



COVID-19 Testing for KS3 Pupils

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are working to keep St Joseph's Catholic Middle School as safe as possible. Following the school updates from the Prime Minister and Secretary of States recent announcement that schools will reopen for all pupils from Monday 8th March the testing for those staff and KS3 pupils without coronavirus symptoms is necessary across the country using a COVID-19 test known as 'lateral flow tests'. I have attached some frequently asked questions from the NHS test and trace that you may find useful.

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

We will be testing all Y7/Y8 pupils from week commencing 1st March. Staff will continue to be tested twice a week as they have been successfully since 4th January 2021.

You have been sent a consent form via ParentMail. Please read this carefully, it is essential that this is completed for either consent or non-consent for each child in Y7 & Y8 (one per child). Please update this with any changes from January. We also need to know if your child has tested positive for coronavirus and the date of the positive test. These pupils do not need to be tested up to 90 days from their positive test. This is so that we can correctly include your child in the testing programme.

If you have trouble accessing this form please send an email to parentcontact@hexhamstjosephs.uk

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. As our pupils are under 18, staff will oversee the swab process.

Once we receive parents' consent we will be offering an initial date and time for your child to come to school to have his/her test. It is vital that you check your ParentMail regularly for any changes.

All KS3 pupils are required to have three lateral flow tests at school 3-5 days apart initially and then home kits will be provided for them to be tested at home twice a week. More information on this will follow.

To complete the initial three tests in school we are wanting to test Y7 and Y8 pupils twice in the week commencing 1st March and their final and third test in school will be on Monday 8th March when an appointment time will be given via ParentMail. KS3 pupils will **not** be in school this day and will only attend for their third test at their given appointment time. This will ensure all KS3 pupils will be able to attend school fully on Tuesday 9th March.

I would like to clarify that school will be open for all Y7 and Y8 **Vulnerable and Critical Key Worker** children on Monday 8th March as normal.

First two tests

These will take place in the mobile classrooms at the times given below. All KS3 keyworker pupils and Year 8 pupils on Monday 1st and Thursday 4th March. Year 7 pupils will take place on the Tuesday 2nd and Friday 5th March. Please keep to the timings given below but you may attend at any time during the allocated session.

Pupils to arrive at the mobile classroom entrance and parents are asked to wait in the car park. Once the test has been completed your child will return home and you will receive notification of the test result later in the day.

Third and final test

This will take place on Monday 8th March in Base 7. Pupils only are asked to arrive at the Year 5 entrance as testing will take place in Base 7. Parents are asked to wait in the car park. You will be sent an appointment time and we ask you to keep to this so that we can test all the pupils during the day. Again, once the test has been completed the pupil will return home and parents will be notified of the test result later that day.

Day	Group	Time	Group	Time	Group	Time	Group	Time
	Session 1		Session 2		Session 3		Session 4	
Monday 1 st March	Y7/8 Keyworkers	8:50- 9:30	8C	9:30- 11:00	8D	12:00 – 1:30	8S	2:00 – 3:30
Tuesday 2 nd March	7H	8:30 – 10:00	7R	10:30 – 12:00	7S	1:00 – 2:30		
Wednesday 3 rd March	No testing							
Thursday 4 th March	Y7/8 Keyworkers	8:50- 9:30	8C	9:30- 11:00	8D	12:00 – 1:30	8S	2:00 – 3:30
Friday 5 th March	7H	8:30 – 10:00	7R	11:00 – 12:30	7S	1:30 – 3:00		
Monday 8 th March	All Y7/8 pupils by appointment to be sent out via ParentMail							

There will be no live lessons on Monday 8th March but there will be recorded lessons following your child’s remote learning timetable. All staff will be in school on Monday helping with testing and preparing for your child’s return to school.

I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school soon and I will endeavour to keep you informed of any more changes in the coming weeks. Staff are looking forward to having all pupils back in school from Tuesday 9th March.

Kind regards,



Mr Paul Naughton

From NHS Test and Trace

Frequently asked questions

What if my child tests positive?

If a pupil 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 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 come to school on Tuesday 9th March 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 and will need to self-isolate for 10 days in line with Government guidance.

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>.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office by email at parentcontact@hexhamstjosephs.uk