

Our Ref: SST/HBr

Date: Thursday 31st December 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 Testing for Pupils

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, and our school will be starting this in January.

The Duston School Test and Trace team will be testing once a week for those who want to participate starting from Monday 11th January. In addition, the programme will help pupils to stay in education, by enabling close contacts of someone who tests positive to stay in school if they do a daily test for seven days. This is known as 'serial testing'.

Along with the other measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and pupils to work safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus have no symptoms, so by supporting them to self-isolate we will save lives and help keep our school open and as safe as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

Registration & Parental Consent

In order to process the test, we will register all participating pupils. If you would like your child to be tested, please complete the online form by clicking this link:

[The Duston School - NHS Test and Trace Student Consent Form for COVID-19 Testing](#)

Please ensure that you complete a consent form for each student that you have attending the school, the consent form should be completed and submitted by **Monday 4th January**, this is to enable us to support with the logistics and planning of testing.

Further information document

For further information on how the test is taken please click the following link:

[How to do a test instruction leaflet](#)

The test will be supervised by trained school staff and there will be minimal disruption to lessons. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can assist with taking the swab. Results will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. To reach this stage, the test has been tested at Public Health England's research laboratories in partnership with Oxford University and is totally safe, with a 99.8% specificity. Testing is free and provided by NHS Test and Trace.

What if a close contact at school tests positive?

A close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to school if they agree to be tested once a day for 7 days, and the test is negative. If not, 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.

What if a pupil tests positive?

If a pupil tests positive, this result will be shared directly pupils and parents/guardians. Pupils will then need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in testing sites) to confirm the positive result, they will be able to do this at school or take a test kit home. During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate until they get their result. If it is negative, the pupils can return to school. If the result of this secondary test is positive, the pupil and household members will need to self-isolate for 10 days following Government guidelines. **Please inform the school as soon as you receive this test result.**

We will continue to support pupils with their education remotely. We recognise this may be disruptive for your family but it is really important to isolate to prevent the spread of the virus, and there is financial support available via the NHS app. Pupils might need collecting from school, so please discuss this with them. There is more advice on self-isolation and home learning on www.gov.uk

What if a pupil tests negative?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A pupil will only be told if they test positive in the first 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative.

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 of change to your 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 pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Strickland
Principal

Mr S Strickland - Principal - BA (Hons), MA, NPQH

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