



5th February 2021

Important Note – students who are showing any symptoms relating to COVID-19 must NOT come into college for testing. Symptomatic students must follow the guidance on 119 and book for a drive through test.

Dear Parent/Carer

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

As you may know, at the start of term the Government requested that, as part of the keyworker provision of supporting students in college, we continue with plans to test students who come into school. We initially offered two tests over a period of between 3 and 5 days to students who are attending school as they are deemed vulnerable and those who are the children of key workers.

We would now like to offer a test twice each week to those students who are attending school as they are deemed vulnerable and those who are the children of key workers. As now, testing will take place on two days each week, and therefore students who attend the provision on a part time basis may not receive two tests per week. This process will commence over the coming days and participation remains voluntary. Please note that we are still not, at this stage, calling all students in to be tested.

As this is a change from our original arrangements, an updated consent process is required, and consent can be provided or declined by [completing this form here](#). Students over the age of 16 can complete the form themselves once they have discussed their decision with their parent or legal guardian.

On each occasion that your son/daughter takes a test, they will be provided with a card showing a test barcode and you will be provided with the same identifying code by email. Given the ongoing arrangements of this testing, parents or legal guardians are now asked to register the test on the NHS Test and Trace website to receive the result, as you might with a home test kit. This should be done within 24 hours of the test being taken and details of how to do this will be provided on both the card provided to your son or daughter and in the email sent to you.

Positive results (which take around half an hour from testing) will still be shared directly by the college with students participating in the testing and participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

The school-based **asymptomatic** testing (testing for those without Coronavirus symptoms) uses a new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests' (LFT). The government would like as many secondary and college age students and staff to take two tests upon their return to school as possible.

The remainder of this letter provides the same information relating to the nature of the tests and answers the same frequently asked questions as the letter of 7th January, which outlined the process for initial testing on return from the Christmas break.

You are aware that we have introduced many protective measures since September 2020 such as the 'zoning' of year groups in specific areas of the school, the wearing of face coverings on the school site, and careful hygiene and cleaning routines. Last term, we thankfully had comparatively few confirmed cases of Coronavirus among students and staff, with limited disruption. However, it is very difficult to know how many children and adults carry Coronavirus without symptoms (asymptomatic carriers), these lateral flow tests (LFT) will help us identify those asymptomatic carriers, reducing the risk of further transmission and potentially limiting the time students and staff need to spend in isolation when they come into potential contact with Covid-19.

While taking a LFT test in school will be voluntary, I would encourage everyone to participate. These tests are primarily about the confidence we can have that we are doing everything possible to prevent the transmission of this virus to the most vulnerable in our region. The LFT tests are certainly not perfect but I believe that they enhance our risk assessment provision and may limit the disruption to teaching that a confirmed case can mean. In validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, the LFT were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a PCR test (99.68% specificity).

We have uploaded a number of additional resources together with the data handling Privacy Notice and a frequently asked questions sheet to the CMAT Coronavirus (Covid-19) web page on the CMAT website which can be found [here](#).

Students will be supervised by trained staff in administering the test themselves. It is important to note that staff will not be physically swabbing the children. The staff will be a combination of existing college staff who have successfully completed all the online training modules and have been certified as meeting a competency checklist.

What if a student 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.

Students will need to take a further 'PCR test' (like 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 choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while the student waits for the PCR result (via text/email) they will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result the student will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

The student will be able to stay in college 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

Principal: Simon Warburton



ELY COLLEGE

Downham Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2SH

t: 01353 667763

e: office@elycollege.co.uk

w: www.elycollege.com

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 college who has tested positive for COVID-19 will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This 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>.

It is important that symptomatic students do not come into college for a test.

If you have further questions or concerns please contact us on the COVID19@elycollege.co.uk email address.

Yours faithfully

Simon Warburton
Principal