

31 December 2020

Dear Parents

### **NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students**

We are working to keep Sexey's School as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school/college 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 our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be testing all staff and students who want to participate from week commencing 4 January 2021.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information.

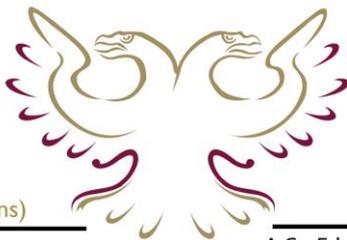
If you are happy for your child to be tested, please complete the form online using the link <http://www.sexeyssomerset.sch.uk/covid-19-form/> by completing this form, you are agreeing to the consent statement, which is displayed on the website form – these are also included in the appendix to this letter. Please complete one form per student.

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.

Testing will be offered free of charge.



## Registration

To process the test, we will register all participating students. To complete this registration please fill in the form at <http://www.sexeyssomerset.sch.uk/covid-19-form/>

## What if a pupil tests positive?

Participating staff and pupils 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.

Students 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). You can go to [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, please choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while students 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 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/college tests positive?

A close contact of someone in school/college who has tested positive for COVID-19 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 as per the national guidelines. This does not apply to household members or close contacts outside of school who will still need to self-isolate. Further details will be provided at the time, but if you would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, you can.

## 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>.

Thank you for your ongoing support and considering supporting your son or daughter to engage in the mass testing programme. We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully,



**Mrs H Cullen**  
Headteacher

## Appendix 1

### Covid 19 registration and consent form

This common consent form has been designed for use by parents and guardians of pupils and under 16s, pupils and students over 16 and staff. These sections should be read as applicable and completed as follows:

- **For pupils and students younger than 16 years** – this form must be completed by the parent or legal guardian. Please complete one consent form for each child you wish to enrol.
  - **Pupils and students over 16** can complete this form themselves, having discussed participation with their parent / guardian if under 18.
  - **Staff** will complete this form themselves.
1. I have had the opportunity to consider the information provided by the school/college about the testing, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily, based on the information presented in the letter dated 31.12.20.
  2. In the case of under 16s, I have discussed the testing with my child and my child is happy to participate. If on the day of testing they do not wish to take part, then they will not be made to do so and consent can be withdrawn at any time ahead of the test.
  3. I consent to having / my child having a nose and throat swab for a lateral flow test.
  4. I consent that my / my child's sample(s) will be tested for the presence of COVID-19.
  5. I understand that if my child / my result(s) are negative on the lateral flow test I will not be contacted by the school/college except where they/you are a close contact of a confirmed positive.
  6. If the lateral flow test indicates the presence of COVID-19, I consent to my child having / having a nose and throat swab for confirmatory PCR testing, which shall be sent the same day to an NHS Test & Trace laboratory.
  7. I consent that I / they will need to self-isolate following a positive lateral flow test result, until the results of the confirmatory PCR have been received.
  8. I agree that if my / my child's test results are confirmed to be positive from this PCR test, I will report this to the school / college and I understand that I/ my child will be required to self-isolate following public health advice.

9. I consent that if a close contact of my child tests positive but I / my child has tested negative, I / they will continue to attend school / college but will be tested every day at school / college for 7 days.

Electronic signatures are permitted.