

Lowton Church of England High School



Lowton
Church of England High School

23 February 2021

Dear parents and carers

Return to face-to-face learning in school from Monday 8 March

I hope my letter finds you safe and well.

As expected, the Prime Minister announced yesterday the Government's plans for easing lockdown restrictions and as part of that the arrangements for all students to return to school.

All secondary age students will be expected to return to school *starting* from Monday 8 March and as part of that there will be an expectation for students to have had a negative COVID-19 test conducted in school. **This requires parental consent.**

You will need to complete and return the attached consent form in order for your child to be tested in school. Please can I strongly encourage you to grant consent for the safety of your child, your own family and the whole school community as part of our collective fight to reduce the risks attached to catching COVID-19.

The tests are designed to pick up asymptomatic cases – that is, students and staff that may be carrying the virus but have no symptoms.

During the week starting Monday 8 March students start returning to school. We will need to test over seven hundred students and to be in step with Government guidance, we will need to stagger the return to school so that students come into school a year group at a time to get tested. Therefore, our programme for the return of students to school will be as follows:

- Year 11: Monday 8 March.
- Year 7: Tuesday 9 March.
- Year 10: Wednesday 10 March.
- Year 9: Thursday 11 March.
- Year 8: Friday 12 March.

In order to **brief all parents** on our plans for the return to school we are holding two webinars, although you will most likely only need to attend one of these:

For Year 11 parents and students: Thursday 4 March at 6.00 pm

You can sign up for the Year 11 webinar here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZYxPII6bT5GOCTfAvZuFfg

For Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 parents and students: Thursday 4 March at 5.00 pm.

You can sign up for the Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 webinar here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bV_FN8luR3uwZyAdAHkONQ

Until then, please ensure your child engages with the work set by school. We look forward to welcoming all students back to school and returning to something more normal in the coming weeks.

Yours faithfully,

Kieran Larkin
Headteacher

CARING, LEARNING AND SUCCEEDING

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As part of the Government's plan for schools to re-open in full from Monday 8th March testing for those **without** coronavirus symptoms is being introduced in schools across the country using new '**lateral flow tests**'.

This letter gives you more detail about why we want to do this and how it will be done if you agree to your child being tested.

The tests will be supervised by trained staff. The tests are quick and easy to do using a swab of the nose and throat. Your child will complete their own swabbing. Results are available within 30 minutes, if your child tests positive we will contact you and your child immediately. If your child tests negative we will contact you and your child by the end of the day. Please make sure we hold your correct contact details.

Students who are identified as close contacts of someone testing positive, will required to self-isolate.

These tests sit alongside all our other measures in school such as mask wearing, hand sanitising and hand washing, operating our one-way system, and year group bubbles.

We must have parental consent before we can do the test. I would encourage everyone to take it as it will help us to beat the virus and reduce\minimise transmission. As an example of our collective effort to do this, all staff at the school have agreed to and have taken the test, and will continuing doing so twice each week. Please find additional information about the testing on the next page of this letter.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the enclosed consent form and return it to:

testresult@lowtonhs.wigan.sch.uk by Wednesday 3 March 2021.

If you do not want your child to be tested, please do not fill in the consent form and you do not need to contact us. Students will only be tested if they produce a completed consent form.

If you have any queries or concerns, or need support in any way, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Kieran Larkin
Headteacher

HOW TO DO YOUR TEST

WHILE THIS IS A SELF-SWAB TEST, THERE WILL BE A TESTING HELPER WHO WILL OVERSEE THINGS AND PROVIDE HELP IF YOU NEED

1 YOUR COVID-19 TEST WILL BE SCHEDULED. IF YOU ARE UNDER 16, YOUR PARENT / CARER WILL HAVE CONSENTED

2 YOUR TEST WILL BE FAST AND WHILE IT MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE, IT WON'T HURT YOU

3 BLOW YOUR NOSE IF NEEDED, WASH AND DRY/SANITISE YOUR HANDS. REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO TOUCH THE SOFT PART

4 OPEN YOUR MOUTH WIDE AND USE A MIRROR TO LOOK AT THE BACK OF YOUR THROAT, THEN USE THE SWAB TO RUB FIRMLY 4 TIMES ON EACH SIDE

