



# HAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

Learning together Achieving together

4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

## NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students

Testing for those **without coronavirus symptoms** is beginning across the country using COVID-19 tests known as lateral flow device (LFD) tests. Secondary schools are playing a significant part in the roll-out of this new testing programme.

**Do not send your child into school if they have symptoms or if someone in their household has symptoms. In these circumstances follow normal public health advice around isolation and testing.**

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students 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. The test is voluntary, but we would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be testing all staff and students who want to participate from this week onwards. We will be inviting students into a scheduled testing slot so that they can be tested at least once before face-to-face lessons begin for their year group.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with more information.

We are asking all parents/carers to complete this online consent form, even if you do not wish to give consent. Please complete this form by Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January.

>>> [Student testing online consent form](#) <<<

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a self-administered swab of your nose and throat.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

These tests are not always accurate but they do work to reduce risk - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a lab-based 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.



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### **What if a student tests positive?**

Students 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.

Students will need to take a further Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). The school may be able to provide a PCR test kit to perform at home or you can go to [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourself, you should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

If a student receives a positive LFD test result they will need to self-isolate until they receive the result from their follow-up PCR test. If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to self-isolate, following the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

### **What happens if the test is negative?**

They will be able to resume their activities as normal. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

### **What if a close contact at school tests positive?**

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to school if they agree to be tested once a day for 7 days and the test is negative. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines.

This does not apply to close contact outside of school. In cases where a student has close contact with a confirmed case outside of school, they will still need to self-isolate as normal.

Further details will be provided at the time, but if you would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, you can.

### **What if my child develops symptoms?**

This testing programme at Hampstead 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>.

**Do not send your child into school if they have symptoms or if someone in their household has symptoms.**

Please contact us on [COVID-19@hampsteadschool.org.uk](mailto:COVID-19@hampsteadschool.org.uk) if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions.

All best wishes,



Matthew Sadler  
Head