

RIPLEY ST THOMAS

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

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26 February 2021

Phased return to school: COVID-19 testing for pupils week beginning 8th March

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) have been used in schools to detect asymptomatic COVID carriers – people who have COVID but show none of the symptoms. Testing helps us to identify these carriers and prevent the spread of COVID. Testing enables us to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

Beginning with the phased return of secondary pupils from 8th March, all pupils will be able to have three Lateral Flow Tests in school and then be issued with LFT kits to continue twice weekly testing at home. 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.

Keyworker children will continue to attend school as they have been during lockdown during the phased return from Monday 8th March. For all other pupils we intend to have a phased return to school to permit the safe testing of your child and reduce the risk of contracting COVID from untested pupils as much as possible. Keyworker children who wish to be tested will do so with their peers. Our intention is that pupils will be given an appointment to come into school to conduct their test and then go immediately home in order to minimise close contacts and to keep your child safe. The initial testing will be on the following days and times:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Monday 8 th March | 09:00 to 11:00 | Year 11 pupils |
| Monday 8 th March | 11:30 to 14:30 | Sixth Form |
| Tuesday 9 th March | 09:00 to 11:00 | Year 9 pupils |
| Tuesday 9 th March | 11:30 to 13:30 | Year 10 pupils |
| Wednesday 10 th March | 09:00 to 11:00 | Year 7 pupils |
| Wednesday 10 th March | 11:30 to 13:30 | Year 8 pupils |

In order to schedule the individual appointments, we would be grateful if you could complete this [online form](#). If you wish your child to have a test but are unable to make an appointment as scheduled above please indicate a preferred time on the online form. Whilst we cannot guarantee other time slots will be available, we shall work with you to find a more suitable appointment time where possible. We understand that if you have more than one child you may prefer to have them all tested at the same time – please do indicate this on the online form. We also appreciate that some pupils come from a long way away on buses

Believe.....

Principal Mrs C Walmsley
Chair of Governors Mrs J Garnett

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and may not be able to come into school for their appointment during these initial tests. For these pupils their initial test will be on Thursday 11th March as soon as they arrive at school and before they go to lessons. The **deadline for completing the online form is Wednesday 3rd March at noon**. We shall then use this information to assign individual appointment times. You will receive further notification of the time assigned for your child.

Pupils will need to come to school for their appointment. If parents are bringing their child into school then please drop your child off at the main drive so they can walk to the gym for testing. We have no parking available on site. Please be mindful of local residents if parking in the nearby streets.. Pupils may come for testing in non-uniform but we do **require them to bring their lanyard and ID badge** for identification purposes.

The test should take no longer than ten minutes. Pupils taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The tests are quick and easy using a swab of your throat and then nose. The principle behind the initial three tests in school is to give pupils the skills and confidence to continue testing at home. This video [How to do a COVID-19 Self Test \(rapid antigen test\)](#) gives clear instruction on how to swab correctly and I would urge all parents to watch this with their child before attending their first test at school.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please print and complete the consent form at the end of this letter. We **require a consent for each individual** before they can have their first lateral flow test – without a correctly completed consent form your child will not be tested.

On arrival, pupils will register and have their consent form checked. They will only need to bring their consent form on their first visit. Before each test they will be given a registration card to enable them to register via NHS Track and Trace for their result by text message. However, I can reassure parents that you will be informed by phone call if your child has a positive result.

Yours faithfully,

Mr I G Gomersall
Director of Operations

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

This 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.

Terms of consent

1. I have had the opportunity to consider the information provided by the school/college about the testing, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily, based on the information presented in this letter and the [Privacy Notice on the school website](#).
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 am / 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 person named below. 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 understand 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. I will be notified where I am / they are a close contact of a confirmed positive identified in the lateral flow test.
7. 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.
8. I understand 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.
9. 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.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| First Name | |
| Last Name | |
| Year group (if applicable) | |
| Date of Birth | |
| Gender | Male / Female |
| Currently showing any COVID-19 symptoms? | Yes No |
| Home Postcode | |
| Email Address | |
| Mobile Number | |
| Name of parent/guardian giving consent | |
| Relationship to test subject | |
| Signature | |
| Today's date | |
| Details of any health or accessibility issues which might affect a child's safe participation in the testing exercise. | |