



TANFIELD
SCHOOL

HARD WORK | TRUST | FAIRNESS

15th March 2021

Testing update

Dear parent/carer,

I hope you and your family are keeping well.

I wanted to write to you to say a big thank you for supporting us in getting your child back to school safely last week. I'm pleased to inform you that we had no positive tests.

This week we will be conducting the second and third tests. The aim of doing three tests in school is to make sure students know how to carry them out effectively so that they will be able to do them at home in the coming weeks. All students will be offered tests to take at home twice a week, so that we can reduce the spread of the virus. We hope that you support us in doing these tests with your child at home to ensure that all members of TeamTanfield stay safe.

Up to one in three people who have COVID-19 can spread the virus without knowing. This is because they have no symptoms. To reduce the spread of the virus, we need to identify those individuals. We can do this by carrying out tests at home twice every week.

Testing students at home

We understand that each child has individual needs. Many children will adapt to testing becoming part of their routine, others will find it more challenging. We hope that the option to take the test in the morning or the evening will support families to test at home. We are suggesting that all staff and students take their tests on a Sunday and Wednesday evening.

Tests kits will be collected from school and are free of charge. Students will receive a pack of 3 tests in a box with a leaflet on how to take the test and report the results. The result of each test needs to be reported using the NHS Test & Trace self-report website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>. Students/parents will also need to tell the school the result of each test using the following link: <https://forms.gle/6ZUFrh2bBMYKvoTY6>

If a student has a positive test result, they will need to stay home and self-isolate. If the result of the test is unclear (void) they will need to do another one.

Please use the help@tanfieldschool.co.uk email address if you have any questions or concerns about home testing.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Mr S Clough
Headteacher

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Some frequently asked questions

What type of tests will be used?

We will be sending home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. They are a fast and simple way to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus.

The tests are easy to use and give results in 30 minutes.

Further information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms>

Are LFD tests accurate?

Lateral Flow Devices identify people who are likely to be infectious. These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying them through this test is important.

These tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals and are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The speed and convenience of the tests supports the detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals, who would not otherwise have got tested.

The tests are highly specific, with low chance of false positives. They are also very sensitive and are able to identify the majority of the most infectious yet asymptomatic individuals. Extensive evaluation has been carried out on the tests and it shows that they are both accurate and sensitive enough to be used in the community for screening and surveillance purposes.

It is important to remember that these tests are only an aid to help stop the spread of the virus and you should continue to follow other guidance such as on wearing face coverings and social distancing.

How are LFD tests different to PCR tests?

There are 2 main types of test to check if you have coronavirus: polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests check for the genetic material (RNA) of the virus in the sample - you send the sample for processing at a lab lateral flow device (LFD) tests detect proteins called 'antigens' produced by the virus - LFD tests give rapid results, in 30 minutes after taking the test.

How will personal information and test results be shared?

When students take a Lateral Flow test, they need to report the result. This is so that their test result can be traced, which means that they need to share some information about the student. They will need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- child's name
- child's test result
- the reference number on the test Kit

They will also need to tell the school or college their test result. Under UK law, a child's school or college can collect and store test result data because it is in the 'public interest'. Schools and colleges will only share information with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) if the test kits used are found to be faulty. If this happens, DHSC will use our information to contact people who used the faulty tests, so that they can be tested again.

When someone reports test results online, they are sharing information with DHSC. DHSC may share the information with your GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer health services and guidance if someone needs to self-isolate. They might also use data anonymously (a person's name or contact information) to research COVID-19, and improve our understanding of the virus.

For more information on how personal data is used for testing please see the detailed privacy notice <https://www.tanfieldschool.co.uk/gdpr/show/11>.

What if a child cannot tolerate a swab down their throat, perhaps due to their disability?


A child or young person may find it difficult to take a throat swab due, for example, to them having difficulty in understanding instructions, needing to keep their mouth open during the period of swabbing or they are having a strong gag reflex. In such cases, where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils can be taken. Similarly, if a nasal swab is not feasible, a throat swab alone will suffice.





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