

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and pupils

Guidance from DfE Received 29th November 2021

We are working to keep All Saints as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning again after the Christmas holiday across the country using 'lateral flow tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and pupils to remain in school/college safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing, we will help to try and stop the virus spreading and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it. We will be testing all staff and secondary aged pupils who want to participate from 4th January 2022. The schedule for testing is:

Tuesday 4th January

Pupils in Years 7, 9 and 11 will come for their test only and then return home. Pupils in Years 8 and 10 will remain at home. All pupils will have a schedule of remote lessons arranged by their teachers and therefore need to be working.

Wednesday 5th January

Pupils in Years 8 and 10 will come for their test and then return home to access online lessons. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 11 will return to school and access their lessons as normal in full uniform.

Thursday 6th January

All pupils return full time.

To summarise:

Year	Testing Date	Return to school date
7	Tuesday 4.1.22	Wednesday 5.1.22
8	Wednesday 5.1.22	Thursday 6.1.22
9	Tuesday 4.1.22	Wednesday 5.1.22
10	Wednesday 5.1.22	Thursday 6.1.22
11	Tuesday 4.1.22	Wednesday 5.1.22

To reiterate, no child will return to lesson on Tuesday 4th January. Pupils in years 7, 9 and 11 will only come to school for tests. Pupils in Years 8 and 10 will only come to school for tests on Wednesday 5th January, but pupils in Years 7, 9 and 11 will be back with us full time.

An information leaflet is available on the school website.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the consent form below (one per pupil) and return it to school with your child before the 16th December. An information privacy notice is on the website for you to check. Where we already have consent we will take this as you continue to consent for your child to be tested. If that has changed please contact school asap and let us know about that change (sscott@allsaintscatholiccollege.com). If you wish to now give consent then please the form is on the website.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of the nose. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around fifteen minutes from testing) will be shared directly with pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed immediately if their child tests positive. To do so we must register details, and we must have a mobile number and email address. Only where there is a positive result will parents be informed.

The DfE has validated the accuracy of the testing. They state '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'.

What if a pupil tests positive?

Participating staff and pupils 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.

Pupils will need to take a further 'PCR test' (at a local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). School will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home or you can go to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result you will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace. Please let school know immediately the result of a PCR test.

What happens if the test is negative?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A pupil will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative. A small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason. Please let school know immediately the result of a PCR test.

What if a close contact at school tests positive?

A close contact of someone in school/college who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to school. The new guidance does state that this does not apply if they have been in close contact with the Omicron variant. In this case close contacts will be contacted by Trace and Track and will need to isolate for 10 days. In such cases work will be provided remotely.

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 (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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 0161 338 2120 or email your child's Head of Year, Miss Scott or Mr Diamond.

Guidance Changes

The guidance is subject to last minute changes from the DfE and any updates will be sent out via text and social media updates.