



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

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are working during these challenging times to keep Cranbrook 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 device' (LFD) tests.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests are designed to help staff and students 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 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 starting with exam year groups 11 and 13 and the staff. The test is conducted twice spaced 3-5 days apart. Please see this link for more information. How to do your test: COVID 19 instruction leaflet for schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)

As we need to know whether you consent to your child being tested or not, we require **all parents** to complete the consent statement (one per student) via the [link](#). Please can we request that you **reply by 4pm on Monday 5 January at the latest**.

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. Training of staff will happen at the start of the week commencing 4th January. The LFD does not require a laboratory to process the test and can take around half an hour to get the results.

Results will be shared directly with pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

We are informed that 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.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. They will need to leave school asap and follow the isolation guidelines. Boarding students will return to their boarding house. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Students will need to take a further 'PCR test' (Polymerase Chain Reaction - similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). Tests can be booked via www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. It is faster to book a drive through test than to request a home test. While waiting for the PCR result (via text / email) students will need to self-isolate at home. Boarding students will isolate in their boarding house.

If the PCR test returns a positive result students will have to self-isolate for the 10 day period of isolation following the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

If tested negative students will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. 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 school 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. This is known as 'serial contact testing'. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days 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 are currently receiving further information from NHS and the Government and will update you with further details of the exact process and timetable for testing as soon as possible. We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact Barham Reception enquiries@cranbrook.kent.sch.uk or 01580 711800.

Thank you for your support.

Kind regards,

Mandy Smart
Deputy Head

31 December 2020