

Executive Headteacher Mr D Gurney B.A. Hons / NPQH / NLE

Head of School Mrs S Roberts BSC. Hons / PGCE / NPQH

5th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are working to keep our academy 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 students to remain in the academy 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 academy open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but we would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be testing all staff and students who want to participate from week commencing 4 January 2021.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the consent form attached to the email and the enclosed consent statement (we require one per student).

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your 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 students participating. Parents/carers will also be informed.

The government confirmed 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.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Parents/carers will also be notified.

Students will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). 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, you should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test. During this time while you wait for the PCR result (via text/email) you 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?

Students will be able to stay in the academy and resume their activities as normal. A student will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear from us you can assume it was negative. 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 close contact at the academy tests positive?

A close contact of someone in the academy who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to the academy if your child agrees to be tested once a day for 7 days and the test remains negative. If students 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 the academy who will still need to self-isolate.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at the academy 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 (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 01134872800 or email info@cockburnjohncharles.org

Yours faithfully



Mr. D Gurney
Executive Headteacher