



3 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Students – Year 11

I write to you to give you more information about the mass testing programme in our school from 8th to 18th March and the transition thereafter to home testing twice weekly.

We will be looking to test all secondary age students as they return following this latest period of lockdown using Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. Along with the other protective measures we are taking, testing will allow us to help your child to return to study in as safe an environment as possible. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing regularly we will help to reduce the spread in school through asymptomatic transmission. I am therefore strongly encouraging those returning to school to be tested.

Mr Mullings has already written to you about your child's FIRST test date and return to school date. As a reminder, for Year 11, the FIRST test will be on Monday 8th March 2021 and your child will return to normal lessons in school at 8:45am on Tuesday 9th March 2021.

Having as many students as possible complete three tests upon the wider reopening of school is another way in which we are trying to keep our school community as safe as possible, and we would very much appreciate your cooperation in seeking to achieve this.

Consent for testing

The school is not allowed to administer these tests without your consent. Thank you to all parents and carers for responding so readily to the Google consent forms that were sent out on Friday with regard to Lateral Flow Testing (LTF). We have now received over 1100 responses, which are currently being processed. The original google forms have now been closed to enable this processing to take place. Please note that if any parents / carers have so far been unable to complete the form, they will be directly contacted with a new form for completion. Please do not attempt to complete the original form.

Once consent has been given, the school will rely on it for as many rounds of testing as may be required in school and for home testing twice weekly. Please note that you may withdraw your consent at any time by emailing our Business Manager (Karen Williams) at the following email address kwilliams@vynersschool.org.uk.

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Mr Gary Mullings BA (Hons)
Headteacher

Plan for mass testing

We will be looking to test all students as they return to school three times in the Sports Hall between Monday 8th and Thursday 18th March. The schedule for mass testing Year 11 is as follows:

Monday 8th March	8:00 - 11C 8:30 - 11F 9:00 - 11G 9:30 - 11H 10:00 - 11M 10:30 - 11W
Thursday 11th March *	8:50 - 11C 9:10 - 11F 9:30 - 11G 9:55 - 11H 10:15 - 11M 10:35 - 11W
Tuesday 16th March *	8:50 - 11C 9:10 - 11F 9:30 - 11G 9:55 - 11H 10:15 - 11M 10:35 - 11W

* Children will be tested as part of their regular school day on these days

You will notice that your child will come for their three tests with their tutor group. To assist with the smooth running of mass testing, please could you get your child to write their three test times in their school planner now.

Testing using lateral flow device (LFD) tests

LFD tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals. No test is perfect, but the speed and convenience of LFD tests supports detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals who would not otherwise be tested. They are clinically approved and are crucial in the fight against the virus. As the tests are more sensitive with higher viral loads, there is a risk of returning a negative result when viral loads are low (for example, in the early stages of infection). This is why Public Health England recommends two LFD tests 3 to 5 days apart (or 3 to 4 days for home testing), to enhance detection by picking up any cases which were not detected during the first test and to catch any new infections.

If you test positive using an LFD, it is likely that you are infectious at that moment, whereas people testing positive on a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or lab-processed test could be

in the less infectious early or late stages of disease. This means that by using the lateral flow test we can identify people with a high viral load who are the most likely to spread the virus further.

Please note, a negative result on a Lateral Flow Device does not mean that your child does not have Covid-19, it merely indicates that at the time you took the test, no viral load was detected. Therefore, behaviours must not change as a result of Lateral Flow Testing. Even if your child receives three negative test results upon return to school, your child must still behave as if they have the virus. Testing is only one component of reducing risk of transmission in our school community. Other measures of hand washing/sanitising, wearing of face masks and social distancing (where possible) must still be adhered to.

How the tests work

Those taking their first three tests in school 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. Mr Cahill has created these [Slides](#) and a Loom video (see link on Slide 1) to guide your child through the testing process. It is vital that your child reads the Slides and watches the Loom video before attending their first test.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) can be obtained by completing the registration process. The student will also receive a text notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. The school will only inform the student of a positive or invalid test result. The school will not be informing students of negative results.

