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NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Staff and Students

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to help give you more information about the Lateral Flow Testing programme at Smithdon High School and to ask for your consent for your child to be tested.

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 you to agree for your child/children to be tested.

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose (and throat in some cases). 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 and their parent/carer will also be informed. The parent/carer who has completed the consent form to receive information will also receive a text and/or email notification of either a positive or negative result from the online NHS system.

Please note, for the second and third tests: the NHS notifications will be received instantly that the result is recorded. This means the parent/carer will likely know their child's results before the child themselves and before we have a chance to contact you.

- Please **do not** contact your child directly, as receiving this information is likely to cause some anxiety for them and we want to minimise that anxiety – and that of other students
- We will remove them from their class discretely before informing them of their positive result and the need to go home.
- However, as soon as you receive notification of a positive result, please **do arrange** for them to be collected from school immediately and await our contact with you.

Home Testing

The kits for home testing are slightly different from those used in school for ease of processing and will be issued in a pack for twice-weekly testing at a later date.

Please complete the survey (<https://forms.gle/N9QRqq2N9QyjCxqWA>) as soon as possible to inform us whether you give your consent for your child/children to take part in the Lateral Flow Testing in school and also at home.



What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device in school they will be informed immediately by the school and will need to isolate. If a student tests positive on a home lateral flow device, they will need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result. This should be on the same day or as soon as possible afterwards.

During the time they are waiting for the PCR result, they will need to self-isolate, along with other members of the household.

If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace. If the PCR test returns a negative result, they will return to school and resume their activities as normal.

What happens if the Lateral Flow 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. Students will be informed of negative test results via text/email to the parental contact details shared on the consent form.

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> as has been the case up until December 2020.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office by calling us on 01485 534541 or emailing office@smithdonhigh.org.uk .

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information, as well as information regarding the privacy of personal information and data protection. Thank you again for completing the survey to inform us of your consent/non-consent for your child to be involved in the testing.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Gibbins
Head of School