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NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Year 9 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, in a very similar process to when schools reopened following lockdown. These tests will be done using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow devices', results are available within 15 minutes and the tests that we have been provided with only require a swab to be taken from each nostril. The test centre will be set up in the same way that it was in March and similar fully trained staff will carry out the processing of the tests. I enclose a leaflet with further information.

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. We are therefore strongly encouraging all students returning to school in September to be tested.

We will be operating a staggered testing timetable for students to ensure that all students will be able to begin learning on 6<sup>th</sup> September, the first day of term. It is imperative that all students attend their tests at their scheduled time; scheduling 2000 tests over a 6-day period is extremely challenging and will only be completed if there is strict adherence to the schedule. All students will be offered 2 onsite tests spaced 3-5 days apart on their return. Once students have been tested twice at school, they will be provided with home tests for regular testing until the end of 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 9 students have as smooth a start to secondary school as possible we have planned to complete the first of these tests on the afternoon of 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021. The timetable for when students need to arrive is below. This is a training day at the academy and therefore Year 9 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 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021. They will then complete their second test in school on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> 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 9 Test Times – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**

Surnames A to F	1.30pm to 2.15pm
Surnames G to R	2.15pm to 3.00pm
Surnames S to Z	3.00pm to 3.45pm

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

Please park in the visitors car park and bring your child to the Drama Studio doors at the front of the academy.

If your child was tested in the previous on-site testing in March we already hold a consent form and you therefore do not need to complete any further paperwork. If you did not consent previously your child will not be tested. If you now wish your child to be tested as part of this round of testing, **please complete the [CONSENT FORM](#) here**. To assist with planning, we request that consent forms are completed by **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2021**.

### **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 long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Mrs N Williams**  
**Associate Executive Principal**