



Ryecroft C.E. Middle School

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Ryecroft C.E. Middle School
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25th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

NHS Test and Trace: Lateral Flow COVID-19 testing for pupils in Year 7 and 8

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. You may have heard that Lateral Flow Devices (LFD)s will be used to support the return to face-to-face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.

Testing for pupils in **Year 7**, who are not already attending in the Key Worker School, will **commence on Friday 5th March** on an appointment basis. Pupils will need to leave the school site immediately after their test and you will only be notified if your child has a positive test result.

Year 8 pupils will be tested on **Monday 8th March** on a scheduled and staggered basis. You will be informed of your child's allocated arrival time in due course

Pupils are required to be tested 3 times in school with no more than 5 days between test dates. The additional dates for the year groups are as follows:

- Tuesday 9th March – Year 7
- Friday 12th March – Year 7 and Year 8
- Tuesday 16th March – Year 8

After the third test, pupils will be provided with home test kits for regular testing. Testing remains voluntary but strongly encouraged.

Those taking the test in school will be required to self-swab, supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat.

When home testing, secondary pupils aged 11 should have the test administered by an adult, and pupils and students aged 12-17 should be supervised by an adult but can swab themselves – our 'Key Worker' pupils have already been doing this without any issue since January.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and pupils 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.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the attached **consent form** (one per pupil) and **return it to the school office** [email will suffice] **by midday on Tuesday 2nd March 2021** at the latest.

We would also ask that you inform us if you do not give your consent by either telephoning the school office 01889 590394 or email office@ryecroft.staffs.sch.uk. This will avoid you being unnecessarily contacted.

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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 pupil tests positive?

Participating pupils 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). We would recommend booking a PCR test directly either online, www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or calling 119, 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.

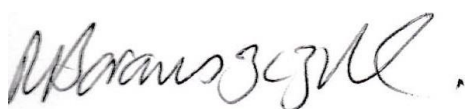
What happens if the test is negative?

They will be able to stay in school 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 my child develops symptoms?

The lateral testing programme 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>.

Yours sincerely



Miss R Baramuszczak
Headteacher