

January 6th, 2021

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for students

Dear Parent or Guardian,

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 students to remain in school safely once we return from lockdown. 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 we would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be testing all students who want to participate as soon as they are back in school

Enclosed is some more information along with a consent form.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the consent statement (one per student) and return it to school with your child. Please note, without the completed forms we will NOT be able to test your child.

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 students that require it, staff can support the swab process verbally. Please note, staff will not be able to swab students, this must be done by the student themselves. If a student refuses to complete the test or is unable to complete the test in school but the parent/guardian wants them tested, it would be the parent/guardian's responsibility to take them to a local testing centre.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with students participating. Parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

We know these tests work - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a PCR test (99.68% specificity). 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.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. 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). 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 or email) they 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?

Students 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 tests positive?

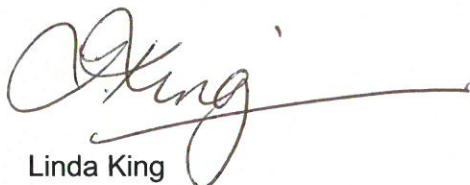
A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines.

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>.

We will support our students 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 0151 424 4892 or email sec.ashley@halton.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,



Linda King

(Head Teacher)

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|---|---|
| First Name | |
| Last Name | |
| Year group (if applicable) | |
| Date of Birth | |
| Gender – this information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes. | Male/Female |
| Ethnicity - this information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes. | Asian or Asian British Black, African, Black British or Caribbean Mixed or multiple ethnic groups White Prefer not to say |
| Currently showing any COVID-19 symptoms? | |
| Home Postcode | |
| Email Address – this is where test results will be sent | |
| Mobile Number – this is where test results will be sent. Please do not put a landline number – you can only receive test results to a mobile number. | |
| Name of parent/guardian giving consent | |
| Relationship to test subject | |
| Signature (typing out your name is sufficient if you are filling in this form digitally) | |
| Today's date | |

Details of any health or accessibility issues which might affect a child's safe participation in the testing exercise.