



THE PINES SCHOOL

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Dear Parents / carers

You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID19 tests known as 'lateral flow devices.' This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme in our school.

We recognise that the self-swabbing part of the test may cause significant concerns for some students and young people with SEND and their families. We will be able to support pupils emotionally and with physical and verbal reassurance, however as a school we will not be administering the swabbing and children will need to do this themselves with supervision. Within this pack there is a short photo booklet that explains our testing centre and the process of the testing. The centre is run by staff that we have employed who have received training in order to support the administration and processing of tests. The testing centre is overseen by myself and another member of staff.

From the week commencing 15th March 2021, the school will offer to test secondary pupils three times over the course of two weeks. Following this, home testing kits will be offered - we are awaiting further guidance on how this will work and the procedure for distribution. Please be clear that testing will only happen if we have your full consent. In this pack there is a consent form the yellow page of this should be returned to school in the envelope provided if you wish for your child to take part in the testing process. This is not compulsory and children will still be able to attend school if they are not testing as long as they are well.

We have also enclosed a privacy notice, which details the ownership and what happens with the data supplied.

### How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow devices are easy to undertake, using a swab of your nose and throat. There will be verbal and visual support available for the children and they will be accompanied by a familiar member of staff.

Results, which take around half an hour from testing, will be communicated via the mobile phone number/ email address provided on the consent form. This message will be from the NHS testing service.

### Parental Consent

The school will be asking for parental/guardian consent for all our students, wishing to take part in the testing programme. This is the yellow sheet that should be returned if you are giving consent. Please be aware that testing, while highly recommended is **NOT compulsory**. Please note, the phone number and email address used on the consent form will be used to notify the results of the test.



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### **What if I have consented for my child to have the test but they do not want to on the day?**

If a pupil does not wish to have a test on the day, which could be for any number of reasons, there will be no obligation for them to do so and they will remain in school as long as they continue to be symptom free. If during the test your child is unable to continue the test will be stopped immediately.

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

If your child tests positive on a lateral flow device, that has been taken in school they will NOT need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result, but will have to self-isolate for 10 days – as will the rest of their bubble. We will contact you immediately and you will need to collect your child. Whilst we wait for you to collect your child they will wait in a designated first aid room. If your child does test positive, please remember that the whole household has to self-isolate as per government guidelines.

When home testing becomes available if the result is positive then you will have to arrange for a further PCR test, this should be on the same day or as soon as possible afterwards, at a NHS testing centre. During the time while waiting for the PCR result (via text/email) they will need to self-isolate. 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.

### **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 pupils have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?**

You will be notified if your child has been in close contact with a positive case by the school and will need to self-isolate as per the current national guidelines. If your child is a close contact it is only your child who has to isolate and not the rest of the household.

### **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 they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Please remember the symptoms are a high temperature, loss or change to smell or taste and a persistent cough. It can be one or all of these symptoms that your child may experience, similarly they may have no symptoms. If anyone in your household is symptomatic then the whole household should self-isolate.

We will support our pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office by calling 0121 464 6136

Many thanks for your support and if you want your child to be part of the testing process please return the yellow sheet in the envelope provided as soon as possible and we will then inform you of the time of the test next week.

Best wishes



Emma Pearce



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