



SPALDING GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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2 January 2021

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

Dear Parent

With reference to my letter of 1 January, I am writing with further details on the matter of testing in school, which, you may have heard, is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests', for testing those without coronavirus symptoms.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. 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 the School open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but everyone is encouraged to take it.

Phase 1 of the testing will consist of two tests, taken three to five days apart, to identify any asymptomatic carriers post-Christmas. We will look to start testing all staff and students who want to participate from week commencing 11 January 2021, with possibly some on Friday 8 January. We hope to be able to carry out both tests on all students before they return to school, although this may not be possible, in which case the second test will be taken after students have returned. Please note, the taking of the tests is not a requirement to be able to come back to school, and all students should return to school as per the dates set out in my letter of 1 January, regardless of whether they have participated in testing or not.

Phase 2 of the testing will consist of regular testing of those students who are identified as close contacts of a positive case. By taking these tests, students will be able to remain in school, rather than having to self-isolate.

Tests will be administered by the students themselves, and I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information. Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared (as necessary, see below) directly with students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents will also be informed.

Please fill in the Microsoft Form by following the link (please note that students will need to log in to their school Office 365 accounts to be able to complete the Form):
<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=zXe743Q9cU6UJqyVwuYuZS8JLLLeP6nhNpcnuNPJqwPNUOVJMNE5HRk0wUFBYQU9INKnXRVNFTEIRVS4u>.

Although this is a Consent Form, there is a question later in the Form which asks whether consent is being given or not; therefore, you are asked to complete all questions on the Form, regardless of whether or not you are giving consent.

What if a student tests positive in the 'lateral flow' test?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents will also be notified.

Students will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). The 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, you should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

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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. If the PCR test returns a negative result, then they can return to school and resume activities as normal.

What happens if the 'lateral flow' test is negative?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. 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 students 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 be able to return to school if they agree to be tested once a day for seven days and the test is negative. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. Further details will be provided at the time, but if you would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, you can. Please note that this only applies to students who are close contacts; it does not apply to household members, or close contacts outside of school, who will still need to self-isolate.

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>.

Volunteers to assist with testing

As per my letter of 1 January, the School will only be able to carry out this testing if we are able to secure a force of volunteers. Some of the roles have to be carried out by school staff; however, there are three different roles that parents/friends are able to fulfil:

1. Team Leader / Quality Lead
2. Test Assistant
3. Processor

The descriptions below are taken directly from the Government documentation.

The first of those roles would require a greater commitment and may not be suitable for the majority of people. The **Team Leader / Quality Lead** is responsible for the overall on-site operations at the test site on any given day, including day-to-day workforce management:

- Running day-to-day operations including on-site workforce management, managing site health & safety and receiving and managing stock
- Ensure adherence to defined testing processes throughout operations, and use of correct tests on test site (eg LFD and not PCR)
- Responsible for safety and security of the site
- If subjects raise any data privacy concerns, directs subjects to the Data Privacy Notice which explains how we will use their data (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-privacy-information>)
- Ensure quality assurance, incidents, risks mitigation across the testing service
- Implement appropriate quality assurance as defined by the programme
- Implement the incident and risk reporting system that is used within the mass testing programme
- Undertake testing staff competency and performance reviews
- Retain a weekly summary of your records and any lessons learned to report to DfE/DHSC

A Team Leader / Quality Lead would need to undergo approximately 1½ hours of online training.

A **Test Assistant** provides guidance to subjects on swabbing as requested, and ensures cleaning of booths or sample collection station:

- Directs subject to available testing stations and directs them to the exit when they are finished
- On hand to provide subject with additional verbal instructions if required
- Provides regular cleaning to testing stations throughout day (subjects are also ask to self-clean between each test)
- For those who would be willing (although this is not a requirement), to assist with administered swabbing for those students who are unable

A Test Assistant would need to undergo approximately 1 hour of online training.

A **Processor** (of which we need the most) prepares test sample for analysis and interprets result:

- Sets up sample for analysis, and pipettes reagent to sample
- Times the sample analysis
- Awaits and reads result displayed, and marks it on device
- Provides to Results Recorder to upload to digital platform

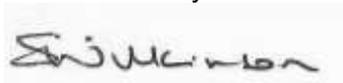
A Processor would need to undergo approximately 1 hour of online training.

We will need a larger group of volunteers to support us across the first two weeks, as we carry out the mass testing. After that, we should be able to manage with a smaller force; however, what would be very helpful is if volunteers in the longer term were able to be called upon at short notice, as the testing will only be needed in response to a positive case.

If you feel you would be able to support the School, I would be grateful if you could email communications@spaldinggrammar.lincs.sch.uk detailing (1) which role(s) you would be interested/willing to take on; (2) on which day(s) you would be available (both in the short term – the next two to three weeks – and beyond); and (3) whether you would be contactable, on those days, at short notice to come in and support. Given the time pressures on us to get this testing up and running, I would be grateful for any response by the end of Wednesday 6 January.

I thank you, in advance, for your support, both with completing consent forms for testing and with any willingness to volunteer.

Yours sincerely



S M Wilkinson
Headmaster