

23rd June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

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

We have been given the opportunity to test for asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 using 'lateral flow devices'. This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme in our Academy.

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. This will make attending the Academy safer for our staff, and students. I am therefore encouraging those attending the Academy to be tested, although this is entirely voluntary and will not affect a child's right to attend.

Initial plan during lockdown

We are planning to offer one test, per week for staff and students. This will help us to identify any asymptomatic cases of COVID-19. By then isolating the positive cases and their contacts for 10 days we will make our Academy and the wider community, safer for all those that attend. This process would be repeated at regular intervals to continue to identify positive cases in those attending the Academy.

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will only be shared with the individual participant if the result is positive. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will be informed immediately by the Academy and 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 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 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 the Academy and resume their activities as normal.

What if staff or students have been in close contact with someone in the Academy who tests positive?

Contacts of the confirmed case will be asked to isolate for 10 days following their last contact with the confirmed case. Although in some settings daily contact testing is being used to allow contacts to remain in the Academy this is not something, at this stage, that we will be offering. Should this change we will inform parents.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at the Academy 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>.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office by emailing info@astn.uk.

How do I opt in/out of this testing programme?

We aim to start the testing process from Monday 28th June 2021. In order for us to plan effectively ALL parents are expected to complete and return their consent form as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J E Sing
Headteacher

CONSENT FORM TO BE RETURNED TO THE ACADEMY OF ST NICHOLAS

First Name	
Last Name	
Year group (if applicable)	
Date of Birth	
Gender – this information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes.	
Ethnicity - this information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes.	
Currently showing any COVID-19 symptoms?	
Home Postcode	
Name of parent/guardian giving consent	
Relationship to test subject	
Signature (typing out your name is sufficient if you are filling in this form digitally)	
Today's date	
Details of any health or accessibility issues which might affect a child's safe participation in the testing exercise.	