

6 January 2021

Dear Families,

Further to my letter on 18 December, I am writing with more details about the proposed mass testing for Covid-19 of students and staff in schools this term.

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. I am therefore strongly encouraging all students to be tested before they return to school.

In the short-term, this will apply to the **critical worker and vulnerable students that we will have on-site now and throughout the lockdown period**, with more widespread testing introduced once the rest of the student body is able to return to the school site.

I would however encourage all other families to complete this form for us **now**, as it would assist us greatly in being able to prepare well in advance of students returning to school.

The DfE and PHE are introducing two testing strands for students:

- First, that all secondary school students are tested upon their return to school.
- Secondly, students who are identified as close contacts of a confirmed case will be tested on a daily basis for 7 days. If that test result is negative they will continue with their normal activities that day. On weekends or if they do not receive a test on a given day they must self-isolate.

The test is voluntary and consent is required. Consent relates to the following groups of students as follows:

- **For 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.
- **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 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.

Please fill in this [form](#), which includes the required consent statements. **If you have more than one child at the school you need to complete a form for each child, please.** If you do not wish to give consent, please also complete this form so that we have been notified of this. Consent given will be valid from 6 January 2021 until 31 August 2021 but you may of course withdraw consent at any time by emailing admin@themisbourne.co.uk Records regarding the testing of students will only be kept for as long as is necessary.

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Apologies to those families who already completed the form we sent out before Christmas. This new form supersedes the first one as a result of more information being sent over the Christmas break. Therefore, all families will need to complete the new form as requested via the link above.

Those students taking the test will be supervised by adults who have completed the DfE/PHE training programme associated with this scheme. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to administer using a swab of your nose and throat. Students will self-administer the swab provided in the test kit. We have attached a leaflet outlining how they will do this.

Results are usually available in around 30 minutes (though can take up to two hours to process) and we will only be communicating results to students, parents and staff where the result is positive. The student will also receive a text or email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. Further information about this process and the correct actions depending on the test results, as provided by PHE, is below.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch via your child's school base.

Yours faithfully,



Jo Meloni
Headteacher

Further information

Please read the following attachments from PHE and the DfE for further details about:

- [How the Lateral Flow Test will be carried out](#)
- [NHS Information leaflet](#)
- [Data Protection FAQs](#)
- [Privacy Statement](#)

PHE FAQs

Do 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.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating staff and students 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.



Students 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. A student will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear within two hours you can assume it was negative. A small number of students 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 my child develops 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>.

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