



1st March 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers

Re: NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 Testing – Consent Form

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in college 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 college open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, **but I would encourage everyone to take it.**

We have been testing all staff and students who were on site, on a rolling programme from week commencing 4th January 2021. With schools and colleges reopening to all students from Monday 8th March, it is necessary to ensure that our sites are safe and therefore we will test all students 3 times this term according to Government regulations.

In order for your child to receive a test, you will need Complete the consent form which can be accessed through this link:
<https://trhat.co.uk/letter-covidlateraltest/>

Please ensure that only one form is submitted per student.

Just to reiterate, 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 students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. Further information regarding outcome will be available on the Track and Trace App or NHS the .gov website.

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.

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' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). 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 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 the NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

Students will be able to stay in college and resume their activities as normal. A student will only be told their result 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 college who has tested positive for COVID-19 will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. Further details will be provided at the time of a close contact being identified.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at the respective college sites 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>.

What if the rest of the family wants to participate in the testing?

Free Lateral Flow Test (LFT) testing is available to all residents of Hillingdon at the Beck Theatre for all those **without** any COVID-19 symptoms. The rapid lateral flow swab tests provide results within an hour and help to identify those who are unknowingly carrying the virus. It also enables those who test positive, their household members and their close contacts, to self-isolate, which can help drive down the R rate locally and save lives.

Please note: If you have any COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, high temperature, or loss/change to your sense of smell or taste), you should self-isolate and book a PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) test at a local testing site by visiting www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or by phoning 119.

If you are interested in being tested, you can book an appointment online by accessing the link: [Hillingdon Lateral Flow Tests](#)

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

Heidi Faure
Chief Officer – Operations