around 40 minutes from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant. The school will inform the pupil of a positive test result. Where participants are under 18, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. The pupil will also receive a notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. Tests are free of charge and I enclose a leaflet with further information.

## **I cannot accompany my child to school for the test?**

Please liaise with the TPS School Office and we will endeavour to work with you to find a solution.

## **What if my child tests positive?**

If a pupil tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days 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 start school on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March and resume their activities as normal. Pupils will be informed of negative test results. Where participants are under 18, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

## **What if staff or students have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?**

The staff member or student will be notified that they are a close contact by the school and will need to self-isolate for 10 days in line with Government guidance.

## **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 (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 faithfully,

Ed Burnett

Deputy Head

Taunton School

Chris Coleman

Deputy Head

Taunton Preparatory School

Lyndsay White

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Taunton School International