5 REMOVE THE SWAB CAREFULLY WITHOUT TOUCHING YOUR TEETH, TONGUE OR GUMS

6 GENTLY PLACE IT ABOUT 2-2.5 CM INSIDE ONE OF YOUR NOSTRILS. ROLL THE SWAB 4-5 TIMES ALONG THE LINING OF THE NOSTRIL, THIS WILL TAKE 10-15 SECONDS

7 AFTER THIS, YOU'RE DONE, GENTLY REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO LET ANYTHING TOUCH THE TIP

8 YOUR SWAB CAN THEN BE PLACED IN A TUBE FOR TESTING, THIS TAKES ABOUT 30 MINUTES

9 YOUR SCHOOL / COLLEGE WILL CONTACT YOU OR YOUR PARENT / CARER WITH THE RESULTS AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Do these tests work?

Studies by Oxford University and Public Health England showed them to be as accurate as a PCR test. The tests have lower sensitivity, but are better at picking up cases where a person has a higher viral load.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Students will then need to take a 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) ideally on the same day. The school will provide the PCR test kits to perform at home or you can go to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, it is best to visit a drive-through test site 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, students will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

Students will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal and we will contact you and your child with the result by the end of the day. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What if a student is a 'close contact' of a positive case?

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate for 10 days as per national guidelines.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms (called 'asymptomatic'). 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 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.



CONSENT FORM FOR COVID-19 TESTING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Introduction

This consent form is for participation in tests designed to detect asymptomatic coronavirus cases. Anyone experiencing symptoms should follow [government guidelines to self-isolate](#), even if they have had a recent negative lateral flow test.

Consent relates to the following groups of students as follows:

- **For 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 participate in testing.
- **Students over 16 who are able to provide informed consent** - can complete this form themselves, having discussed participation with their parent/guardian if under 18.
- **For any student who does not have the capacity to provide informed consent** - this form must be completed by the parent or legal guardian. Please complete one consent form for each child you wish to participate in testing.

Terms of consent

1. I have had the opportunity to consider the information provided by the school about the testing, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily, based on the information presented in the letter dated 23 February 2021 and the attached Privacy Notice.
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 my child having a nose and throat swab for lateral flow tests. My child will self-swab if my child is able to otherwise I understand that assistance is available. In the case of under 16s or students who are not able to provide informed consent, I have discussed the testing with my child and they are happy to participate and self-swab (with assistance if required).
4. I understand that there may be multiple tests required and this consent covers all tests for the below named person. If, on the day of testing they do not wish to take part, then I understand they will not be made to do so and that consent can be withdrawn at any time ahead of the test.
5. I consent that my child's sample(s) will be tested for the presence of COVID-19.
6. I understand that if my child's result(s) are negative on the lateral flow test I will not be contacted by the school except where they are a close contact of a confirmed positive.
7. If the lateral flow test indicates the presence of COVID-19, I understand that my child will need a nose and throat swab PCR test (this will be conducted at home or at a Government test site).
8. If the test indicates the presence of COVID-19, I commit to ensuring that my child is removed from school premises as promptly as possible, bearing in mind they may have some anxiety following a positive test result.
9. I consent that they will need to self-isolate following a positive lateral flow test result, until the results of the confirmatory PCR have been received.
10. I agree that if my child's test results are confirmed to be positive from this PCR test, I will report this to the school and I understand that my child will be required to self-isolate following public health advice.



CONSENT FORM FOR COVID-19 TESTING - STUDENTS

Student first name:		
Student last name:		
Form:		
Date of Birth:		
Gender: This information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes.	Male/Female	
Ethnicity: This information is needed for Department for Health and Social Care research purposes.	Asian or Asian British	
	Black, African, Black British or Caribbean	
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	
	White	
	Prefer not to say	
Currently showing any COVID-19 symptoms?		
Home Postcode:		
Name of parent/guardian giving consent:		
Relationship to student (test subject):		
Signature: (typing out your name is sufficient if you are filling in this form digitally)		
Today's date:		
Details of any health or accessibility issues which might affect a child's safe participation in the testing exercise.		

Please return this form to: testresult@lowtonhs.wigan.sch.uk by Wednesday 3 March 2021.