4 January 2021

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students.

Dear Parent or guardian,

We are working to keep Goldington 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 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 key worker students who attend school and want to participate from Tuesday 5 January 2021.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information.

11-16 years olds may self-swab (swab their own nose/throat) with supervision of an appropriate member of staff if they have the consent of their parent or guardian. If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the form below and the enclosed consent statement (one per pupil/student) and return it in person with you child when they return tomorrow, if you are unable to print off and return the form we will contract you tomorrow to gain verbal consent.

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. For under 18s, staff will oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, 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 higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

Testing will be offered free of charge.

Registration

To process the test, we will register all participating students.

To complete this registration please fill in the form below and complete the enclosed consent statement.

First Name	
Last Name	
Date of Birth	
Gender at birth	
Currently showing any COVID-19 symptoms?	
Today's date	
Home Postcode	
Email Address	
Mobile Number	

What if a pupil tests positive?

Participating staff and students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Pupils 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). Goldington Academy will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home or 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, they should 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?

They will be able to stay in Goldington Academy 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/college who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to Goldington Academy 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 Goldington Academy 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 Goldington 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 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 call the office on 01234 261516 or email office@goldington.beds.sch.uk .

Yours faithfully,