

4th January 2021



Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy New Year. Welcome back.

As I am sure you will be aware from the Government announcements, we were attempting to implement plans for mass testing for COVID-19 for all our staff and students. The test kits are known as 'lateral flow device tests' (LFD tests) and are able to produce results quickly.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing it is hoped to help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open.

We aimed to begin testing all staff and students who wanted to participate as soon as all arrangements had been made. Unfortunately, with the current lock down and school closed to most students, that will no longer be happening. However, we do envisage that this process will restart when it is safe for students to return to school. You will be informed when this will start and we will send specific timings as soon as we they are able. We would like to ensure we are ready to start this process and therefore request that you complete the Covid 19 testing consent form highlighted in blue below.

Schools have been asked to set up the following testing programme:

- Test as many secondary pupils on their return to school as possible. This means two LFD tests three to five days apart.
- Carry out weekly testing of school staff
- Carry out daily contact testing for seven days of pupils and students and staff who are close contacts of a positive case

If you are happy for your child to be tested for COVID-19, complete the consent form by following this link: [COVID 19 Testing Consent Form](#)

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND ACCURATELY. Please ensure you spell names correctly and enter the name of your child/children as it appears on their Microsoft TEAMS account. This will help ensure we record information swiftly and correctly.

Please can you also complete this form if you are not willing to give consent, as we also need to have this information in order to correctly set up the testing programme.

Consent relates to the following groups of students and staff as follows:

- **For pupils and students younger than 16 years** - this form must be completed by the parent or legal guardian. Please complete one consent form for each child you wish to participate in testing
- **For any pupil or student who does not have the capacity to provide informed consent** - this form must be completed by the parent or legal guardian. Please complete one consent form for each child you wish to participate in testing.
- **Staff** will complete this form themselves.

The attached privacy notice explains how test subjects' personal data will be used. The DfE have also produced this document to answer questions related to how personal data is collected and used. [Link to FAQ regarding data use](#)

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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. Attached is an instructional leaflet, produced by NHS Test and Trace, with some more information describing how to carry out the test.

Validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, have shown LFD tests 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.

In addition to this document NHS Test and Trace have published these FAQs, we hope that these responses will help answer some of your questions.

What happens if someone tests positive?

Participating staff and 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.

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). 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. Arden may be able to provide these PCR tests, depending on levels of demand.

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

Participating staff and students who test negative 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?

A close contact of someone in school 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 they do not want to take the test, 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 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>.

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Please can we ask that you complete the consent form as soon as possible. We will begin to contact those who have not completed the form on Thursday 7th January. If you need this information in any other language or format, please contact the school office on office@lighthall.co.uk

If you have any additional questions please can you also email the school office. Please be aware that we may not be able to respond immediately. If a number of parents/guardians/students ask the same questions we will send out further information to all families.

All the above detail and information will be on the school website on a dedicated page - **Covid Mass testing January 2021.**

Yours sincerely

Annette Kimblin
Headteacher

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