

25<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

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

The DfE has asked schools to test all secondary school pupils on site, using 2 lateral flow devices 3 to 5 days apart, **on return following the summer holidays**. This will be a similar format to onsite testing previously using the same experienced school staff to support students in completing the tests. Due to this, we have arranged a staggered return to school and are asking ALL parents to complete a consent form to confirm whether they wish for their child to participate in the onsite testing. Please do so before Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September. **Consent Form:** <https://forms.gle/1HWMQ5SjzM1XL4YF6>

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 through asymptomatic transmission. Therefore, we strongly encourage those returning to school to be tested.

**Plan for testing**

In order to facilitate this safe return to school in September, there will be a staggered return as follows:

Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September			
Year Groups in School	Time of Arrival	Testing & Form Time	Normal Lessons Start
Year 7	8:15 am	8:30 am to 10:35 am	After Break Form Time – After Lunch Normal Lessons
Year 11	10:30 am	10:45 am to 12:25 pm	After Lunch Normal Lessons
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> September			
Year Groups in School	Time of Arrival	Testing & Form Time	Normal Lessons Start
Year 7	8:30 am	No Testing – Normal Lessons	
Year 8	8:15 am	8:30 am to 10:35 am	After Break Normal Lessons
Year 10	10:30 am	10:45 am to 12:25 pm	After Lunch Normal Lessons
Year 11	8:30 am	No Testing – Normal Lessons	
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> September			
Year Groups in School	Time of Arrival	Testing & Form Time	Normal Lessons Start
Year 7	8:30 am	No Testing – Normal Lessons	
Year 8	8:30 am	No Testing – Normal Lessons	
Year 9	8:15 am (Except 9ST: to arrive 9.30 am)	8:30 am to 10:35 am	After Break Normal Lessons
Year 10	8:30 am	No Testing – Normal Lessons	
Year 11	8:30 am	No Testing – Normal Lessons	

Headteacher: Mrs J Gray, MSc, NPQH

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From Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September all students will be in school from our normal start time of 8:30 am. The following rotation for the second round of tests will take place with students being escorted to the testing area from their lesson in form groups.

### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September**

Year 7 – Periods 1 & 2

Year 11 – Periods 3 & 4

### **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September**

Year 8 – Periods 1 & 2

Year 10 – Periods 3 & 4

### **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September**

Year 9 – Periods 1, 2 & 3

### **How the tests work**

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained school 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 pupil of a positive test result. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. The parents or legal guardians will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system.

### **What if my child tests positive?**

If a pupil 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.

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

Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.

As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case and/or their parent to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case and/or their parent specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact.

#### 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 pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office by emailing [contact.staff@st-michaels.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:contact.staff@st-michaels.sandwell.sch.uk)

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Gray', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

Mrs J Gray  
**Headteacher**