



Sacred Heart High School

"For the sake of one child, I would have founded the Society"

31 December 2020

MADELEINE SOPHIE BARAT

Dear Parents and Carers,

NHS TEST AND TRACE: COVID-19 TESTING FOR STAFF AND PUPILS

We hope you have managed to get some rest over Christmas and had some moments of joy with your families. Like us you will no doubt have been following the media reports regarding the spike of infections linked with the new variant of the virus. You may be anxious and concerned about your daughters' return to school.

We wish to reassure you that we have been working throughout the holiday to review our risk assessment and put in place the measures required by the government for mass Covid testing in school using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

This is in direct response to the recent spike in infections in our local area and aims to try to reduce the risk of infection in school.

The government has today announced a delay to the staggered start of term. Monday 4 January will remain an inset day, with no pupils on site. On Tuesday 5 January, only vulnerable children and key worker children should return to school.

Years 11 and 13 will undertake remote learning from Tuesday 5 and return to school for face to face teaching on Monday 11 January.

The remainder of the school will be provided with work to complete in the first week, however, please be aware that not all of this will be live teaching as we have to prioritise the set-up of the testing programme. Full remote learning for Years 7-10 and 12 will commence from Monday 11th January, with then a full return to school on Monday 18 January.

Please note that despite the staggered return to school, BTEC exams that are scheduled in the first two weeks of term will go ahead as normal. Further details will be sent out about these, to those involved.

As ever, the government will keep this under review, but we will let you know if anything changes.

This letter explains what the plans entail and asks for confirmation from you about whether or not you would like your daughter to be included for the tests. No tests will be carried out on anyone without a signed consent form.

Importance of taking part

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and pupils 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 I would encourage everyone to take it.

Testing will be offered free of charge.



Stage 1: Mass testing

Initially we will conduct (voluntary) **mass testing** of all staff and pupils, prioritising first the staff and Years 11 and 13 in the week commencing 4 January, then extending the tests to all other year groups. As part of this, pupils will be tested twice, three days apart. If you choose to take part in this, we will write to you separately to confirm the time and date of your daughters test.

Stage 2: Serial Testing

After the initial mass testing, staff (but not pupils) will be tested on a weekly basis. If any staff or pupil is later identified as a close contact of someone who tests positive, they can either opt to self-isolate at home as normal for 10 days, or they can continue to come into school if we have permission to test them every morning on arrival for 7 days.

What does the test involve?

We enclose an instructional leaflet to explain how the test is conducted. The test is self-administered under supervision of a trained adult. The 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 directly with the relevant member of staff or pupil. Parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

Processing personal data in support of COVID-19 testing

Further detail is provided in the links below, but in summary, we need to collect and process some limited personal data to pass to government in relation to those who test positive – similar to the information needed routinely by track and trace and for statistical analysis.

We also need ask parents and staff for confirmation of whether they decline consent. This information is purely for our own school use, so that we do not then spend time chasing you to ask if you have forgotten to return the consent form. Names of those who opt out of testing will not be passed outside of school. In relation to Covid Testing in school, please see our '[Data Protection Frequently Asked Questions](#)' and our '[Privacy Statement](#)'

Providing Consent (or not)

We first need **an indication of numbers** to be tested and for this we have made a simple online form for you to complete to clarify **whether or not** you wish your daughter to take part. For those who indicate their intention to take part, there are also some simple registration questions required by the government. We need this completed for all pupils by 12 noon on Monday 4 January 2021.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BmroL6izoUePAsdmol6GApvZSHhvOZ9FriawEYRofxhUNldRVzhEV09BMFVJOVVKU0pNRzE0S0IORi4u>

For those who do wish to take part we also need you to print out and sign the attached hard copy consent form, to be handed into the school office on the day that your daughter returns to school. If you are unable to print the form please email us on covid@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk.

Test Results

Positive: Participating staff and pupils who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Parents or legal guardians will also be notified and we will guide you regarding what to do next.

Negative: You will be able to stay in school and resume 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 pupils 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?

As referred to above, a close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID will be able to return to school if they agree to be tested once a day for 7 days and the test is negative. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days. This 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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can email us with any Covid related issues or questions on covid@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk. Once school has reopened you can also telephone us as normal.

Final Thought

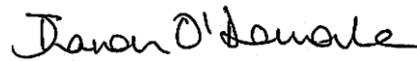
As we are sure you will understand, we are working within a rapidly changing context and we ask for your patience and support while we continue to work hard to ensure we have the capacity and resources to implement the testing programme safely and effectively.

Please keep our school community in our prayers at this challenging time.

Kind Regards.



Mrs M Doyle
Headteacher



Mrs S O'Donovan
Associate Headteacher