



6th January 2021

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Pupils and Staff

Dear Parent/Carer

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. Prior to the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday 4th January about the return to lockdown, you may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms was due to begin this week across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow' tests.

Currently this process has been paused because of the lockdown announcement. However, there is nothing to suggest that when schools reopen this programme won't be resumed. We have already created the infrastructure for this having:

- trained staff
- set up a fully operational testing station
- acquired a significant amount of PPE and tests
- secured the support of a volunteer army amongst the parent body (many thanks indeed!).

However, what we need before we can do anything, is to gain your consent to test. We have decided that because this can be quite a time-consuming process, there's no reason why we shouldn't begin the administration of this now so that we can get ahead of the game as it were. You may feel that you only want to provide consent when you know any testing will take place and I fully understand this. Equally you might be happy to set the process in motion now. The rest of this letter, based on the DfE guidance for schools, explains the process and details how to register online should you wish to do so now.

Context for the tests

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and pupils to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be testing all staff and secondary school pupils who want to participate from week commencing 4 January 2021.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information.

Consent and Registration From

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please either:

- Complete the on-line Consent and Registration form by clicking [here](#) OR
- fill in the enclosed Consent and Registration form (one per student) and return it to school with your child when this is permitted.

Please note that we will not be able to test if we do not have a signed consent form.

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. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process.



Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

We know these tests work - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown 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.

What if staff or pupils test positive?

Participating staff and pupils who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Staff or Pupils 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). School will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home or 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.

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?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Staff and pupils 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 staff and pupils 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 staff or pupils develop 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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> .

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us on enquiries@bridgewaterhigh.com if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully,

Tim Long, Principal



Consent form for COVID-19 testing in secondary schools

Introduction

This consent form is for participation in tests designed to detect asymptomatic coronavirus cases. Anyone experiencing symptoms should follow [government guidelines to self-isolate](#), even if they have had a recent negative lateral flow test. An online version can be found [here](#).

Consent relates to the following groups of students/pupils 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.
- **Pupils and students over 16 who are able to provide informed consent** - can complete this form themselves, having discussed participation with their parent / guardian if under 18.
- **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.

Terms of consent

1. I have had the opportunity to consider the information provided by the school/college about the testing, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily, based on the information presented in the letter dated 4th January 2021 and the attached Privacy Notice.
2. In the case of under 16s, I have discussed the testing with my child and my child is happy to participate. If on the day of testing they do not wish to take part, then they will not be made to do so and consent can be withdrawn at any time ahead of the test.
3. I consent to having / my child having a nose and throat swab for lateral flow tests. I / my child will self-swab if I / my child is able to otherwise I understand that assistance is available. In the case of under 16s or pupils who are not able to provide informed consent, I have discussed the testing with my child and they are happy to participate and self-swab (with assistance if required).
4. I understand that there may be multiple tests required and this consent covers all tests for the below named person. If, on the day of testing I / they do not wish to take part, then I understand I / they will not be made to do so and that consent can be withdrawn at any time ahead of the test.
5. I consent that my / my child's sample(s) will be tested for the presence of COVID-19.
6. I understand that if my / my child's result(s) are negative on the lateral flow test I will not be contacted by the school/college except where I am / they are a close contact of a confirmed positive.
7. If the lateral flow test indicates the presence of COVID-19, I consent to having / my child having a nose and throat swab for confirmatory PCR testing. I/they will follow the instructions on the PCR Kit to return the test the same day to an NHS Test & Trace laboratory.
8. If the lateral flow test indicates the presence of COVID-19, I commit to ensuring that I / my child is removed from school premises as promptly as possible, bearing in mind I / they may have some anxiety following a positive test result.
9. I consent that I / they will need to self-isolate following a positive lateral flow test result, until the results of the confirmatory PCR have been received.
10. I agree that if my / my child's test results are confirmed to be positive from this PCR test, I will report this to the school / college and I understand that I / my child will be required to self-isolate following public health advice.
11. I consent that if a close contact of my child tests positive but I / my child has tested negative, I / they will continue to attend school / college but will be tested every day at school / college for 7 days.



COVID-19 CONSENT FORM

Please bring this with you when you are being tested

First Name	
Last Name	
Year group (if applicable)	
Date of Birth	
Gender – this information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes.	Male/Female
Ethnicity - this information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes.	Asian or Asian British Black, African, Black British or Caribbean Mixed or multiple ethnic groups White Prefer not to say
Currently showing any COVID-19 symptoms?	
Home Postcode	
Email Address – this is where test results will be sent	
Mobile Number – this is where test results will be sent. Please do not put a landline number – you can only receive test results to a mobile number.	
Name of parent/guardian giving consent	
Relationship to test subject	
Signature (typing out your name is sufficient if you are filling in this form digitally)	
Today's date	
Details of any health or accessibility issues which might affect a child's safe participation in the testing exercise.	