

24 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

COVID-19 Testing for Students

As you may have heard in the recent government announcement, COVID-19 testing is being offered to all students as they return to school from 8 March. This is alongside the testing of school staff. The tests aim to reduce the spread of the virus in schools and the wider community by helping to identify people who have coronavirus but are displaying no symptoms (asymptomatic). It is believed that up to one third of people with coronavirus remain asymptomatic.

Who will we be testing?

The tests will be available to all students. All staff are also carrying out regular tests. Under the government plans, students will carry out initial testing at school, then test at home twice a week.

Who carries out the tests?

In the great majority of cases, students will carry out the tests themselves, supervised by trained school staff and volunteers. For the small number of students where this isn't possible, we will discuss with parents the options for testing.

The testing process

The lateral flow tests use a swab taken of the throat and nose. Results are available within half an hour of the test and will be shared with the student. The school will inform students of a positive test result and, if the student is under 16, their parents/carers will also be informed. Students (and parents/carers where applicable) will receive a text or email notification of a positive or negative result direct from the NHS online system.

What if my child tests positive?

If a student 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. They do not need to get a further (PCR) test at a testing site.

What happens if the test is negative?

Students who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Students will be informed of negative test results via text/email. Where participants are under 16, 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.



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Nunthorpe Avenue, York YO23 1WF



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>.

Is testing compulsory?

Testing is voluntary but strongly encouraged by the Government, as they believe it offers a reliable and effective tool to help keep schools, and the wider community, safe.

I hope this letter clarifies the testing process but please contact us if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully,

Miss G Greenhalgh

Head of School