



DEAN TRUST Wigan

Chief Executive: Mr Tarun Kapur CBE
Executive Headteacher: Mr James Haseldine

8 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid-result testing in school

From January 2021, the government will be making rapid-result coronavirus tests available to schools and colleges using a phased approach, starting with secondary schools and colleges.

This testing is being introduced to help safeguard the health of staff and pupils and to ensure people do not need to self-isolate unnecessarily.

Rapid testing will begin the week beginning 11th January 2021. This letter outlines details of the approach to testing in school.

Please note that testing is only applicable to those who give their consent. The Department for Education has explained that anyone who is 16 years of age or older can give their own consent. Anyone younger than 16 years old, for the purpose of these tests, must have consent from their parent/carer/legal guardian.

Who is eligible for tests and how often will tests be administered?

Staff are eligible for weekly routine testing. This will help to identify those who are carrying coronavirus without displaying symptoms.

If staff and pupils are close contacts of an individual within school who has tested positive for coronavirus, they will be eligible for daily testing, known as 'serial testing'. Close contacts would be tested once a day, at the start of the day, for seven school days. Any new positive cases during serial testing will reset the clock for serial testing to the start of seven school days.

Is testing mandatory? ('mandatory' means 'required by law' or 'compulsory')

In all cases, **testing is voluntary**; however, the government is strongly encouraging those who are eligible for testing to take part to help reduce the risk of transmission in schools.

If a close contact of a confirmed positive case within school decides to not be tested daily, they will need to self-isolate in accordance with national guidance for 10 days, beginning from the day the individual tested positive. If consent is given, and someone is identified as a contact of a confirmed positive case, then they can remain in school as long as they agree to be tested, and test 'negative' for 7 consecutive days (contacts would still need to isolate during any days they are at home e.g. at the weekend during those 7 days). Pupils and staff can choose to opt out from daily testing at any time and self-isolate.

Believe Achieve Succeed

Greenhey Orrell Wigan WN5 0DQ

t: 01942 511987

e: office@deantrustwigan.co.uk

w: www.deantrustwigan.co.uk

Registered in England 8027943 VAT Registration 195 3889 46



How will we obtain consent for testing?

As participation in both routine and serial testing is voluntary, consent will be required from staff, pupils (aged 16 years or older) or pupils' parents, as appropriate. A consent form has also been included in this communication.

Pupils who are aged 11 to 15 may self-swab with supervision of an appropriate member of staff if they have parental/carer/guardian consent. Pupils aged 16 and over may self-swab, provided the school is satisfied that they are able to consent to their own medical treatment without a parent, carer or guardian present.

How will tests be administered?

The school will be provided with 'lateral flow tests' which produce a result in 30 minutes. Schools do not require a laboratory to process the test and require minimal training to operate. Along with the testing kits, we will also be provided with the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment e.g. disposable gloves, aprons, face-shields, masks etc.

All tests will be conducted at a dedicated testing site on the school premises. The school's testing site has been set up in line with NHS guidance. The team comprises of school staff who have undertaken the NHS testing training and who will deliver the testing programme.

The majority of swabbing will be conducted as a self-test with supervision from trained personnel. In some cases, trained personnel will swab individuals, e.g. where the individual may not be able to administer a self-test due to their needs.

What happens if a pupil tests positive for coronavirus?

If a pupil tests positive for coronavirus following a rapid test, they will be taken to a quiet space where a member of staff will sensitively talk to them about their results and discuss the next steps. During this conversation:

- The pupil will be told that they need to take a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, available at testing centres.
- The member of staff will explain how long the coronavirus symptoms may last for and reassure the pupil that, for most people, symptoms will be mild.
- The pupil will be told about the support available to them to learn from home.
- The pupil will be told they need to follow national guidance and self-isolate for 10 days.

The pupil's parents will also be contacted to inform them of the positive result and arrange for the pupil to be collected. During this call, the school will inform the pupil's parents that their child needs to take a confirmatory PCR test. Upon collection of the pupil, a member of staff will remind the pupil and their parent that they need to let the school know about the result of the PCR test. Parents should notify the school of a PCR test result by emailing DTWOffice@DeanTrustWigan.co.uk

Believe Achieve Succeed



What happens if a staff member tests positive for coronavirus?

If a staff member tests positive for coronavirus following a rapid test, they must:

- Go home and self-isolate.
- Take a confirmatory PCR test.
- Contact the school to inform them of the PCR test result.
- Complete 10 days of self-isolation.

What happens if a staff member or pupil tests negative for coronavirus?

If a staff member or pupil tests negative following a rapid test, they can continue with their normal activities until their next rapid test is due.

Please note that a negative test result does not remove the risk of transmission. In some cases, someone who has tested negative may still have the undetected virus and be infectious. It is, therefore, essential that staff and pupils continue to follow good hygiene practices and social distancing measures, in line with the school's protective procedures.

If a member of staff or pupil has symptoms of coronavirus, but they test negative following a rapid test, they will be required to self-isolate until they get the result from a PCR test.

Important Information

Please note that if your child tests positive for COVID-19 by swab test you will be exempt from being retested within a period of 90 days from the test, unless you develop new possible COVID-19 symptoms. This is because fragments of inactive virus can be persistently detected by the swab test in the respiratory tract for some time following infection.

How will testing data be protected?

A small amount of processing personal data will be required as part of the testing programme. All data will be protected in line with the school's Data Protection Policy. We have also included a DfE Privacy Notice which we have been advised to follow for this process of mass testing.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the testing programme, please contact Maria Finnigan, Director of Resources via the school office email DTWOffice@DeanTrustWigan.co.uk

Yours sincerely

J Haseldine
Executive Headteacher

Believe Achieve Succeed