

7 January 2020

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 Testing for Students at TCS Exeter Road

Dear Parent/Carer,

You will be aware that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID 19 tests known as 'lateral flow devices'. This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme in our school. We have now set this up and are successfully and safely running this for staff now.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing, we will help to reduce the spread in school and college settings through asymptomatic transmission. I am therefore strongly encouraging those in or returning to school to be tested. 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.

Consent

We will not test any student without your or their consent. Please follow the link to complete the digital consent form in order to give your permission for your child to take this test on a regular basis:

[Consent Form](#)

Plan for testing

We will be hoping to test all staff and as many students as we are able (with your permissions) as and when they return to school. In addition, any staff member or student who has come into contact with positive cases in our school can be tested daily for seven days to allow them to remain in school. Even if your child/children is not currently attending school, please could you complete the digital consent form as this will allow us to test your child/children as and when we can.

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant. I enclose a leaflet with further information.

Principal: Mr James O'Connell

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Tel: 01626 774091 **Visit:** www.teignmouthsecondary.co.uk



What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will be informed immediately by a member of our staff and their parent/carer will also be informed as soon as possible. They will need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result. This should be on the same day or as soon as possible afterwards. We (TCS) will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home. During the time while waiting for the PCR result, they will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result, they will have to continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

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.

What if staff or students have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?

The staff member or student (and their parent/carer) will be notified that they are a close contact by one of our staff as soon as possible. If close contacts agree to be tested each day for a maximum period of 7 days, and they test negative every day, they will be allowed to remain in school. There may be instances where close contacts are also contacted by NHS Test and Trace. In this instance they should notify NHS Test and Trace that they are a close contact through school and are participating in daily contact testing.

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 (including 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>.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office by phone (below) or email: studentservices@teignmouth.devon.sch.uk.

Yours faithfully,



James O'Connell
Principal