

March 2021

School re-opening in March 2021 NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for students

Dear Parent/Carer

As you know, we have worked incredibly hard since the start of the pandemic in March 2020 to keep our school as safe as possible, and that work has continued since school closed in December and throughout the third lockdown period. I would like to thank our incredible staff for their commitment and professionalism, which has seen many working over the holidays. I would also like to thank parents/carers and all other family members who have aided in students continuing their learning. It has been amazing to see so many students online everyday engaging with their teachers and support staff.

My letter today includes important information relating to when your child will return to school at the start of this coming term, and relating to the COVID-19 testing process for students.

Information relating to school re-opening in March 2021

The Government has now announced that secondary schools and colleges will reopen from Monday 8th March. We will be taking a staggered approach to starting as we factor in the testing of students on site. We will share more details with you next week relating to this process.

As before, a great deal of planning and risk assessing has gone into ensuring that our school continues to be as safe as possible for students and staff, in line with latest Government and Public Health England guidance.

We will continue to take decisions in the best interests of our students, working with you and keeping you informed every step of the way, while following Government rules and advice.

Information relating to NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students

You may have heard that many centres across the country are now using 'lateral flow tests' and as a centre we have been doing so since the 18 January, testing both staff and students. To date we have had no positive cases. From Monday 8 March staff who have volunteered will take their tests from home twice weekly. This frees up the test centre to focus on student testing.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests can help staff and students 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.** However, we are participating as a school and I would strongly encourage all students to take part as well.

The test centre holds three testing stations and only three students can enter the centre at any one time, this is to maintain privacy and a clean environment. Staff in the test centre have been trained to support young people and make sure tests are completed successfully whilst still maintaining social distance and the individual's dignity. 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.



Students will need to complete a minimum of 3 tests on site to familiarise themselves with the process before they receive a home testing kit.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information (below).

Although the programme is voluntary we would be most grateful if ALL parents/carers complete the attached Google Form so we have confirmation of your decision in relation to your child being tested.

- Fill in the Google Form - [Student Consent Form](#)

Results take around half an hour from testing and will be shared directly with students participating. Where participants are under-16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

The Government has shared information with us from Oxford University and Public Health England, which have indicated the tests are as accurate in identifying a case as a 'PCR test' (99.68% specificity). The tests have lower sensitivity but are considered 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.

I hope that the information in this letter is helpful and clear. Please do ensure you complete the Google Form **before Monday 1 March 2021**. If you have any questions, please do also email these to enquiries@cityfields.outwood.com.

Again thank you for your continued support and we will be in touch soon with more details about the staggered return to school from the 8 March 2021.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Colledge-Smith'.

Michelle Colledge-Smith
Principal

Registration

What if a student tests positive?

Participating staff and students 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.

Students 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, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) the household 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?

They 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 students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What if a close contact at school tests positive?

If your child is identified as a close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19, they will have to isolate for 10 days 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.

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) the household 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 students throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions enquiries@cityfields.outwood.com.