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ROYAL ALEXANDRA & ALBERT SCHOOL



26th February 2021

Dear Parent

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and Year 7 – Year 13 Pupils

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as ‘lateral flow 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 we would strongly encourage everyone to take it.

All Senior School pupils are strongly encouraged to take three lateral flow tests, 3-5 days apart, on their return to school. The first of these should be carried out before the pupil returns and a negative test result will enable the pupil to attend school the next day. The next two tests will be taken after they have returned to school.

I enclose an instructional leaflet [HERE](#) with some more information.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the form and consent [HERE](#) (one per pupil) if you haven't already done so.

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 a pupil tests 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. If the test returns a positive result you will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the first test is negative?

Flexi-Boarder – A negative first result from the first test will mean a pupil can be attending school as normal the following school day.

Boarder – A negative first result from the first test will mean a pupil can access the Boarding House.

What happens if the following tests are negative?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A pupil 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 pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What happens after the third negative test?

After 3 negative results, your child will transition into a household programme. You will receive information on how this will work once your child's third negative test result is confirmed.

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 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 01737 649000 or email covidtesting@gatton-park.org.uk.

Yours sincerely



Rea Mitchell
Deputy Headteacher

RETURN DATES

The pupils currently attending with critical worker and vulnerable places are already being tested as part of this programme and will continue to attend school. The following information is for returning pupils:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 6th and 7th March | Boarders return with bookable testing on arrival for Senior boarders |
| Monday 8th March | Junior Flexi-Boarder pupils return to School
Testing for Year 11, Year 12, Year 13 Flexi-Boarder pupils (pre-bookable) |
| Tuesday 9th March | Year 11, Year 12, Year 13 pupils with negative Lateral Flow Test result return to School
Testing for Year 10 and Year 7 Flexi-Boarder pupils (pre-bookable) |
| Wednesday 10th March | Year 10 and Year 7 pupils return with negative Lateral Flow Test result return to School
Testing for Year 8 and Year 9 Flexi-Boarder pupils (pre-bookable) |
| Thursday 11th March | Year 8 and Year 9 pupils with negative Lateral Flow Test result return to School |

Consent form for COVID-19 testing in secondary schools and colleges

Please complete the consent form [HERE](#) the following information is contained within the consent form.

Introduction

The 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.

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 about the testing, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily, based on the information presented in the letter above 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.

Please click [HERE](#) for the Privacy Statement regarding COVID-19 Testing