



NHS COVID-19 asymptomatic testing information and consent for students in schools and colleges

Dear Parent/Carers,

I hope you and your families have enjoyed the festive period and that you have remained safe and well. I wanted to get back in touch with you following my previous letter on 18th December 2020, regarding a staggered start to the new term to allow for preparations for asymptomatic testing in schools. You may have seen the Government have adjusted their initial plans for the re-opening of schools next week. Our Academy will now only be open from 5th January for those children whose parents/carers are keyworkers, all other children will receive education remotely during that week. We have made the decision to expand online learning for all students in response to our Academy extended Christmas break and to support our families. Students in year 11, 12 and 13 will return to full-time face to face provision from Monday 11th January whilst all other students will continue with online learning. All students will return to face to face provision from Monday 18th January.

We are also putting together a bespoke on-site package for our year 10, 11, 12 and 13 students who are sitting internal and external examinations week commencing 11th January and will be in touch with those families directly to explain what additional support we have in place to support those students. Year 10 mocks will be delayed until we return in an attempt to remove any anxieties our students might face in trying to prepare for these at home. We will adjust our Academy assessment calendar and updates parents as to what this looks like in due course.

Whilst updates have been limited over the Christmas period we have now been informed that the new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests', will start to be delivered to schools from 4th January 2021. Although we are not yet aware of exactly when ours will arrive.

Along with all of the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely, as we will be able to test those who previously had to self-isolate due to 'close contact' with a positive case of the virus. Whilst the test is voluntary, I would strongly encourage us all to engage with it to help stop the

Newark Academy | London Road, New Balderton, Newark, Nottingham NG24 3AL
Telephone: 01636 615000 | Email: office@newarkacademy.co.uk | Website: www.newarkacademy.co.uk
Executive Head Teacher: Andrew Seymour BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH | Head of School: Chris Fisher BSc (Hons), PGCE

spread of the virus and keep as many of our students and staff in school as is safe to do so. If however you do not wish for your child to undertake 'close contact' testing, the usual national guidelines for self-isolation rules will apply.

We currently await the government training materials on testing and are preparing for the safe recruitment of volunteers and staff to run our testing facility, and at this stage, we intend to offer:

- Weekly testing for all members of staff
- Daily tests for students and staff who are identified as close contacts, prior to attending lessons, during what would ordinarily be the self-isolation period in order that they can remain in school (called 'serial' testing)
- At this stage we are not intending to undertake mass testing of all students prior to their return to our Academy

The extent of our testing will be reviewed regularly and you will be updated accordingly.

The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy, using a swab of your nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed of positive results by telephone. Please find some further information overleaf and the government's instructional leaflet attached.

Collecting consent at whole school level is a time-consuming administrative job and we would therefore like to make a start before our return to school. Please take time to read this information and subsequently, if you are happy for your child to have access to our testing facility when needed, please complete the registration and consent form via the link below and submit by 3pm on Wednesday, 6th January 2021:

www.newarkacademy.co.uk/consent

Once we have finalised our detailed testing arrangements next week we will of course communicate these to you.

You will be aware that my intention all along has been to open our Academy to all students. The recent Government decision on requesting secondary schools to restrict opening until 18th January makes this difficult and we have therefore had to

implement an online learning package designed to ensure our students continue to learn and make progress. I'm sure you will appreciate that pulling this together at such short notice certainly won't be easy but our teachers will work hard to design a creative and engaging experience for our students. You will receive an email in the afternoon of Monday 4th January with an overview of our programme and details of how to access work for your child on a daily basis.

Our teachers have worked hard to carefully plan and sequence the activities and materials so students can return to classrooms with confidence. We recognise that devices to access and complete online work on can also be a challenge. We have identified families where we know this has been difficult previously and will be in contact shortly to make arrangements. If you feel your child might need support in this area then please get in touch with your child's Achievement Leader. We have very limited access to devices but will help where we can.

Furthermore, those families who receive free school meals can expect a separate communication which will explain how you can access your Morrison's E-vouchers.

As explained at the beginning of this letter, our Academy will remain open throughout this period to all Key Worker and vulnerable children. In order to access this on-site provision you will need to complete an online registration form which is accessible through our website (www.newarkacademy.co.uk/keyworker). I ask that all requests for week 1 of on-site provision are completed by Monday 4th January at 12noon in order that I can allocate appropriate numbers of staff. You will be able to follow the same process for week 2 of this provision.

Any students who are accessing our onsite provision will be required to arrive in full school uniform for an 8.30am start. Onsite provision will finish at 2.30pm each day. There will be a very limited food menu available and therefore you may want to consider sending your child with a packed lunch. Transport will not be in place for week commencing 4th January and therefore parents will have to make their own arrangements here. Transport will return week commencing 11th January but will pick-up at the end of our extended provision day (3.45pm) only. Transport will then resume as normal from week commencing 18th January.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support as we work together to keep our Academy open, and our Academy community safe. We will, as

always, continue to support our staff and students throughout the challenges that Covid19 brings.

If you have any questions or require further information please contact our Academy office using the following email: office@newarkacademy.co.uk

Yours sincerely,



Chris Fisher
Head of School



Elaine Rossall
Chair of Governors

