

John Masefield High School and Sixth Form Centre

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July 2021

Dear students, parents and carers,

Covid 19 National Testing Programme: September 2021

In September we are required to offer all students two Lateral Flow Device tests in school, spaced three to five days apart. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic and by testing we will help to reduce the spread in school and college settings through asymptomatic transmission.

The first of these tests will be carried out before students return to lessons in school following the summer break. The second test will be carried out during school hours. As in March this year, students will test themselves with supervision from trained staff, and results will be known within 30 minutes. The tests are voluntary, but we would strongly encourage everyone to take them. We were delighted to have over 95% uptake for on site testing in March, which contributed significantly to keeping our school community and families safe from Covid 19 and hope to repeat this.

Consent and booking

Testing can only be carried out with consent. **If you consented for your child to be tested in March, you do not have to re-consent.** If you wish to withdraw your consent for your child to be tested, please let us know by emailing rebecca.french@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk. On the other hand, if you wish your child to be included in the testing and have not yet given consent, please complete this form: [Testing consent form Sept 2021](#)

We are again using Schoolcloud, our virtual parents' evening system to manage bookings for the first test. The schedule for testing is as follows:

Friday 3 September 8.30am – 5.00pm: Year 7, Year 11, Year 12, Year 13 (*school year 2021-22*)

Monday 6 September 9.30am – 4.30pm: Year 8, Year 9, Year 10 (*school year 2021-22*)

Please book appointments through the link below. **The deadline for booking appointments is Tuesday 31 August, but it would help us enormously with the considerable amount of administration that needs to be finalised if parents could complete this as soon as possible.**

For current Year 11s, please only book appointments if you are expecting to return to Year 12 in September.

[JMHS schoolcloud log-in](#)

Attending test appointments on Friday 3 September and Monday 6 September

Students living in Ledbury should walk to 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 and wait in their car while the test takes place.

On Monday 6 September Years 7, 12 and 13 will return to school after the summer break while Years 8, 9 and 10 have their first test appointment.

We appreciate it may be difficult for parents living outside Ledbury to get students to school for a test on Friday 3 or Monday 6 September, but if you could do this, it will be a great help to us. By organising the first tests in this way, it means that we can open for students as planned at the start of the new academic year. If it is impossible for you to get your children into school on these dates, please could you email either rebecca.french@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk or deborah.sutcliffe@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk by 12 noon on Wednesday 1 September.

Schedule for second tests

Tuesday 7 September: Year 7 and Sixth Form

Wednesday 8 September: Year 11 and Sixth Form

Thursday 9 September: Year 8 and Year 9

Friday 10 September: Y9 and Y10

Following two lateral flow tests in school, students will go back to testing twice weekly at home.

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.

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 [JMHS testing video](#). Please note, since making this film we have been advised that for on-site testing in September, students will not be expected to complete a throat swab and will instead swab both nostrils. Pictures of our test centre set up can be viewed on our website through this link [Pictures of test centre](#).

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, take a confirmatory PCR test 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 student is a close contact of a positive case?

From 16 August, if the student is under 18, they will not immediately have to self-isolate (in line with the policy for fully vaccinated adults) but will be asked to take a PCR test immediately. They will not need to self-isolate while awaiting the results of the test. If the PCR test is positive, they will be required to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test.

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 Rebecca French through rebecca.french@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk

With best wishes,



Andrew Evans
Headteacher