



## Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

27 August 2021

Dear Parent or guardian,

### **COVID-19 Asymptomatic Testing in September**

Following Government announcements at the end of last term, secondary schools are expected to test pupils as they return following the summer break. This asymptomatic testing is for those who do not show any coronavirus symptoms and uses devices known as lateral flow tests (LFT). These are the same tests as used on return from lockdown in March and the same procedure as used with home test kits.

At the start of the Autumn Term, all pupils will be offered two tests on site. Following this students will return to testing twice weekly using home test kits.

Asymptomatic testing is a key component of the Government's response to the pandemic, aimed at stopping those who are carrying the virus without symptoms from unknowingly spreading it to others. This allows workplaces and schools to operate as safely as possible by isolating those that are most contagious as soon as is practical.

There is currently a mix of tests in use for both on-site testing and home test kits. Many will be familiar with the Inova test that uses a swab of the throat and one nostril. New designs (Orient Gene and Acon-FlowFlex) are now also being used that require a swab of both nostrils. We have a mix of device types and are required to use up the tests we have in the order they were supplied to us.

Participation in testing is voluntary and free of charge.

Participation requires consent: this must be parent/guardian consent for those under 16, but may be by the student if 16 or older. We are able to use existing consent from March, so there is not need to redo the consent form unless you wish to change any information.

The consent form can be found at <https://forms.office.com/r/tjihEgvZ42> or using the QR code.



### Arrangements for testing

Year 7 and Year 12 students have been written to separately.

Year 8 students will be tested on their transition day on Monday 6 Sept.

Year 13 students will be tested on their first day, Tuesday 7 Sept.

Students in years 9 – 11 are invited to complete their first test during a drop-in session on **Monday 6 Sept** between **11am and 3pm**. Those not able to attend on this day will have their first test arranged later in the week.

I have attached some brief further information about testing below.

Yours faithfully,

Mr RJ Langton  
Headmaster

## **Registration & Results**

To process the test, participating pupils are registered through an NHS website. To ensure this can happen smoothly please provide all the details on the consent collection form.

Pupils will be given a registration card with the test barcode. Those with a smart phone can use this on the NHS site to register the test themselves and receive results by SMS text message and email. The school will register all tests issued using the information supplied on the consent collection form.

The school will hold details of the tests we deliver in line with DfE guidance and our Privacy Notice.

## **What if a pupil tests positive?**

Participating staff and pupils 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.

Any pupils who test positive will need to self isolate in line with government guidance.

## **What happens if the test is negative?**

They will be able to stay in school and carry on their activities as normal. A pupil will only be told if they test positive, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative.

A small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

It is important to remember, however, that no test is 100% accurate and that a negative test does not mean it is safe to ignore all of the other control measures that are in place.

## **What if I don't want to consent?**

Testing is voluntary and, like any medical intervention, requires consent from the individual. For pupils under 16 that consent must be from the parent/guardian; pupils over 16 may consent themselves. However we want to strongly encourage staff and students to participate in regular testing to help reduce the spread in school settings through asymptomatic transmission.

A number of people, for various reasons, may decide not to consent. They will return to school at the same time as others and simply not participate in testing.

If you have queries and wish to speak to someone before making a decision you can contact the school

## **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 (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 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

## **What if my child has had a positive PCR test in the last 90 days?**

Those individuals who have had a positive PCR result in the past 90days are exempt from testing, and **should not** take part in asymptomatic testing. If an individual chooses to take part in testing and gets a positive LFD result they will still be required to self isolate.

## **More information**

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need more information or have any questions. You can call the office on 01922 720696 or email [enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk)

You can also find more information about how the test kits work, including videos, at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-self-test-help>