

John Masefield High School and Sixth Form Centre

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7 December 2021

Dear students, parents and carers,

Covid 19 National Testing Programme: January 2022

Following the Christmas break, we are required to offer all students one lateral flow device test in school before returning to lessons. 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.

These tests will be carried out before students return to lessons, which will mean a change to the planned return after the Christmas break for some students. By using the INSET day on Tuesday 4 January to start testing, we are able to minimise disruption to learning.

Schedule for testing and return to school in January

Tuesday 4 January – INSET day	8.00am-1.30pm: Completion of the set-up for onsite Covid-19 testing 1.30pm-5.30pm: onsite Covid-19 tests for Y11, Y12 and Y13
Wednesday 5 January	8.45am: Y11, Y12 and Y13 return to school 8.30am-5.00pm: onsite Covid-19 tests for Y7, Y8, Y9, Y10
Thursday 6 January	All year groups in school

As in September 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 to help keep our school community and families safe from Covid-19.

Consent and booking

Testing can only be carried out with consent. **If you have previously consented for your child to be tested, 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:

[Covid Testing Consent Form January 2022](#)

We are again using Schoolcloud, our virtual parents' evening system to manage bookings. You will only be able to book an appointment for your child to have a test on the date which is nominated for their year group as detailed above.

Please book appointments through the link below. **The deadline for booking appointments is Monday 3 January at midday, 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.**

[JMHS schoolcloud log-in](#)

Attending test appointments on Tuesday 4 January and Wednesday 5 January

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.

We appreciate it may be difficult for parents living outside Ledbury to get students to school for a test on Tuesday 4 January or Wednesday 5 January, but if you could do this, it will be a great help to us. By organising the tests in this way, it means that we minimise disruption to the start of the new term and students' learning. If it is impossible for you to get your children into school on these dates, please could you email admin@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk by 12 noon on Monday 3 January.

Following the lateral flow test 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 in school. It is a simple procedure, and students will test themselves using a swab of the throat with the supervision of trained staff with relevant qualifications. On-site testing has taken place over two occasions in the past 12 months and is extremely well organised. The school will inform parents/carers of a positive test result. Parents will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system.

What if a student tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device test, they will need to self-isolate immediately and a confirmatory PCR test ordered. The confirmatory PCR should be taken within two days of the positive LFD test. If the confirmatory PCR is also positive, follow guidance from NHS Test and Trace and continue to self-isolate.

If the confirmatory PCR is negative, the student can stop self-isolating and return to school.

Should a confirmatory PCR not be obtained, the students should self-isolate for 10 days from the result of the positive lateral flow test.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, students who test negative will be able to resume their activities as normal. Parent/carers will be informed of negative test results via text/email.

What if a student is a close contact of a positive case?

NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case and/or their parents to identify close contacts. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. As parents or carers, you may be contacted to help with identifying close contacts.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated;
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months;
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial;
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

Instead, NHS Test and Trace will inform affected individuals, children or their parents or carers that they have been in close contact with a positive case and advise them to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Whilst waiting for the PCR test result, children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who have been identified as a close contact should continue to attend school as normal.

What if my child develops symptoms?

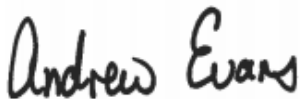
This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Should I still take part in the asymptomatic testing programme if I have recently tested positive for COVID-19?

If a child has tested positive on a PCR in the last 90 days they should not participate in the return to school testing, as there is a risk it could display a false positive result.

If you do have any questions or need any further information about the testing programme, please contact Rebecca French through rebecca.french@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk

With best wishes,



Andrew Evans
Headteacher