Registering test results

It is very important that you register your child's test to enable NHS Test and Trace to monitor the spread and prevalence of the virus in our communities.

You register tests at this link: <https://test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/register-kit/register-rapid-test>

Your child will receive a **registration card and unique barcode** each time they have a test. They will need this to hand when they register their test. Registration can be done any time **up to 24 hours after a test** and takes between 5-10 minutes; we would encourage you to supervise your child when they do this for the first time. Please note that children over the age of 13 can set up an account for repeat tests to save them having to re-enter all their details; this means all they will need is to log in, submit their unique barcode and answer some simple questions. For children aged 12 years and under, they will need to complete the registration process in full for each lateral flow test. Your child has been given a [Loom video](#) and [Google Slides](#) walking them through the registration process (click on the hyperlinks to view them yourself).

Transition to home testing kits

Those taking the three initial tests in school will have home test kits given to them when they come for their third test in the Sports Hall (on Tuesday 16th March). Students will have to sign the 'Test Kit Log' to acknowledge receipt. Students will need to sign for their home test kit and record the 'LOT' number on the box of their test kit against their name. There will be two registration assistants on hand in the Sports Hall to take these details down and to hand out the kits. Once your child has collected their home test kit, you will be consenting to your child conducting these tests, registering their results and informing the school of any positive or repeat invalid results.

Students should complete their fourth test at home by the end of w/c 15th March. Thereafter, students should aim to test themselves in the morning before coming to school twice a week 3-4 days apart; for example on a Monday and a Thursday morning.

The LFDs supplied do not require laboratory processing and can provide a quick result in around 30 minutes. Comprehensive guidance on self-testing is contained in the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet, which comes with the test kit. There is also a useful video to show you how to administer the test [here](#).

Your child will need to report their result to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is completed either online [here](#) or by telephone as per the instructions in the home test kit. Tests are free of charge and will be provided by the school. It is important that tests assigned to you are not used by anyone else.

From Monday, 22 March onwards, we will continue to run a small testing site at school in the old SEN office so that students who are unable physically to test themselves at home will be able to be tested regularly. This small test site will be open on Mondays and Thursdays only from 7:45-8:45am.

What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device **in the test site at school**, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace. There is **no requirement** to book a PCR confirmatory test.

If your child tests positive on a lateral flow device **at home with a self testing kit**, please inform us straight away by emailing Mrs Foster (afoster@vynersschool.org.uk) and Mrs Bashford-Hynes (ehynes@vynersschool.org.uk). They will need to self-isolate for 10 days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace. They **will also need to book** a PCR confirmatory test. If that PCR test is negative, self-isolation will stop and your child will be allowed back to school immediately along with all their close contacts.

The reason for this difference is that the test site at school is a clinical environment in which students are supervised by trained staff. This is not the case while self-testing at home.

If your child gets a void result, they should complete a second LFT test. If they get a second void result, you should book a PCR test for them (there is no need to self isolate unless you have Covid symptoms) and report this issue to Neill Cahill, the Covid Coordinator (ncahill@vynersschool.org.uk)

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. We do **not** need to know if your child's self test at home is negative.

What if my child has tested positive in the last 90 days?

If your child has tested positive with Covid-19 in the past 90 days, they may well have developed some immunity. Therefore your child is exempt and is not required to conduct twice weekly self testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) until 90 days has passed since they first tested positive. As such, we will not (unless you request otherwise) be issuing self testing kits to any student who has tested positive since New Year's Eve (31st December). If

your child falls into this category, do let us know if you would like to have a kit anyway regardless and we will issue them with one.

What if my child has been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?

The student will be notified that they are a close contact by the school and will need to self-isolate for 10 days in line with Government guidance.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This mass testing programme at school and this self testing at home twice weekly 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 students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact Mr Cahill (the Covid Coordinator) via email at: ncahill@vynersschool.org.uk or Mrs Williams (The Business Manager) via email at: kwilliams@vynersschool.org.uk

Yours sincerely



Mrs E Bashford-Hynes
Assistant Headteacher



Damian Brooks
Year 11 Leader