
NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Year 7 Students – September 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

You may have heard that testing for those without Coronavirus symptoms will need to be completed in schools when students return after the summer break. These tests will be done using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow devices'. This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme in our school.

Up to one third of people who have Coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school and college settings through asymptomatic transmission. I am therefore strongly encouraging those returning to school in September to be tested.

We plan to test all students twice, in school, with 3 to 5 days in between the tests. Once students have been tested twice at school, they will be provided with home tests for regular testing throughout September in the first instance. **All students and staff will be required to wear a face mask for the duration of the time they are in the test centre for both their tests. Please ensure all students arrive at the Academy on their test days with a face mask.**

To ensure Year 7 students have as smooth a start to secondary school as possible we have planned to complete the first of these tests on the morning of 3rd September 2021. The timetable for when students need to arrive is below. This is a training day at the academy and therefore Y7 students will only come into the academy to be tested and once they have received their results will then return home. This will then allow them to begin the new academic year as normal from 8:45am on Monday 6th September 2021. They will then complete their second test in school on Tuesday 7th September 2021. As they will already have been tested on Friday, students will attend school as normal and be brought down to the test centre in groups during the school day.

Year 7 Test Times – Friday 3rd September

Surnames A to F	9.00am to 10.00am
Surnames G to R	10.00am to 11.00am
Surnames S to Z	11.00am to 12.00pm

There will be a mop-up session for students who are unable to make their allotted test time on Friday 3rd September from 4.00pm until 5.00pm. If you will need to use this session please contact the academy via info@valeacademy.org.uk to ensure we are aware of who we will be expecting.

We are aware that this may seem daunting, but the tests will be carried out by trained staff in the testing centre, based in the drama studio. We are happy for a parent to accompany

their child for the first test if they wish. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, most of these tests use a swab of the nose and/or throat. The tests that we have been given only require a swab of each nostril and results will be available in around 15 minutes. 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/parent will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. Tests are free of charge and I enclose a leaflet with further information.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the electronic consent form by following this link to the [CONSENT FORM](#). Alternatively, if you require a paper copy, please contact the academy directly. To assist with planning, we request that consent forms are completed by **Friday 6th August 2021**. Without consent, we will not test your child. As mentioned earlier, the tests involve a swab being taken from each nostril, the test should be pain free and we would urge all parents to consent to their child being tested.

What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will need to self-isolate immediately and a confirmatory PCR test ordered. The confirmatory PCR test should be taken within two days of the positive LFD test. If the confirmatory PCR is also positive, follow guidance from NHS Test and Trace and continue to self-isolate.

If the confirmatory PCR is negative the pupil can stop self-isolating and return to school. Should a confirmatory PCR not be obtained the pupil should self-isolate for 10 days from the result of the positive lateral flow test.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, pupils who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Pupils 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 in school who tests positive?

The staff member or student will need to follow the Government guidance on self-isolation.

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 (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>.

What if my child has tested positive for Covid-19 recently?

Your child should not do a LFD test for 90 days after they received their positive result. During the registration process for onsite testing on their first test day, they will be asked this question, please ensure they answer yes and are aware of the date of the positive test.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N Williams', with a small flourish at the end.

Mrs N Williams
Associate Executive Principal