



26 February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

As you are aware, as part of the return to school from Monday 8 March, students are being strongly encouraged to partake in a programme of mass testing to identify asymptomatic cases within the school community.

Following the first three tests (which will be undertaken over the next few weeks on the school site) students will be provided with home test kits to continue twice weekly testing at home– more details on this will follow in the coming weeks.

Organising mass testing of over 1700 students is a huge undertaking. Therefore the first round of testing for students will be offered on the below schedule, with students starting lessons the following day:

Mass testing at Backwell School		
Week beginning Monday 8 March		
Venue: Main School Theatre		
Year Group	Testing Date	Return to Classroom date
Year 11 and Year 13	Monday 8 March	Tuesday 9 March
Year 10 and Year 12	Tuesday 9 March	Wednesday 10 March
Year 7	Wednesday 10 March	Thursday 11 March
Year 9	Thursday 11 March	Friday 12 March
Year 8	Friday 12 March	Monday 15 March

Exact time slots will be circulated next week. Please note that students will need to make their own way to school/be driven by a parent to undertake their test. As soon as testing is complete they will need to return home. Those who receive a positive result will then be contacted to organise a PCR test. Those with a negative result will **not** be contacted – no news is good news!

Consent

Another large logistical part of this process includes gathering permission from parents which is why I am emailing you all today. I am aware that we had contacted parents regarding COVID-19 consent testing back in January and many of you have already given consent – thank you. **However the consent form has been amended slightly and we are now asking all parents to complete the form in all cases, i.e. whether you are giving consent or not.**

Testing is not compulsory but is strongly advised. If you do not wish for your child to take part in the testing programme then you will need to formally withhold consent using the form below.

If you have more than one child at Backwell School, you will need to complete a form for **each** child.

Your prompt return of this consent will hugely help our planning and we will circulate the exact schedule/timings for testing next week. The final deadline for submission of the consent form is 9.00am on Friday 5 March so that we can process this data prior to testing start on Monday 8 March.

[Click here to access the COVID-19 testing consent form for March 2021](#)

How does testing work?

Those taking a COVID-19 lateral flow test will be supported by staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff will oversee the swab process, but the child will administer the swab directly themselves. Testing will be offered free of charge.

What happens if the test is positive?

Pupils testing positive will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). We will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home or alternatively parents may go to www.gov.uk/getcoronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, parents should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test. During this time whilst waiting for the PCR result (via text / email) pupils will need to self-isolate (meaning they cannot attend school or other normal activities). If the PCR test returns a positive result your child will have to continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

Pupils will be able to attend lessons as per the schedule above and resume their activities as normal. A pupil will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear anything 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.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at Backwell 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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/getcoronavirus-test>. Please do not come into school seeking a test.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions: mailbox@backwellschool.net

Please [click here](#) to read the privacy notice connected to this data collection.

Thank you for your support.

Mr J Nunes
Headteacher