



PDE/CME

March 2021

Dear Pupils and Families

Up to one in three people who have COVID-19 can spread the virus without knowing. This is because they have no symptoms. To reduce the spread of the virus, we need to identify those individuals. We can do this in schools by carrying out tests at home twice every week, 3-4 days apart. If a pupil or family member is displaying symptoms, they should follow NHS guidance and book a test immediately, self-isolate until the result and not come to school.

### Taking test kits home

You will be able to collect your home test kits from school. The first 2 kits will be given to you when you have had your third supervised test in school. We will give you more kits when you return after Easter. We would like you to take your tests before school on Monday and Thursdays. You will be given a pack of 3 tests in a box with a separate leaflet on how to take the test and report the results. Please ignore the leaflet in the box, use the leaflet given with this letter. After each test, carefully dispose of all the test items in your normal household waste.

### Taking the test

You should take the test two times every week. Make sure you have enough time to do the test before going to school. Preferably this would be in the morning before going into school/college. However, we understand that for some people this may be challenging. Therefore, tests can be taken the evening before school if needed. You need to report test results.

Your child should also **continue testing twice a week, at home, throughout the Easter school holidays**. We will ensure your child has enough tests to cover the Easter break.

[Help and support is available](#), including instructions in different languages on how to test and report the results and a video showing you how [to take the test](#). [Links to this help and video can be found on the COVID section on the Mount Carmel website](#)

This does not replace symptomatic testing. If you have symptoms you should self-isolate immediately, book a PCR test and follow national guidelines.

### Can I take the test myself?

Pupils aged 12-17 should do the test themselves with adult supervision. The adult may help the pupil to take the test if they need support.

Pupils aged 11 must be tested by an adult and the adult must report the result.

You need to report each test result.

The result of every test needs to be reported using the NHS Test & Trace self-report website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>.

You will also need to tell the school the result of each test. This will be done by the following method:

For parents who have previously consented to testing, if the pupil records a negative result, send your child to school and we will record that your child has **returned a negative COVID result** each Monday and Thursday. If your child is absent from school on a Monday or Thursday, we will record that they have had a negative result on the next day they are back in school.

For parents who have **not previously consented to testing**, we will record that the pupil has not been tested.

For 'void' results, please retest your child

**For positive results**, please contact school at the earliest convenient time. If this is out of hours, please use the COVID reporting phone number on the school website. We will record this result as being positive.

For parents who withdraw consent, please contact Miss McIntyre at school who will record this

### **Why take part?**

Taking part in testing is voluntary and you will be able to attend school whether you take part in testing or not.

I am strongly encouraging all pupils to take part. Testing yourself at home will allow us to reduce the spread of the virus. Please contact Mr Dugdale, our COVID Coordinator, if you have any questions or concerns about home testing.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely



**Mr X Bowers**

Headteacher

### **Some frequently asked questions:**

#### **What should you do after the test?**

If anyone tests **positive you, your household, any support bubbles you are part of** should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance for 10 days.

You need to report your result to both [NHS Test and Trace](#) and your school.

You should [order a confirmatory PCR test](#) if you are testing at home (confirmatory PCR tests are not needed if the test was conducted at the Asymptomatic Test Site at school).

If the result of the test is **unclear (void)** you should do another test. A negative result does not guarantee that you are not carrying the virus. So, you should continue to follow social distancing, and other measures to reduce transmission such as wearing a face mask and regularly washing your hands and observing social distancing.

If you or anyone in your household gets symptoms of the virus you should follow [national guidelines on self-isolation and testing](#).

#### **Do I need to give consent?**

Students and parents do not need to give written consent to take part in the home testing programme. Please read the information below on how personal information and test results are shared and the privacy notice which can be found on the school website.

Once you open the kit you should take and report the results of the tests to [NHS Test & Trace](#) and school as outlined on the previous page.

#### **Reporting problems or issues with testing**

If there is an issue with the test kit, for example something is missing, please report it by calling **119** and please also tell the school.

If an accident or injury happens whilst using the test kit, please seek medical care by calling 111 (or 999 if it is an emergency). Please also report what happened using this website: <https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

#### **What type of tests will be used?**

We will be sending home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. They are a fast and simple way to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus. The tests are easy to use and give results in 30 minutes. Further information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms>

### **Are LFD tests accurate?**

Lateral Flow Devices identify people who are likely to be infectious. These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying them through this test is important.

These tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals and are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The speed and convenience of the tests supports the detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals, who would not otherwise have got tested. The tests are highly specific, with low chance of false positives. They are also very sensitive and are able to identify the majority of the most infectious yet asymptomatic individuals. Extensive evaluation has been carried out on the tests and it shows that they are both accurate and sensitive enough to be used in the community for screening and surveillance purposes.

It is important to remember that these tests are only an aid to help stop the spread of the virus and you should continue to follow other guidance such as on wearing face coverings and social distancing.

### **How are LFD tests different to PCR tests?**

There are 2 main types of test to check if you have coronavirus:

- polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests check for the genetic material (RNA) of the virus in the sample - you send the sample for processing at a lab
- lateral flow device (LFD) tests detect proteins called 'antigens' produced by the virus - they give rapid results within 30 minutes

### **What does it mean if I have a positive result?**

If you have a positive antigen LFD test result you, your household and any support bubbles you are part of should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance for 10 days. You need to report your result to both NHS Test & Trace and your school.

You should order a confirmatory PCR test if you are testing at home (confirmatory PCR tests are not needed if the test was conducted at the Asymptomatic Test Site at school). You can [book a test here](#).

### **What does it mean if I have a negative result?**

A negative result does not guarantee that you are not carrying the virus. So, you should continue to follow social distancing, and other measures to reduce transmission such as wearing a face mask and regularly washing your hands.

### **What if I have a void result?**

If the result of the test is unclear (void), you should take another one. If the next test is also void, you should take a PCR test. You can [book a test here](#).

### **Do I need to send the test to a lab?**

No. The LFDs supplied do not need to be sent to a laboratory to get a result and can give a quick result in around 30 minutes. Guidance on self-testing is contained in the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet, which comes with the test kit. There is also a useful video to show you how to administer the test.

### **How do you report the result?**

Once you have taken the test, you will need to report the result online (whether it is positive, negative or void) using this [service](#). You also need to tell the school the test result if it is positive. You will receive a text or email from NHS Test & Trace confirming that you have reported your test result.

All test results need to be reported to [NHS Test & Trace](#).

### **Can someone else in my household use a test kit sent home from school?**

No, however whole families and households with primary school, secondary school, and college age children, including childcare and support bubbles, will be able to test themselves twice every week from home. This testing can be accessed through the following channels:

- get a rapid test at work, through workplace testing. Ask your employer for more information
- attend a test site to get tested where you will be able to see how to take the test or pick up tests to do at home (you can find your nearest test site via the postcode checker [www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site](http://www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site) or check your local council website)
- collect tests to do at home, find your nearest collection site [COVID Test Finder \(test-and-trace.nhs.uk\)](https://www.test-and-trace.nhs.uk)

If these options are not possible, there will be a supply of rapid tests for order online for people who need them the most. More information can be found on [www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](http://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

### **How will personal information and test results be shared?**

To report your result, you will need to share some information about yourself, so that your test result can be traced. You need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- your name
- your test result
- the reference number on the test kit

You will also need to tell your school or college your test result as outlined earlier in this letter.

Under UK law, your school or college collect and store test result data because it is in the 'public interest'.

Schools and colleges will only share information with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) if the test kits used are found to be faulty. If this happens, DHSC will use our information to contact people who used the faulty tests, so that they can be tested again.

When you report test results online, you are sharing information with DHSC. They will share it with your GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer you health services and guidance if you need to self-isolate. They might also use your data anonymously (without your name or contact information) to research COVID-19, and improve our understanding of the virus.

For more information on how personal data is used for testing please see the detailed privacy notice on the school website.

### **Who is the school COVID Co-ordinator and Registration Assistant?**

The school COVID Co-ordinator is Mr Dugdale and the Registration Assistant is Miss McIntyre.

### **Who do I contact if there is an issue with testing at home?**

Please contact the appropriate Pastoral Leader for further help.

### **Where can I access this letter electronically in order to use the weblinks?**

This letter can be found electronically on the COVID section of the Mount Carmel website – [www.mountcarmelhigh.co.uk](http://www.mountcarmelhigh.co.uk)