

6 January 2021



Stowupland High School

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Headteacher:
Mr P Whear

Chair of Governors:
Mrs K Hudson



Healthy School

Dear parents and carers

COVID-19 testing for staff and students

We are working hard to keep our school as safe as possible. Despite the reintroduction of lockdown, testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning in schools across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

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 the Stowupland community as safe as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it. For the time being, of course, testing will be restricted to staff and those students who are in school because they are vulnerable or because they are the children of critical workers.

If you are happy for your child(ren) to be tested, please complete the [online consent statement](#) (one per student), via Google forms. This has been updated to reflect the latest government guidance. Please accept my apologies if you have already submitted your consent. I should be most grateful if you would update this.

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 can oversee the swab process. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and students 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.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating staff and students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where students 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.



Founding Partner of the
John Milton Academy Trust

Company no: 10298832

Email: enquiries@stowuplandhighschool.co.uk

Web: www.stowuplandhighschool.co.uk

Stowupland safeguards and promotes the welfare of students and requires all staff and visitors to share this commitment.

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. We 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, you should visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

While waiting for the PCR result (via text / email), they will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result, they 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 school 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 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 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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Additional FAQs and guidance is attached. However, please do not hesitate to contact us via enquiries@stowuplandhighschool.co.uk if you have any further questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely



Peter Whear
Headteacher



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