

## Further information about Covid-19 testing at Blackpool Sixth

**Important: If a student has symptoms they must not attend college** - The testing programme at college is for students with no symptoms. If a student develops symptoms at any time (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>.

### The testing process

We have already been regularly testing a small number of staff and students using this process and we are ready to expand this to mass testing for all students.

Students will have the opportunity to take three tests, 3-5 days apart, with the first before any return to face-to-face lessons. Students will be contacted again closer to the time of testing to confirm the dates/times of appointments. This letter will also include information on a testing location in college and a specified entrance point to ensure social distancing.

Upon arrival at the specified entrance, the student will be guided through the following stages:

**Registration** - to complete online registration and check consent for testing has been given.

**Testing** - when taking the test, students will be supervised and guided through the process by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' device tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the throat and nose.

**Recording** - upon completion of the test the student will be given information regarding communication of results. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant via an email and/or text from NHS Test and Trace.

For the first test, which will take place before a return to face-to-face lessons, students will be able to make their way home after testing and do not need to wait for the result. For the second and third tests, a student may be in college for face-to-face lessons on the day of testing. If this is the case, students will be allowed to leave the classroom to attend their appointment. Students can then return to class following the test.

### Information about detection rates

The rapid "lateral flow" tests that will be used in college have detection rates of between 58% to 85%, compared to the more sensitive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests carried out in NHS test centres and laboratories.

#### **IMPORTANT**

**The test gives some "false negative" results, therefore a negative result does not mean that a student is "in the clear".**

The test only gives a result for the moment in time - someone could catch the virus very soon after taking the test. Students must continue with rigorous protective measures, even if the test comes back negative:

- Maintain at least 2m social distancing (where possible)
- Wash/sanitise hands frequently
- Follow good respiratory hygiene - 'catch it, bin it, kill it'
- Wear a face covering when required to do so.

**However, the detection rate of the lateral flow tests increases to about 95% for asymptomatic individuals with high viral loads - this means that in these people it is more likely to detect COVID-19 and identify those who are more likely to transmit the virus. This will help to reduce the risk of transmission in college.**

### **What if my son/daughter/ward tests positive?**

Following a positive test, the student will be informed immediately by a member of staff. If not already at home, the student will need to go home and immediately begin self-isolation. Members of the student's household will also need to self-isolate.

#### **Please note**

**Students who test positive will be responsible for making their own way home. They will not be able to use public transport so they must make their way home by walking, cycling, using their own transport or by collection by a parent/carer.**

### **What if my son/daughter/ward has been in close contact with someone who tests positive?**

The student will be notified that they are a close contact by the college and advised of next steps. There may be instances where close contacts are also contacted by NHS Test and Trace. In this instance the student should notify NHS Test and Trace that they are a close contact through college. Close contacts will need to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of their contact with the individual.

### **What if my son/daughter/ward develops symptoms?**

**The testing programme at college is for people with no symptoms.** If a student 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>.

They should also contact their Pastoral Mentor to let them know they are symptomatic. The student's Pastoral Mentor will support them throughout and will liaise with teachers to keep them informed.