



Ref: JDE/era

Date: 8 January 2021

Dear Parent and Carer

NHS TEST AND TRACE: COVID-19 TESTING FOR STUDENTS IN YEARS 7-14

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 devices'. This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme at The Sittingbourne School.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school through asymptomatic transmission. We are therefore strongly encouraging students to be tested when they attend school.

Plan for testing

We will be looking to test all secondary school students as they return to school after the current lockdown period. Students attending the key worker / vulnerable provision will be tested from next week.

Giving consent for testing

Before being tested, all students must give consent. If they are under 16 years of age this must be given by a parent/carer. Students over 16 can give consent themselves. You can give your consent by completing the Google form - please click [here](#). The registration form collects student data. You can see what data is collected, and how your privacy is protected by reading the attached Privacy Notice.

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant. The school will inform the student of a positive test result. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. The student will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. Tests are free of charge.

What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will be informed immediately by a member of staff at the school and will need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result. This should be on the same day or as soon as possible afterwards. We will be able to provide these PCR test kits for students to perform at home.

During the time while waiting for the PCR result they will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, 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 at The Sittingbourne School who tests positive?

The staff member or student will be notified that they are a close contact by the school. If close contacts agree to be tested each day for a maximum period of 7 days, and they test negative every day, they will be allowed to remain in school. There may be instances where close contacts are also contacted by NHS Test and Trace. In this instance they should notify NHS Test and Trace that they are a close contact through The Sittingbourne School and are participating in daily contact testing.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at The Sittingbourne 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>.

We will support our students and our community throughout this process, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office at tss-office@swale.at.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J van Deelen', written in a cursive style.

Ms J van Deelen
Deputy Headteacher