

This information is taken from the Government's resource file relating to COVID-19 testing (lateral flow tests) in schools (19.01.21):

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jYv0MjFyllbzgPn_1S10OuRgfrj_b5_P

Note that Springfield School **will not be using serial or routine testing as an alternative to self-isolation. 'Contacts' of a person who tests positive for COVID19 will be asked to self-isolate in accordance with Government guidance regarding isolation periods.*

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

You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow devices.' This document is to help give you more information about the testing programme in schools.

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. It is therefore recommended that those returning to school be tested.

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 Mass Testing Guidance for Specialist Settings for further information - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/mass-asymptomatic-testing-in-specialist-settings>

Plan for testing

We will be looking to test all staff and secondary school and college age pupils as they return after the Christmas break.

~~*In addition, any staff member or student who has come into contact with positive cases in our [school/college] can be tested daily for seven days to allow them to remain in [school/college].~~

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 Mass 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. The school will inform the pupil of a positive test result. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. The pupil will also receive a text notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system. Tests are free of charge and I enclose a leaflet with further information.

What if my child tests positive?

If a pupil tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result. This should be on the same day or as soon as possible afterwards. The school will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home.

During the time 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 continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, pupils who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Pupils 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/college]. If close contacts agree to be tested each day for a maximum period of 7 days, and they test negative every day, they will be allowed to remain in [school/college]. There may be instances where close contacts are also contacted by NHS Test and Trace. In this instance they should notify NHS Test and Trace that they are a close contact through school/college and are participating in daily contact testing.~~

~~If they do not want to take the tests, they will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. The option of daily testing does not apply to household members or close contacts of a positive case outside of [school/college], who will still need to self-isolate.~~

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 (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>.

Schools will support staff and pupils throughout, but please contact the school if you have any questions.