

1st January 2021

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and pupils

Dear Parent or guardian,

We are working to keep Mayfield 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 pupils 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.

We will be testing all staff and secondary school age pupils who want to participate from week commencing 11 January 2021.

An instructional leaflet with some more information can be found below.

Please complete the registration/consent google form: <https://forms.gle/4vze98MHnMDYnSCBA> by **5.00pm on Wednesday 6th January.**

This should be completed even if you do not consent to your child to be tested by answering **No** to the question "*Do you consent to your child taking part in the 'lateral flow' testing?*"

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy, using a swab of your child's nose and throat. Staff will oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils and is the case where results are positive 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 a higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

Testing will be offered free of charge.

'Your only limitation is your ambition'
Headteacher Mr. David Jeapes



What if a pupil tests positive?

Participating staff and pupils who test positive will be informed about their results individually and parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Pupils or staff will need to take a further 'PCR test' on the same day (or as soon as possible). This can be booked by visiting: www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test

Wherever possible please choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while they 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?

Pupils or staff who test negative 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 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. or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can email the school at general@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk .


Yours faithfully,


Mr. D Jeapes

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.

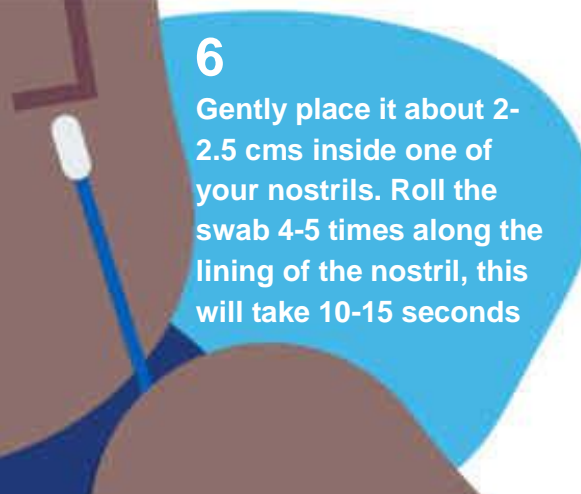
1  Your COVID-19 test will be scheduled. If you are under 16, your parent / carer will have consented

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 cms 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 will only make contact if the pupil tests positive.



So, if you don't hear presume the test is negative.