



St Martin-in-the-Fields High School for Girls

11-19 Church of England Academy Founded 1699

Service Compassion Justice Perseverance

Wednesday 10 February 2021

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 Testing for Staff and Students

Dear Families

I am writing to update you on the testing programme that we have been operating in school since 18 January 2021. NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England have reviewed their previous advice and although the testing programme will continue in school, the daily contact testing and confirmatory PCR testing elements have been paused. You can read the details of this in the updated asymptomatic frequently asked questions and in the government publication [Rapid asymptomatic testing in specialist settings](#) Also please visit the [covid-19 testing page](#) on our website for all the updated letters.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school and college settings through asymptomatic transmission. We therefore strongly encourage those returning to school to be tested. Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely.

We recognise that the self-swabbing part of the test may cause significant concerns for some children and young people with SEND and their families. Some of these concerns may be alleviated by discussing them with school and agreeing strategies to help reduce anxiety and putting in place any reasonable adjustments (if the individual has a disability). Parents and carers may want to look at the Rapid Testing Guidance for Specialist Settings for further information - [Rapid asymptomatic testing in specialist settings - GOV.UK](#)

Plan for testing

We will be looking to test all staff and students as they return after the National Lockdown. In the meantime, as school is currently open for vulnerable and critical worker students, we will be carrying out our test programme for students and staff that are onsite during this time.

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow devices are easy to undertake, using a swab of your nose and throat. For those who are unable to self-swab please refer to the Rapid Testing Guidance for Specialist Settings for further information about options. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant. St Martin's will inform the student of a positive test result. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. The student will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. Tests are free of charge and an information leaflet can be found on our website.

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WITH LOVE AND LEARNING



What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, students who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Students will be informed of negative test results via text/email. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

What if staff or students have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?

The staff member or student will be notified that they are a close contact by the school and will need to self-isolate for 10 days in line with Government guidance.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at St Martin's is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (including 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 will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the school by telephone on 020 8674 5594 or email smartins@smartins.academy

Yours sincerely,



Beverley Stanislaus
Headteacher