

23rd February 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

You will have heard that testing for students without coronavirus symptoms is being conducted across the country in schools 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 students to be tested as they return to school.

Consenting to the testing

So that we are able to support your son/daughter with testing, please complete the short consent form which can be found in the letter about school reopening.

Plan for testing

We will be looking to test all staff and secondary school students as they return to school, with priority given to exam year groups.

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. 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. Parents or legal guardians will also be informed. 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 school. They will have to self-isolate for 10 days. Guidance from NHS Test and Trace should be followed and so all other members of their household will be required to self-isolate for 10 days as well.

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.

What if staff or students have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?

The staff member or student will be notified that they are a close contact by the school/college and will be asked to self-isolate for 10 days starting from the last time they had contact with the person who tested positive.

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>.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office at enquiries@tla.essex.sch.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Mr S Essex
Headteacher