



13th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

LATERAL FLOW TESTING FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING SCHOOL ON SITE

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. It is unfortunate that we had return to remote teaching for all except for vulnerable students and the children of key workers, but we are following Government guidelines and will return to on site provision as soon as we are able. You may have heard that testing for those without Coronavirus symptoms has started using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

If your child is a vulnerable child or you are a critical worker and you wish to secure their presence on site, your child will be required to take part in the testing which commences from Friday 15th January 2021. **The attached consent form needs to be completed and brought with your child when they attend school** (or sent in advance via email to: enquiries@cardinalpole.co.uk).

The testing will be carried out by Cardinal Pole who have trained by NHS staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of the nose and throat. **I enclose an instructional leaflet** on how to carry out the swab tests for your child to read in advance. Following the test (which take around half an hour from testing), results will be shared via a letter.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive in the lateral test outcome will need to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will be notified. This means:

- Your child will be sent home;
- They will need to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test;
- You can stop self-isolating on day 11 if they haven't had a high temperature for 48 hours and are well;
- People they live with must self-isolate for 10 days from when they start self-isolating.

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) if positive.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text/email) your child and family will need to self-isolate.

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

Does that mean the lateral flow tests aren't conclusive? There is a low chance of false positive tests – that is why the secondary test is necessary. There is also a low chance that lateral flow tests do not pick up positive cases because they are not as sensitive as lab-based tests. That is why there will be serial tests for close contacts of positive cases.

If the test is negative then students and teachers will be able to carry on as usual.

A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

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

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the form below and the enclosed consent statement (one per student) and return it to the school office via email on enquiries@cardinalpole.co.uk with "Testing" in the subject heading.

We are advised that 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). Given the high R rate in London, and the need to keep our community safe, we are encouraging all to participate.

Testing will be offered free of charge.

What if a close contact at school tests positive?

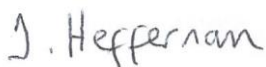
A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to school if after their period of self-isolation. This does not apply to household members or close contacts outside of school who will still need to self-isolate. Further details will be provided at the 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 Cardinal Pole Catholic 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 should not attend school and 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 students throughout, but please contact us if you need this information or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 020 8985 5150 or email enquiries@cardinalpole.co.uk

Yours sincerely



Ms J Heffernan
HEADTEACHER