



11th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

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

We are currently working to establish a programme of testing for staff and students. I am sure you are aware that testing is being provided across the country using new, quicker Covid-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests.' Up to 1 in 3 people who have coronavirus symptoms experience no symptoms; and by testing regularly this will help stop the spread of the virus and keep our school open as safely as possible.

The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it. We are hoping to commence testing both students currently attending part of the Critical Worker/Vulnerable group and school staff who want to participate this week. This will be rolled out to ALL students once school is fully open.

Please refer to the website for an instructional leaflet containing more information on the test.

Registration and Consent

To process the test, we will need to register all participating students.

To complete this registration and provide consent please complete the online form via Microsoft forms on the link below:

[**STUDENT CONSENT FORM – CLICK HERE**](#)

If you do not complete all the information required on this link, your child will not be able to be tested.

Testing and results

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. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

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, hence the need to test frequently.

What if a pupil tests positive?

Participating staff and students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Pupils 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). We 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, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

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.

What happens if the test is negative?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A pupil 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?

At this point in time, if classed as a close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 you will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. Moving forward, we aim to give the choice of serial testing or an isolation period.

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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need any further information. You can call the main school office or email admin@halewoodacademy.co.uk

Yours sincerely,



Ms J Gallagher

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We Seek the Best

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