

## John Masefield High School and Sixth Form Centre

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26 February 2021

Dear students, parents and carers

### Full details of COVID-19 testing arrangements for students

We are working hard to keep our school as safe as possible and there are a number of protective measures we are continuing to take. In keeping with government guidance, we are now asking all students at JMHS to have three voluntary lateral flow device tests in school, followed by two home tests a week.

Lateral flow device tests are quick and easy and involve taking a swab from the back of the throat and a nostril. Students will test themselves with supervision from trained staff and results will be known in 30 minutes. We are doing the first of these in-school tests on Thursday 4 March and Friday 5 March. The tests are voluntary, but I would strongly encourage everyone to take them. Those taking the tests will be making a great contribution to keeping themselves, their families and the whole school community safe from COVID-19. It would be an excellent contribution if all members of our school gave consent to having tests and took their first test before returning to lessons in school.

#### Consent and booking

Testing can only be carried out with consent. Please read all of the following information and the attached privacy notice, then complete the Consent Form using the link below. Students who are over 18 can complete the form and consent themselves. On completion of the Consent Form you will receive a further link to book an appointment for your son or daughter. **The deadline for completing consent and booking appointments is 9am on Wednesday 3 March, but it would help us enormously with the considerable amount of administration that needs to be finalised if parents could complete these as soon as possible.**

[Link to JMHS Student Consent Form for COVID-19 testing in School](#)

#### Attending testing appointments on Thursday 4 March and Friday 5 March

We will closely supervise students when they attend test appointments to ensure social distancing. Students attending appointments will need to bring a face covering to wear in the test centre. They do not need to be in uniform but are expected to dress appropriately.

Students living in Ledbury should walk to school to attend their appointment and do not need to be accompanied by a parent. Parents living outside Ledbury may drive their children in for their test appointment. Our booking system will allow siblings to be tested at the same time. Parents should remain in their vehicles while their children have their test. We anticipate that students will return to be driven home approximately 20 minutes later.

We appreciate that it may be difficult for parents living outside Ledbury to get students to school for a test on either Thursday 4 March or Friday 5 March, but if you could do this it will be a huge help for us. By organising the first test for these dates it will enable us to open for all students on Monday 8 March rather than as previously planned from Thursday 11 March. If it is impossible for you to get your children into school on these dates, please could you email [admin@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:admin@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk) by 12 noon on Tuesday 2 March.

#### Skeleton School students

Those students who have been attending Skeleton School and have been tested do not need to book an appointment on 4 or 5 March nor complete another consent form.

### Schedule for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tests

**Mon 8 March:** Y11, Y12 and Y13 will have Covid-19 test 2

**Tues 9 March:** Y9 and Y10 will have Covid-19 test 2

**Weds 10 March:** Y7 and Y8 will have Covid-19 test 2

**Thurs 11 March:** Y11, Y12 and Y13 will have Covid-19 test 3

**Fri 12 March:** Y9 and Y10 will have Covid-19 test 3

**Mon 15 March:** Y7 and Y8 will have Covid-19 test 3

Following three COVID-19 tests in school, students will receive kits for home testing and details regarding this will be communicated soon.

### Information about lateral flow device tests

These tests will help staff and students to remain in school. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. Staff at JMHS have been having lateral flow device tests since the start of January and almost every student who has been attending skeleton school has had at least two tests.

We know these tests work - in 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 (and is more infectious), hence the need to test frequently.

### Taking the test

We understand that your child may be anxious about taking the test. The test is a simple procedure, and students will test themselves with the supervision of trained staff with relevant qualifications. Testing has taken place smoothly since January and is extremely well organised. You can watch a video of how to do your test using this link <https://youtu.be/aiFzbVP6P9o> . Pictures of our test centre set up can be viewed on our website through this link <https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/about-us/covid-19-risk-assessment/> .

### What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 18, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results. Following a positive result, the student will need to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Track and Trace.

### What happens if the test is negative?

A student 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.

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

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will need to self-isolate for 10 days in line with government guidance.

### 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 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

If you do have any questions or need any further information about the testing programme, please contact myself, Rebecca French (Team Leader) or Angela Griffith (Covid 19 Coordinator) through [admin@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:admin@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk) .

With best wishes,



**Andrew Evans**  
**Headteacher**