



## NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 September Testing for Secondary Pupils

August 2021

Dear all,

I do hope you are all having a good summer. We are, of course, starting to look ahead now to the start of term and are very much looking forward to welcoming your child into the Secondary phase at CFS. Whether this be as a member of our new Year 7 cohort, or if your child is joining us from another Secondary school in Years 8-11.

Whilst I will be in touch again before the end of Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September to confirm any remaining Covid processes that we will have in place next term, I wanted to confirm to you now the plans for on site lateral flow Covid testing for Secondary pupils. As you may be aware, in a similar way to the system in place when schools fully reopened in March, the Department for Education has requested that all Secondary schools facilitate the testing of pupils in Years 7 and above on their return to school in September. We have been directed to supervise two tests in school, before home testing will continue again until at least the end of September.

### 1. Why are these tests happening?

Firstly, it is important to remind you that the lateral flow tests are for asymptomatic pupils only – **if your child has symptoms of Covid-19 they should isolate as previously and may take a PCR test at or from a local testing centre.** However, up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By conducting lateral flow testing we will help to reduce the spread in school settings through asymptomatic transmission.

It is widely acknowledged that these tests are not 100% accurate, but as part of a regular testing regime they have been proven to pick up cases of those who are most contagious but not actually displaying symptoms and so would otherwise have not been tested. It is also important to note that a positive test now needs to be confirmed by a PCR test as well, reducing the impact of a false positive result.

Having two tests conducted in school will ensure all pupils are shown or reminded about how to test properly. The DfE's decision has also been based on the fact that testing is more likely to happen, and to happen accurately, when in a supervised environment and it is important that as many pupils as possible receive an accurate test at the end of the summer where more mixing is likely to have occurred.

As outlined below, we have worked hard to make this process as comfortable as possible for the pupils, and this worked very successfully in March. **We are therefore strongly encouraging all Secondary pupils to be tested in school twice during the first week of term.** However, these tests are not compulsory, and testing will only be conducted for pupils for whom we have received formal written consent from their parent/guardian.

### 2. How does the testing work?

The testing centre will be based in the Sports Hall. Pupils will be tested in small groups and we have created a sense of privacy around the testing bays themselves to help pupils who are feeling nervous or anxious. We have a variety

of CFS staff on hand to support pupils. All staff have completed thorough training, both in person and through completing a variety of online training and assessments.

Pupils will take the test themselves; they will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat, or just a swab of the nose depending on the brand of test being used.

### **3. When will the tests happen?**

We do not need to stagger the pupils' return to school as pupils can be in class before they take the test, due to altered processes around close contacts – as outlined in the FAQs below. Therefore all Secondary pupils should arrive as planned on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September and will have their first test at some point during the day. Year 7s will have their test in the afternoon, after their settling in activities, and other new pupils will join their own year group before lunchtime. The second test will take place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September – complying with the recommended 3-5 day gap.

### **4. How do I provide consent?**

As mentioned, we will only test pupils for whom we have received the appropriate written consent, granted by one parent/guardian.

To provide consent, please complete the formal consent form. This can be found at <https://www.chichesterfreeschool.org.uk/back-to-school/>

**Please return this to the school by emailing [absence@chichesterfreeschool.org.uk](mailto:absence@chichesterfreeschool.org.uk) by 8am Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September.** We must receive this form from a parent email address. Alternatively you can print the form and drop it into main reception. Pupils are able to bring a copy of the form with them on the day – printed out and signed by you (we cannot accept photographs etc of the form on their phone). However, it will make the process far smoother for everyone if the form is returned to us in advance please.

If you do not give consent then we will not test your child. **Remember you do not have to opt out, you only have to formally opt in.**

**It is important to note that if your child is joining us in Year 8 or above, and you gave consent at their previous school, we will not have access to this information. We must receive a new consent form from you, otherwise your child will not be tested on site and will not be able to receive the home testing kits from the second week onwards.**

### **5. Do I need to set up anything on my child's phone? How will data be sent to the NHS?**

No, your child will not need their own phone to upload any results – we will be doing this all centrally. For how the data will then be used, please see the Privacy Notice and Data Protection FAQs on our website at <https://www.chichesterfreeschool.org.uk/back-to-school/>

## **6. What will be happening with home testing?**

This will begin again from the second week, and Mr Phillips (Deputy Principal: Secondary Lead) will be in touch at the start of term to explain to pupils and parents about how to use the home tests. Home testing kits will only be available to pupils for whom we have conducted supervised tests in school.

## **7. Further FAQs**

### **What if my child tests positive?**

If a pupil tests positive on a lateral flow device, we will contact you and ask you to collect your child from school. They will need to take a PCR test, and self-isolate until you receive the result. On receiving the result you will be given advice from NHS about your next steps, but usually a negative result will mean that your child can return to school, and positive will mean that self-isolation must continue.

### **What happens if the test is negative?**

While a small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, pupils who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Parents or legal guardians will be informed via the contact details provided on the consent form via the national service, not the School. Please be aware this can take a while to come through to you from the national centralised system, but we will be in touch straight away if there is a positive case – so no news straight away means that your child has tested negative.

### **What if other pupils have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?**

This is the new guidance directly from the revised school document:

*From 19 July 2021, in school contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.*

*From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.*

### **What if my child tells you that they want to be tested, but I have not given consent?**

We will only test pupils for whom we have the appropriate written consent from a parent or guardian regardless of what the pupil tells us in person.

### **What happens if I have given consent but my child refuses to have the test when in school?**

Whilst we will try to support them and encourage them, we are not going to force anyone to have the test who is that uncomfortable about doing so. However if we have consent from you, and so you are expecting them to be tested, we will contact you to let you know that this has happened.

Kind regards,

**Mrs Louise New**

**Principal**