



Alder Community High School

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Headteacher: Mr R O'Regan BSc (Hons) NPQH

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Dear Parent/Carer,

COVID-19 Lateral Flow Device testing programme for students

In line with the DfE Schools Covid-19 Operational Guidance which was updated in July 2021 we will be reintroducing on site lateral flow testing in September. As students will potentially mix with lots of other people during the summer holidays, all secondary school students should receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term. Students should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed.

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 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 about 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.**

Why do pupils and students need to do 2 tests on site when they return in Autumn?

Testing on return is the most effective way to reduce the risk of transmission and support the continuation of face-to-face education. Identifying positive cases on return in the autumn is important, given that most students will not be testing over the summer and will need to re-establish the habit of regular twice weekly testing.

Testing on site on return will also give new students the opportunity to get used to swabbing in a supervised environment before moving to twice weekly testing at home. For example, our new Year 7s transitioning into secondary school who do not have experience of the education testing programme.

Is testing compulsory?

Testing is voluntary and requires parental consent; however, we would strongly encourage everyone to join in the asymptomatic testing programme to help break transmission links by identifying those that may be carrying the virus unknowingly.

How do I provide 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 already taken part in on site testing in school (March 2021) you do not need to provide consent again.



Will regular lateral flow testing continue at home?

Following the two initial tests on site, students will collect their test at home kits and to continue their regular twice weekly testing at home. Testing at home will continue until the end of September, when it will be reviewed again.

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 child must immediately self-isolate, and you should arrange a PCR a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

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 your child 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.

You will need to arrange for your child to take a confirmatory PCR test and they will then need to self-isolate for the next 10 full days. 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 continue 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. You will receive the result later in the day from NHS Test and Trace via text message and e mail.

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

From September, close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace rather than the school. Contacts will only be traced where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. Children will no longer be required to self-isolate, if they are contacted as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, they will be advised to take a PCR test even if they do not have symptoms and have tested negative on a lateral flow 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

Yours faithfully,



Richard O'Regan



Headteacher

