

21 January 2021

Dear Parents

## **COVID-19 NATIONAL TESTING PROGRAMME**

You may be aware that staff, pupils and students in educational settings will be tested using a validated Lateral Flow Device. Up to a third of individuals who test positive for COVID-19 have no symptoms at all and can therefore spread the virus unknowingly. That is why the testing of those without symptoms is vital. Identifying those individuals will save lives. This is what is known as 'rapid testing'. Initially testing will be provided for all secondary pupils, students and staff as they return to school.

### **The components of Rapid Testing**

Currently, the national agenda is that as many secondary pupils and students as possible will be tested on their return to school and FE colleges. Pupils and students will be offered two Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests spaced three to five days apart (minimum three days). A positive confirmatory PCR will be required for all positive cases. However, as an alternative provider, which remains open during national lockdown, our testing procedures are different to mainstream schools (please see 'Testing at your child's commissioning school' paragraph below).

### **Testing at your child's commissioning school**

As an alternative provider, we shall not be offering the lateral flow testing within our setting. We would be grateful, therefore, if you would access testing for your child via the mainstream school who commissioned your child's place or via community testing programmes if the local authority commissioned your child's place. To ensure the safety of all members of our 'school' community, we would strongly advise that all pupils are tested every 7 days. Should your child be on a part time placement or has had a period of absence away from the setting, we would politely request that a lateral flow test is undertaken before he/she returns to our setting - this is, of course, voluntary.

### **Contact with a positive case**

Pupils, students and staff will need to be tested if they come into contact with a positive case. This new approach, known as 'daily contact testing', will allow those who are in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 to return to school or college if they agree to be tested for 7 days\* following last contact with a positive case and that test is negative. Should your child come into contact with a positive case, please arrange for him/her to be tested at their commissioning school or community testing station. \* If staff, pupils or students cannot take a test (e.g. on the weekend) they should self-isolate for that day, and resume daily contact testing on their return to school / college. If they return after the 7 days are finished, then they should take one final test, and if it is negative they can return to school/college.



**What if my child develops symptoms?**

This testing programme 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>.

**Further information and links can be obtained from:**

There is an explainer video on lateral flow testing here:

<https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1328387524490911745?s=20>

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

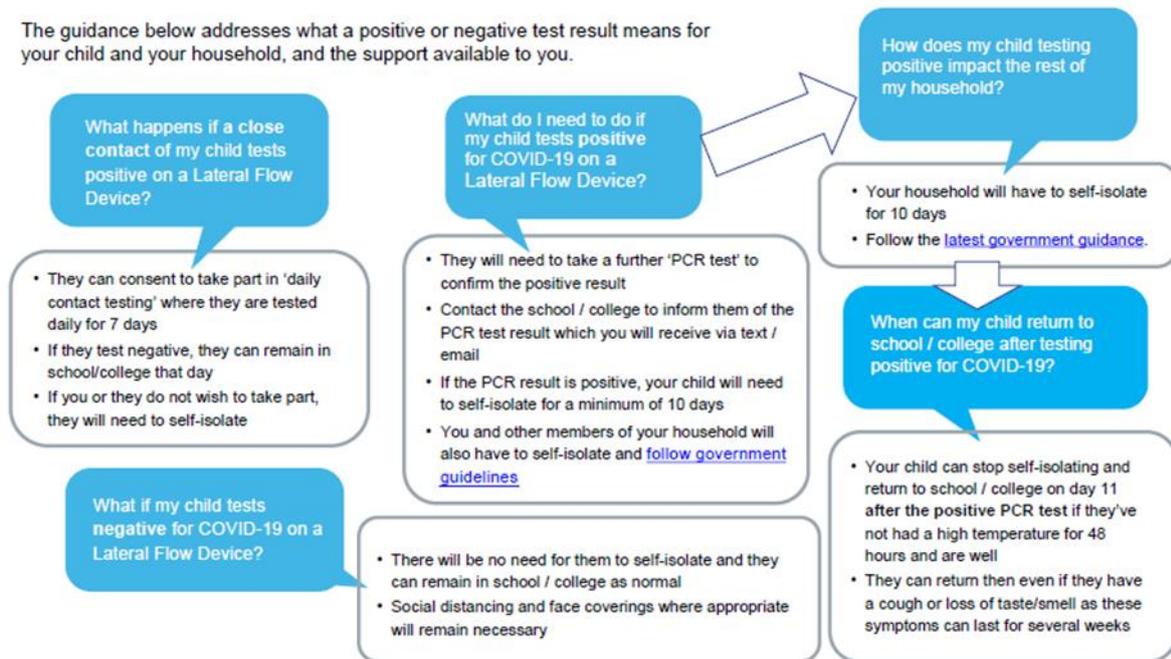
**Claire Fyfe**

Principal

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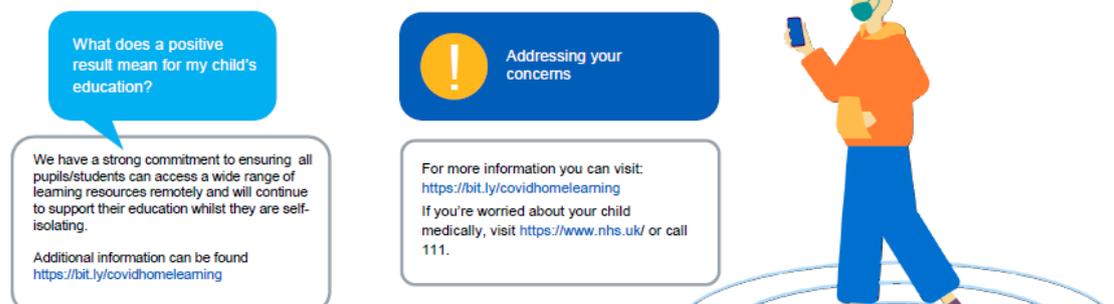
## COVID-related pupil/student absence – Printable Guidance for Parents and Pupils/Students (1/2)

The guidance below addresses what a positive or negative test result means for your child and your household, and the support available to you.



## COVID-related pupil/student absence – Printable Guidance for Parents and Pupils/Students (2/2)

The guidance below addresses what a positive or negative test result means for your child and your household, and the support available to you.



**IMPORTANT:** If, at any point, a student, pupil or staff member begins displaying symptoms they must [follow government guidelines](#), [order a PCR test](#) and self-isolate.