

17 August 2021

Dear families,

Coronavirus testing in schools

You will be aware that most of the restrictions that were brought in during the Covid-19 outbreak have been eased. Despite this easing Covid-19 continues to circulate and measures such as self-isolation for anyone with a positive test result remain. In order to help prevent the virus having an impact on the day to day running of schools the Department for Education (DfE) are requiring asymptomatic testing to continue until the end of September in the first instance.

During the first week of attendance at school each student is required to complete two tests in school. The first test will be conducted on your child's first day back in our testing facility at the school. If you have previously given consent for your child to be part of the on-site testing programme, then this remains in place. As previously, students are strongly encouraged to take part in the testing programme, however, it is voluntary and should families wish to withdraw consent they can do this in writing at any time thereafter by emailing admin@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk

Each student will then complete a second test between 3 and 5 days following the first one. Following your child's second test, further testing kits will be given to all students for them to use at home on a Wednesday and Sunday evening until the end of September. The Department for Education have advised that this will then be reviewed and we will keep you updated once this has taken place.

How does the test work?

When taking the test, students will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy, using a swab of your nose and throat. We expect all students will swab themselves under supervision.

If a child's test result is positive (results take around half an hour from testing) this will be shared directly with participating students and their parent / carer.

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.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually and arrangements will be made for them to go home. Parents / carers will be notified by telephone as soon as possible. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Students who test positive from a lateral flow test in school will need to take a further 'PCR test' on the same day (or as soon as possible within 48 hours). We 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, you should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

While students wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result the student will need to continue to self-isolate and notify school.

What happens if the test is negative?

Students who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What happens if my child has been in contact with someone who has tested positive?

The government guidance regarding self-isolation of close contacts has changed. As a result, anyone under the age of 18 years and 6 months or anyone who has received both vaccinations is no longer required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive case. Instead, they are advised to continue with their normal activities, including coming to school, and they are advised to get a PCR test to check if they have Covid-19.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at Longdendale 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, notify school by email on: covid@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Further information

You will find further information on testing on our school's website:

- Click [here](#) for the testing privacy notice
- Click [here](#) for data protection FAQs

With much thanks for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Major
Deputy Headteacher