



# Alder Community High School

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Dear Parent/Carer

## COVID-19 Lateral Flow Device testing programme for students

We are working hard to keep our school and local community as safe as possible. One of the measures we have taken is to introduce Covid-19 Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests, also known as rapid tests in school. These tests are for individuals who do not have any coronavirus symptoms and are being used to identify and isolate asymptomatic case of Covid-19. Staff are being tested on a twice weekly basis and students who are attending school have been tested on a weekly basis. Taking part in the testing programme is voluntary, but I have encouraged everyone to give their consent to participate.

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.

Now we have been given the go ahead to begin to fully reopen school, we are rolling out the testing programme to the wider school community. We are now gathering consent from parents. Upon their return to school, students will be tested three times, with 3 to 5 days between each. These tests are voluntary and 'offered' to students as optional as part of an ongoing programme. Consent for these tests can be withdrawn at any point. **After the third test in school, students will be provided with a home testing kit to be able to carry out a test at home twice per week.**

The test is carried out by self-swabbing. Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your throat and nose. I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information of how the test is carried out. **If you feel that your child would benefit from a parent or carer administering or supporting with the test, please do let us know as we will be able to accommodate this.**

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.

### Consent

If you are happy for your child to take part in the testing programme, please complete the consent form [by following this link](#), a paper copy of the consent form is available on request. If your child has already turned 16 he/she should complete the consent form themselves. If your child has been attending school and you have already completed a consent form, you do not need to provide consent again.



### What if my child has already tested positive previously for Covid-19?

Current advice is that for most, a previous confirmed Covid-19 diagnosis in the last 90 days is likely to make testing with an LFD antigen test not necessary. We do have some staff and students in school who have previously tested positive, once 90 days have passed, they have begun to take part in the regular testing programme.

### What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive, we will contact you immediately to let you know. A member of staff will discreetly collect your child from their classroom and take them to a safe waiting area until you are able to collect them or they have permission to walk home. We will make sure that your child is reassured at this stage. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Your child will then need to self-isolate for the next 10 full days. Anyone within the same household will also need to self-isolate at the same time. Your child may need to self-isolate for longer if they get symptoms while self-isolating or their symptoms do not go away. Read more about [how long to self-isolate](#).

### What happens if the test is negative?

Your child will stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A small number of individuals may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

It is important to remember that those who receive a negative test result from an LFD test **must still follow social distancing guidance, wear face coverings when appropriate and wash their hands regularly**.

### What if my child has been in close contact with someone at school who tests positive?

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will need to self-isolate at home for 10 days since the last point of contact. Further details will be provided at the time.

### What if my child has Covid-19 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) your household 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 in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 0161 368 5132 or e mail [admin@alderchs.uk](mailto:admin@alderchs.uk)

Yours faithfully,



**Richard O'Regan**  
Headteacher

